

**Armstrong Elementary School
Fales Elementary School
Hastings Elementary School**



**Student - Parent Handbook
2016-2017**

The Westborough Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or any other class protected by law.

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBERS

Armstrong 18 Fisher St.	508- 836-7760
Fales 50 Eli Whitney St.	508- 836-7770
Gibbons MS 20 Fisher St.	508-836-7740
Hastings 111 E. Main St.	508-836-7750
High School 90 W. Main St.	508- 836-7720
Mill Pond 6 Olde Hickory Path	508-836-7780
Supt. Office 45 W. Main St.	508-836-7700

SCHOOL TIMES

8:50 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.

Students enter class at 8:40. They should arrive NO EARLIER THAN 8:30.

Half-Day Kindergarten: 8:50 – 11:55

MEAL PRICES

Lunch \$3.00

Milk \$0.50

Lunch:

5 meals for \$15.00

10 meals for \$30.00

15 meals for \$45.00

20 meals for \$60.00

Free and reduced prices available for qualified applicants

HOLIDAY – NO SCHOOL

Labor Day	Monday, September 5
Rosh Hashanah	Monday, October 3
Columbus Day	Monday, October 10
Yom Kippur	Wednesday, October 12
Professional Day	Tuesday, November 8
Veteran's Day	Friday, November 11
Thanksgiving	November 24 & 25
Winter Break	December 26 - January 2
M.L. King Day	Monday, January 16
February Break	February 20 - 24
Professional Day	Monday, March 13
Good Friday	Friday, April 14
April Break	April 17-21
Memorial Day	Monday, May 29

NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Channel 12 (Local cable)
Channels 4 & 5
WTAG (580 AM)
WSRS (96 FM)
WSRO (1470 AM)
Connect5 call to all enrolled students
WPS website www.westboroughk12.org

ONLINE REPORT CARDS: K-3 (PowerSchool Parent Portal)

Thursday, December 15 Issued for Grades 1-3
Thursday, March 30 Issued for Grades 1-3
Last day of school (K-3)
(K report card issued mid-February and end of June)

ELEMENTARY CONFERENCES

Wednesday, October 26, 2016 (after half day dismissal)
Thursday, October 27, 2016 (after half day dismissal)
Thursday, November 3, 2016 (6:00–8:00 PM)

HALF DAYS

(11:55 Dismissal K-3, no Pre-school)
Friday, September 30, 2016
Wednesday, October 26, 2016
Thursday, October 27, 2016
Wednesday, November 23, 2016
Friday, December 9, 2016
Friday, December 23, 2016
Friday, January 13, 2017
Friday, May 12, 2017

1 HOUR EARLY RELEASE DAYS

(2:05 Dismissal)
Wednesday, February 1, 2017

See L'il Sprouts Preschool Handbook for changes to Preschool schedules on early release days

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The goal of the Westborough Public Schools is to accept responsibility for the development of each student into an adult who can stand confidently, participate fully, learn continually, and contribute meaningfully to society. Five objectives that will contribute to the achievement of this goal are listed below.

- To ensure that each student develops proficiency in basic academic skills.
- To ensure that each student develops the capacity to recognize and cope with the problems of an unknown future.
- To ensure the development of meaningful, interpersonal relationships among students, staff, and community.
- To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of resources.
- To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of human resources.

SCHOOL ROUTINES

Parent and Visitor Sign-in:

We welcome parent participation at school, but need to provide a structure to monitor the comings and goings of adults in the building. This is important in order to maintain security in the building. All parents and visitors must sign in at the office and get a name-tag or volunteer button before going to other parts of the building. Staff members have been asked to stop any adult they see without a name-tag or button and direct them to the office. Again, this is a security measure to protect your child from unauthorized adults in the building.

SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL

This section details our policies and routines. By adhering to them, you help the school run more efficiently, and provide a sense of security for your child. If our system for handling the day-to-day details works well, we have more time to spend teaching your child.

School Hours:

School hours are 8:50 – 3:05 (8:50-11:55 for half-day kindergarten). All students, including students driven to school, should arrive between 8:30 and 8:40. Teacher supervision starts at 8:30. Students proceed to their classrooms at 8:40. Please don't arrive earlier than 8:30. The school day officially starts at 8:50.

Tardy Students:

Students arriving after 8:50 are considered tardy and MUST be signed in by a parent at the office before going to class. This procedure ensures that the student is removed from the absence list and lunch is ordered.

Important Safety and Traffic Rules:

Please do not park or drop off students on the sidewalk directly in front of the school any time.

Dismissal at the End of The Day:

Parents picking up students should park in **DESIGNATED PARKING AREAS**. You will have to present ID to a staff member. This is for the protection of all our students. Please arrive at 3:00 for a 3:05 dismissal.

A note is needed if there is any change in dismissal, including form of dismissal or of the person picking up your child.

If there is a change in who will pick up your child or form of dismissal on a regular basis, please indicate so on one note and we will keep that on file in the office.

You may not pick up other people's children without previous permission in writing. Bus changes are allowed only in emergencies or other unavoidable circumstances. Social reasons, private lesson, etc. cannot be accommodated.

Emergency Change in Dismissal Plans:

Calling to change dismissal plans is strongly discouraged. If a change in dismissal is needed due to an emergency or change in the weather, please call the school before 2:15 that day. We will notify students of the change in dismissal, and they will be waiting in the pick up line to be called starting at 3:00.

Dismissal During the Day:

If you are picking up your child early for a doctor or dental appointment, etc., **YOU MUST SEND IN A NOTE** with your child that morning. Please report to the main office to dismiss your child. You will be asked to sign out your child when they are dismissed. If your child returns to school before the end of the day, he/she must be signed in by a parent before returning to class. Early dismissal for social or recreational activities on a regular basis is discouraged.

Kindergarten Procedures:

Half-day kindergarten students are transported on the regular school bus from their neighborhoods. If students are brought to school by parents, they should arrive between 8:30 and 8:40. Half-day kindergarten students are dismissed at 11:55 AM. Kindergarten children will be transported back to or near their homes on a special kindergarten bus or van. Parent pick-up for morning students is in front of office.

Full day kindergarten will be dismissed at 3:05 with all other grade levels. Parents or child care providers of kindergarten students **must** be waiting with/for the students at the bus stop for pick up and drop off

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance and on-time arrival at school are important for your child's education. One of the most important things parents can do is **get their children to school every day, and make sure they arrive on time**. All students should try to arrive by 8:40 so they can enter the building with their class. This gives students time to get organized and settle in for the **start of school at 8:50**.

Attendance:

Students are required to have regular attendance except for personal illness, excusable emergencies, or other reasonable excuses. Massachusetts General Law chapter 76, Section 2 states: "A parent can be fined if a student fails to attend school for seven days (or fourteen half-days) within any six month period." Students with a pattern of excessive absences will be referred to the principal and/or attendance officer for appropriate action.

As you plan family vacations we urge you to schedule those trips during times when school is not in session. Extended absences from school are discouraged because they are disruptive to your child's education. According to school policy, we do not provide homework in advance for students who miss school due to family trips or vacations. As you plan future family vacations please keep in mind that beginning next school year all family vacations and family trips that occur when school is in session will be recorded in your child's attendance record as an "unexcused absence." If an extended time away from school is unavoidable, please send in a note to the teachers and the building principal. Also, if your child is in high school and exceeds the number of unexcused absences set in the student handbook then the student will not receive course credit for taking that course. Please contact your school if you have any questions concerning family vacations.

If your child is absent for 3 or more days due to illness or injury, you may receive homework for them by calling school in the morning. Homework may be picked up that afternoon in the office.

Tardiness:

A student who is not in the classroom at 8:50 is tardy. A legitimate tardiness may be excused if the students present a note explaining the reasons for being late. It is important for students to get in the habit of coming to school on time, as this promotes the good habit of punctuality. Students should try to arrive by 8:40 so they can enter the building with their class. The time between 8:40 and 8:50 is used for morning routines such as before school work, attendance, lunch count, etc. We appreciate your cooperation in having your child come to school on time.

Attendance Call-In System:

A call-in system for absent students has been established. If your child is going to be absent from school, you must call and leave a message on the attendance answering machine. (If you know in advance that your child will be absent or late, you may send in a note the day before.) The number for the call-in system are:

Armstrong School (508) 836-7760

Fales Elementary (508) 836-7772

Hastings Elementary (508) 836-7753

You may call the school between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 AM. You should leave your name, your child's name, the teacher's name and a brief message. Parents can still call school after 8:00 and report their child as absent. We hope to keep these calls to a minimum so as not to tie up phones or front office staff. In the morning, the clerical aide will compare the names on the absentee list with the names on the answering machine. Calls will be made to parents of absent students who have not called in.

PARENTS MUST STILL SEND IN A WRITTEN NOTE FOR EACH ABSENCE. If the school has not received a written note explaining a child's absence within three school days of the absence, parents will be contacted.

LUNCH

Hot lunches are provided for students through the school lunch program. Lunches cost \$3.00 and are served with choice of whole, low-fat, or chocolate milk. Milk alone may be purchased for \$.50. Each day the student has a choice of the featured menu, or a “fun lunch”. The menu is sent home monthly. If students forget lunch money, they should tell the teacher, who will write out a borrow slip. **The child should pay back the borrowed money to the office as soon as possible.** Slips will be sent home periodically if the accounts accumulate.

Reduced rates (\$.40 for lunch) and free lunch are available for those students who qualify under federal guidelines. Forms for free or reduced lunch go home in the first day packet, and are also available in the office. If a family’s financial circumstances change during the school year, they may apply at any time for free or reduced lunch. For those who don’t qualify for free or reduced rates but still have financial need, the school has established a Kid’s Fund to help families with the cost of lunch.

Lunch Payment:

Students may bring lunch money each day, or deposit money into a prepaid account. See the “Nutri Kids” link on the school or district website. Any check should be made out to Westborough School Lunch.

	Regular Prices	Reduced Lunch Prices*
5 lunches	\$15.00	\$2.00
10 lunches	\$30.00	\$4.00
15 lunches	\$45.00	\$6.00
20 lunches	\$60.00	\$8.00

*For those who qualify for reduced rate

Lunch periods are only 20-25 minutes long. If your child is not eating the school provided lunch, you are encouraged to pack simple, nutritious lunches your child can eat in this brief amount of time.

Snacks:

Children have snack each day. All students must bring in their own snack from home. Healthy snacks such as fruit, crackers and cheese, and vegetables are encouraged. **(There may be restrictions on snacks if certain serious allergies are present in your child’s classroom.)** Note: Snacks and other foods consumed at school are addressed in the “District Wellness Policy” found on the district’s website at www.westboroughk12.org under School Committee/District Policies, or click on the link to view [District Wellness Policy](#)

BUS INFORMATION AND CONDUCT

Bus schedules are published in the late summer on the Westborough Website: www.westboroughk12.org

Morning buses begin unloading at 8:30 AM. Afternoon dismissal begins at 3:05 PM.

Parents or child care provider of preschool and kindergarten students **must** be waiting with the student at the bus stop in the morning. At the end of the school day, the parent or child care provider must also be outside waiting at the bus stop or the child will be returned to school. It will be the parent’s responsibility to pick the child up at the school.

Due to the large number of students who ride the bus, changes to the daily bus assignments are not allowed. A child may not take another bus to visit friends attend parties, or to take private lessons.

Students are expected to have proper behavior at bus stops and on school buses at all times. This is for the safety of all students on the bus. Every student has the right to ride to and from school safely without being bothered by other students.

The bus driver is in charge of students while they ride the bus. If inappropriate behaviors are extreme or persistent, a written report will be given to the principal. The principal or guidance counselor will talk over the problem with the student. A copy of the report will be sent home to the parent.

The school will determine consequences for inappropriate behavior on the bus. Consequences can include the following: loss of school privilege, writing a letter of apology, written report to parents, suspension from the bus, or suspension from school. If a child is suspended from the bus for disciplinary reasons, it will be the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to and from school.

STUDENT BUS CONDUCT STATEMENT

The right of a student to transportation to and from school is a qualified right dependent upon the student's good behavior.

Specific rules governing student bus conduct: Students who display any of the following behaviors may, at the discretion of the administration, have their bus riding privileges suspended and/or suspended from school

1. Damaging the bus.
2. Damaging other student's property.
3. Fighting.
4. Abusive language to driver, other students.
5. Rude, discourteous or annoying behavior to driver or other students.
6. Smoking.
7. Violation of safety procedures.
8. Excessive mischief.
9. Littering the bus.
10. Possession, consumption, or sale of drugs or alcohol.
11. Distracting the driver by any means.
12. Misbehavior at bus stop.
13. Throwing of any article either in the bus, or throwing any article out of the bus or throwing anything at the bus.
14. Making obscene gestures to persons outside the bus.
15. Not properly lining up to board bus.
16. Injuring another person.

Bus operators must notify the building principals or administrator in charge of discipline when an infraction of the rules occurs. All school rules shall remain in effect at school bus stops and on Westborough Public Schools' transportation.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY **FOR THE WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

I. POLICY

A. Statement of Purpose

The Westborough Public School System is committed to fostering and maintaining a safe and nurturing learning and work environment that encourages mutual respect, dignity and equality and is free from all forms of harassment, intimidation and bullying. Harassment, intimidation and bullying within the Westborough Public School community will not be tolerated and all complaints will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment, intimidation, and bullying

between or among any members of the school community and to offer persons who believe they have been subject to it an efficient and effective means by which to end it.

While any student could be subject to bullying, the District recognizes that certain students, may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. The Westborough Public Schools has taken specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to avoid and respond to bullying.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Westborough Public Schools from responding to discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law. The Westborough Public Schools has established separate discrimination and harassment policies that provide protection to specific categories and groups of students and staff.

B. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Westborough public school community; staff, students, and parents/guardians, while attending school and all extra-curricular and school sponsored activities and events, both on school property and at off-site locations, and during normal school hours as well as during non-school hours

C. Definitions

Bullying may take a variety of forms and is unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, no student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying in Westborough Public Schools:

1. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of 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 an unwelcome written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage the target's property; student or employee, (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.
2. "Cyber-bullying" means, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator 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 persons.

- a. Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.
 - b. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.
3. “Aggressor” is a student or 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 in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.
 4. “Target” is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.
 5. “Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation about bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

D. Prohibition Against Bullying, Cyberbullying and Retaliation

Bullying and retaliation are strictly prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Westborough Public Schools.

Bullying and cyber-bullying and retaliation are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Westborough Public Schools if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this Policy and the district’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall not be construed as requiring the district or district schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

II. Violation of Policy

Any person who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to warnings, reprimands, /restrictions, discharge, suspension or expulsion. Any disciplinary action

against employees of the school system will be taken in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements, state, and federal law. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying need not be intentional to violate this policy.

III. Reporting and Investigations of Bullying

The following procedures are based on the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 370. In addition to the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, where the alleged conduct is on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability or religion, the district should also consider whether the conduct constitutes a hostile environment based on those protected classes, consistent with its Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

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 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. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will:

- 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
- 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and
- 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

(i) Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not 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.

(ii) Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The Westborough Public Schools expect students, parents or 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. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a 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 or designee.

B. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation.

(i) 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.

In determining the steps necessary to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents, the principal or designee shall consider that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

The 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.

(ii) Obligations to Notify Others

Preliminary Notice to Parents or Guardians. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to investigation or an investigative determination. Any such Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

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.

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 Westborough Police Department. 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 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the Westborough Police Department if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the 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.

C. Investigation.

Upon receipt of a report or complaint that would, if true, constitute bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, the principal or principal's designee will promptly commence an investigation. In investigating any such complaint, the principal or designee will interview students, staff, and any witnesses to the alleged conduct. To the extent practicable and consistent with the principal's obligation to act promptly and to thoroughly investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process and shall not disclose unnecessary or confidential information to interview subjects. During any such interviews, the principal will inform the target, aggressor, and all witnesses that retaliatory treatment of any individual for reporting or lack of cooperation with an investigation of bullying will result in disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion from school.

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.

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

At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, the principal shall notify the Westborough Police Department and School Resource Officer if the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. Notice shall be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. The principal shall document the reasons for his or her decision to notify law enforcement. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to require reporting to a law enforcement agency in situations in which bullying and retaliation can be handled appropriately within the school district or school.

D. Determinations.

Within fourteen (14) school days of the principal's receipt of the complaint of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, the principal will make a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal will determine what remedial action may be required, if any, and determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. The principal's findings and determinations shall be documented in writing on the Incident Reporting Form.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or 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.

E. Notice of Investigative Findings

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly

notify parents or guardians of the target and aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. While prior notice of an investigation shall not be required, the principal shall not be precluded from notifying the parents of a target or aggressor prior to completion of the principal's investigation. This communication will be done in the primary language of the home.

In notifying the parents of a target or aggressor of an investigation or the principal's findings thereon, the principal shall maintain the privacy and confidentiality of any individual or child who is not the child of the parents to whom the notice is provided. The principal shall ensure that any notice to the parents complies with applicable state regulations including, but not limited to, 603 CMR 49.00, and shall not report specific information to the target's parent(s) about the disciplinary action taken against an aggressor unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The notice to the parents or guardians of the victim shall include information about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's ("DESE") problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. The parents of the victim should be provided the following contact information: Program Quality Assurance Services, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700; TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370.

IV. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Westborough Public Schools administrators and staff may consider the following skill-building approaches:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- including offerings, supports and, where appropriate, individual behavior plans addressing the recognition that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's

or district's code of conduct. Possible consequences to serious incidents of bullying include suspension and expulsion from school.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well both while the investigation is pending, if necessary, and subsequent to a determination that bullying has occurred. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. He/she may also implement a safety plan. In developing a safety plan, the principal or designee shall consider that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

V. Anti-Retaliation Provision

Behavior that is interpreted as retaliatory in response to a bullying complaint being filed, or cooperation with the investigation thereof, is in violation of this policy and is subject to the same reporting and investigative procedures as the initial complaint. Filing of false reports is also in violation of this policy. Persons found to be engaging in retaliation or filing false reports of bullying or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

Community Commitment / Code of Conduct

In an effort to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect among all members of the Westborough educational community, the following Code of Conduct has been established, which provides guidelines for responsibilities and expectations for all involved parties.

Parent/Guardian

As a parent/guardian, I will:

- Show courtesy, respect, and support for my child, the staff, and the school
- Support the school's discipline policy
- Maintain open lines of communication between myself, my child, and the Westborough school community
- Instill in my son or daughter:
 - o Recognition of the authority of the school staff to ensure a safe, secure, non-threatening learning environment
 - o Respect for the rights of fellow students and staff
 - o Respect for property and resources
- Not engage in bullying behaviors
- Not expose any member of the Westborough school community to embarrassment, disparagement, or exploitation in any way
- Report all incidents of alleged bullying behaviors in accordance with the procedures established herein

As a parent/guardian, I have the right to expect that:

- I will be treated with courtesy and respect by students and staff members
- My child will be treated with courtesy, consistency, and fairness by all members of the Westborough educational community
- My questions and concerns regarding my child's education will be responded to in a timely and professional manner
- My child will be able to work in a school climate that is safe, pleasant, orderly, respectful, and conducive to learning

Student

As a student, I will:

- Be kind and helpful to my classmates
- Show respect for staff members, parents, other students, the school, and myself
- Obey classroom, school, and bus rules
- Not engage in bullying behaviors
- Not expose any member of the Westborough school community to embarrassment, disparagement, or exploitation in any way.
- Show respect for property by not stealing or vandalizing
- Report all incidents of alleged bullying behaviors in accordance with the procedures established herein

As a student, I have the right to expect that:

- I will be treated with courtesy, consistency, and fairness by all members of the Westborough educational community

- I will be able to work in a school climate, which is safe, pleasant, orderly, respectful, and conducive to learning

Staff Member

As a staff member, I will:

- Show respect for each child and for his or her family
- Provide a safe and comfortable environment that is pleasant, orderly, respectful, and conducive to learning
- Communicate and enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently
- Provide an environment that will promote self-esteem
- Treat students fairly and consistently
- Respect the rights of all individuals
- Maintain open communication within the entire school community
- Strive to make myself accessible to parents/guardians to resolve questions and concerns in a timely manner
- Not engage in bullying behaviors
- Not expose any member of the Westborough school community to embarrassment, disparagement, or exploitation in any way
- Report all incidents of alleged bullying behaviors in accordance with the procedures established herein

As a staff member, I have the right to expect:

- I will be treated with courtesy and respect by all parents/guardians, students, and members of the Westborough educational community
- Students' behavior will promote a positive learning environment
- School administrators will provide leadership and support
- I will have the support and cooperation of students, parents/guardians and colleagues in the performance of my duties

VII. Relationship to other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Westborough Public Schools, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school in Westborough or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, gender identity, disability, 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 including its Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures. 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, 37H½, 37H¾, or 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.

BULLYING PREVENTION FAQ's

The Westborough Public Schools feels strongly that every child has the right to work and play at school, and travel to and from school, without being harassed or assaulted. Incidents of bullying, teasing, harassment, fighting, and assault will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with severely. Parents will be contacted, and students will receive consequences ranging from removal from class or the bus, to in-school or out-of-school suspension.

Bullying Prevention Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What is bullying?

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of 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 target that:

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

2. What is cyberbullying?

It is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

3. What is a hostile environment?

It is 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 a student's education.

4. What is retaliation?

It is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

5. What is the difference between bullying and other forms of conflict?

Rough Play	Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often will do the same things again	Usually not friends; typically not repeated	Not friends but will be repeated
Power not an immediate issue	Power close to equal	Power is not equal
Not about hurting	Trying to hurt each other	Bully is trying to hurt, humiliate
Affect is friendly, mutual	Affect is negative, angry	Affect varies between the target and bully

6. What happens if I suspect there is bullying or retaliation for bullying occurring?

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not 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.

7. What happens if a student, parent or guardian wants to report an incident of bullying or retaliation?

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made orally or in writing and may be made anonymously. The district has made a variety of reporting

resources available to the school community including an Incident Reporting Form and an anonymous alert form available on the Westborough Public Schools website.

8. How do I make a report?

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written.

9. Where will Incident Reporting Forms be found?

The district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website. (The link below will take you directly to the Westborough Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident [Reporting Form](#))

10. What happens after I file a report?

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

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Westborough Public Schools Bullying Policy can be found on the District's website www.westboroughk12.org

We applaud the students in Westborough for being tolerant, respectful and good citizens.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In general, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the student handbook and the school's code of conduct. In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current placement for no more than 10 school days. Special provisions are outlined below for students with a documented disability who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Accommodation Plan.

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days:

- Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same for students without disabilities.
- Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your

child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement.

Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension exceeds 10 days:

- If your child is subject to a pattern of short term removals exceeding 10 school days or suspended in excess of 10 consecutive school days, such exclusions will be considered a “disciplinary change of placement”. A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law (and Section 504).
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement, the school will convene a meeting of school administrators and relevant members of your child’s IEP/504 Team to consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is related to your child’s disability. This consideration is called a “manifestation determination”. Parents have a right to participate in this process. All relevant information will be considered including the IEP (or Section 504 Plan), teacher observations, and evaluations reports.
- At a manifestation determination meeting, the Manifestation Team will consider:
 1. Did the student’s disability *cause* or have a *direct and substantial relationship* to the conduct in question?
 2. Was the conduct a *direct result* of the district’s failure to implement to IEP?
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action *was* related to the disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the special circumstances). The Team will review the IEP (or Section 504 Plan) and any behavioral intervention plans.
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action *was not* related to the disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school’s code of conduct. During the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. (For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension except where your child is suspended in excess of 10 consecutive days.)

School personnel will provide Notice of Procedural Safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year.

WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE** **PROCEDURES**

The Westborough Public Schools are committed to maintaining a school environment for students that is free of harassment and discrimination. Westborough schools do not discriminate against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, veteran status, homelessness, genetic information, or age. This procedure has been adopted by the Westborough Public Schools to provide a method of prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints of discrimination and harassment. This procedure is designed in compliance with state and federal laws which prohibited discrimination based on the above protected classes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Act, and M.G.L. c. 76 § 5.

Definitions

For the purposes of this procedure:

- A. A “Complaint” is defined as an allegation that a student or employee has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, veteran status, homelessness, genetic information, or age.

- B. “Discrimination or harassment” means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, veteran status, homelessness, genetic information, or age.

How to make a complaint

- A. Any student or employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to the school principal or the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator listed below. If the school principal receives the report, he or she will notify the Civil Rights Coordinator of the Complaint. Students or employees who are unsure whether discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the school principal or appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator.

Civil Rights Coordinator for Reports of Discrimination against Students

Sherrie Stevens
Civil Rights Coordinator for Students
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
45 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581-6152
(508) 836-7703

Civil Rights Coordinator for Reports of Discrimination against Employees

Dr. Daniel Mayer
Assistant Superintendent
Civil Rights Coordinator for Employees
45 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581-6152
(508) 836-7701

- B. School staff is expected to report possible incidents of discrimination or harassment of students and fellow employees. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students or employees which have allegedly occurred on school grounds, at school related events, or actions which occurred outside of school but possibly create a hostile environment for a student or employee while he/she is at school.
- C. Students and employees will not be retaliated against for making a Complaint. Any retaliation by students or school staff will result in disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion or dismissal.
- D. Students and employees are encouraged to utilize the District’s Complaint Procedure. However, students and employees are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to:

The United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02110-1491
Telephone: (617) 289-0111 Fax: 617-289-0150 TDD: 877-521-2172

or

Program Quality Assurance Services

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Telephone: 781-338-3700 Fax 781-338-3710

COMPLAINT HANDLING AND INVESTIGATION

- A. The school principal shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator and the person(s) who is the subject of the Complaint that a Complaint has been received.
- B. After notifying the appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator, the school principal or designee may pursue an informal resolution of the Complaint with the agreement of the parties involved. Informal resolution is optional, and the Complainant may elect to proceed according to the formal resolution procedure at any time prior to the completion of the informal resolution.
- C. Under the formal resolution procedure, the Complaint will be investigated by the, the school principal or other individual designated by the school principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any Complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to the School Committee Chair, who will consult with legal counsel concerning handling the investigation of the Complaint.
 - 1. The Complainant shall have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.
 - 2. The person who is the subject of the Complaint will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
 - 3. The privacy rights of all parties to the Complaint shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
 - 4. The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.
 - 5. The investigator may take interim remedial measures to reduce the risk of further discrimination or harassment while the investigation is pending.
 - 6. The investigation and the notification of the outcome to the complainant and the subject of the complaint shall be completed within twenty (20) calendar days of the date of the receipt of the Complaint.
 - 7. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond twenty (20) calendar days because of extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant of the extension.
 - 8. If a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment is received after June 1 of a given school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the District will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame, but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant of the extension and make reasonable efforts to interview the witnesses during the summer vacation period.
 - 9. Nothing in this procedure will preclude the investigator, in his or her discretion, from completing the investigation sooner than the twenty (20) calendar days described above.
- D. If the investigator determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, he/she shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which may include but is not limited to:
 - 1. Determining what disciplinary action should be taken against the person(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment, if any;
 - 2. Determine what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and

3. Inform the Complainant and the person(s) who was the subject of the Complaint of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) within twenty (20) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless the investigation is extended under the provision described above.

If the Complainant or the student's parents/legal guardians are dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator within ten (10) calendar days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation. In the appeal, the appellant should identify any specific alleged factual or legal errors and explain why the errors should result in a different conclusion. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall review the investigation and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate. The Civil Rights Coordinator's decision shall be final, subject to further appeal to the Superintendent.

- E. If the employee or the student's parents or legal guardians are dissatisfied with the decision of the Civil Rights Coordinator, an appeal may be submitted to the Superintendent within seven (7) calendar days after receiving notice of the Civil Rights Coordinator's decision. The Superintendent will consider the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Educational Purpose

The Westborough Public School District offers Internet access for student use. Access to the school network and the Internet System is a privilege, not a right. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for student use of the Westborough Public Schools' Internet System.

1. Westborough Schools' Internet System has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term **“educational purpose”** includes classroom activities, career development and quality independent learning.
2. The Westborough Public Schools' Internet System has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Westborough Public School District has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material students' access or post through the system.
3. Students may not use the Westborough system for commercial purposes. This means that students may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the Westborough Internet System.
4. Students may not use the Westborough Public Schools' Internet System for political lobbying. Students may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express opinions on political issues.
5. Westborough Public Schools filters Internet content in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Student Internet Access

1. All students will have access to the Internet information resources through their classroom, media center or computer lab.
2. Students who use email will do so only for educational purposes.
3. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any messages they receive that are inappropriate or make them feel uncomfortable.
4. Respect resource limits. Students will use the system only for educational and career development activities and quality, independent learning. Educational use will be given priority.

User Guidelines

The following uses of the Westborough Schools' Internet System are considered unacceptable:

1. Personal Safety

- a. Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes home addresses, telephone numbers, etc.
- b. Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online.

2. Illegal Activities

- a. Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Westborough Network System or the System's Internet Access Provider.
- b. Students will not attempt to disrupt the computer system.
- c. Students will not use the system to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for the purchase or sale of drugs or alcohol, or engaging in criminal activity, or threats of any kind.

3. System Security

- a. Students are responsible for their individual account and should take reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no circumstances should students provide their password to another person.
- b. Students will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- c. Students will not download or install any software.

4. Inappropriate Language

- a. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages and e-mail.
- b. Students will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- c. Students will not post information that could cause damage or a danger or disruption to the educational environment.
- d. Students will not engage in bullying or personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- e. Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If students are asked by a person to stop sending messages, they must stop.
- f. Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

5. Respect for Privacy

- a. Students will not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.

- b. Students will not post private information about a person or organization.

6. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- a. Students will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is defined as taking the idea or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own.
- b. Students will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when someone inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, students should follow the expressed requirements. If students are unsure whether they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner. Copyright law can be very confusing. If students have questions, they should ask a teacher or librarian.
- c. Any material that students obtain from the Internet and include in their own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through e-mail or new sources must also be credited as to sources.

7. Inappropriate Access to Material

- a. Students will not use the Westborough computer system to access material that is profane, obscene, or pornographic, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature.) A special exception may be made if the purpose of student access is to conduct research approved by a teacher.
- b. If students mistakenly access inappropriate information, they should immediately tell their teacher or another District employee. This will probably protect them against a claim that they have intentionally violated this policy.
- c. If students' parents should instruct them that certain materials are inappropriate for them to access, the District fully expects that students will follow their parents' instructions.

Student Rights

1. Free Speech

A student's right to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. The Westborough Public School Network System is considered a limited forum similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the District may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons. The District will not restrict a student's speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions that a student is expressing.

2. Search and Seizure

- a. All data stored or transmitted on school computers may be and will be monitored, and Students have no right to privacy with regard to such data.
- b. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the District system may lead to discovery that students have violated this Policy or the law.
- c. An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a student has violated this Policy, or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

3. Due Process

- a. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the District.

- b. In the event that there is a claim that a student has violated this Policy in their use of the District system, the student will be provided with a written notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to present an explanation before the building Principal or administrator.
- c. If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of student handbook guidelines, additional restrictions may be placed on a student's use of the computer network.

Limitation of Liability

1. The District makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the District system will be error-free or without defect.
2. The District will not be responsible for any damage a student may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.
3. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system.
4. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations resulting from the unauthorized use of the system.

Personal Responsibility

When students are using the Westborough Public Schools' Computer Network System, they should understand that they leave "electronic footprints." Personal responsibility should always be considered. Unlimited use of the Internet is a privilege. Violation may result in denial of access to the network system. Consequences for violations of this policy are building-specific. This information is available upon written request.

We encourage and invite students to use the computer network to enhance their educational environment at the Westborough Public Schools.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

By using the Westborough Public School district technology resources students are agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy. The Westborough Public Schools (WPS) provides employees and students with access to the district-wide school network, which also serves as our gateway to the Internet, and school issued technology. The network has been developed for educational purposes. It is intended to assist in preparing students for success in life in the 21st century by providing access to a wide range of information resources and the ability to communicate with people throughout the world.

The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy, including circumventing firewalls, filters, or access controls and/or accessing forbidden or inappropriate material. The WPS utilizes and maintains a CIPA compliant content filter to reduce the risk of inadvertent exposure while recognizing that it will never provide assurance of complete filtering. To protect student privacy and ensure safety, the following guidelines are to be followed:

Responsible Use:

- I will use the Internet, network, and school devices for educationally relevant purposes.
- I will only use websites that are appropriate for student at my age level.
- I will respect the rights of copyright owners and will not plagiarize work that I find on the Internet or make unauthorized copies of digital media.
- I will not use communication tools (e.g., e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, Facetime, Skype, Snapchat, etc) without teacher and parent consent.
- I will not download any files or execute attachments from unknown sources that I did not request or expect to receive.

Privileges:

- Using computers and the Internet at school and home is a privilege, and my teacher and the principal make the decision whether and when I may use it or not. If my behavior online is inappropriate, I may lose this privilege.

Manners and Respect:

- I will coordinate with teachers and/or librarians any large scale downloading and printing to prevent network slowdown and conserve resources.
- I will respect all school hardware and never load software or do anything to damage any equipment.
- I will not send, forward, access or post any material that is likely to be offensive, personal, or threatening to recipients or viewers. This includes personal social media accessed on school issued devices.
- I will not share my personal account information with anyone, use an account assigned to another user or leave the account open or unattended. I will not trespass, delete or tamper with anyone else's files, folders, applications, or work.
- I will promptly inform a teacher if any messages I receive are inappropriate.
- I will only use e-mail for school-related communication.
- I will not send or read e-mails, access personal accounts or games at inappropriate times, such as during class instruction.
- I will not promote cheating in any way.

Roles and Responsibility:

- I will bring my device to school every day.
- I will be responsible for having my device's battery charged and working.
- I understand that there will be consequences administered by the teacher and/or principal if I do not bring my charged device to class or if I violate any of the Responsible Use Policy rules.

Uses for Student E-mail:

E-mail can be a powerful communication tool for students to increase communication and collaboration.

- Students are encouraged to check their Gmail at least once per day.
- Teachers may send e-mail to their students to communicate reminders, course content, and pose questions related to class work.
- Students may send e-mail to their teachers with questions or comments regarding class.
- Students may send e-mail to other students to collaborate on group projects and assist with school classes.

Monitoring Use and Expectation of Privacy

At any time and without prior notice, WPS reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any and all usage of the network and the Internet, as well as any information sent or received in connection with this usage. The district reserves the right to temporarily block any device suspected of interfering with the proper operation of the network, school, or district or of posing an immediate risk to people or property until it can be demonstrated that the issue has been resolved. Students using district devices can expect the same level of privacy as from their lockers and students using personal devices can expect the same level of privacy as from their phones.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility:

Monitor student internet and social media use at home. Contact a teacher if any questions arise. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to monitor their children's computer usage at home. When school issued devices are used at home it is recommended that they are used in a central location where supervision can be maintained. The student/family is responsible for the safety and condition of any district devices designated for their use. Violation of this policy could result in the revocation of all network access, detention or suspension from school, legal action by the authorities and/or other consequences as deemed necessary by the administration.

Liability

The Westborough Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Westborough Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks. The Westborough Public Schools shall not be liable for any damage to or loss of personally owned equipment or data.

WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOTICE OF PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' AND STUDENTS' RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504

You have the following rights:

1. To receive a copy of this notice when the District takes any action regarding the identification, evaluation, and placement of a student pursuant to Section 504;
2. To examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and educational placement;
3. To request an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement with participation by you and representation by counsel (at private expense). In order to request an impartial hearing, please contact the District's Section 504 Coordinator listed below; and
4. To appeal the decision of the impartial hearing officer to a court of competent jurisdiction.

The District's Section 504 Coordinator is:

Sherrie Stevens
Section 504 Coordinator/ Director of Pupil Personnel Services
45 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581-6152
(508) 836-7703

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Westborough Public Schools (District) does not discriminate against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, veteran status, genetic information, religion, or age, and any other class protected by law, in admission to access to, employment in, or treatment in programs and activities.

The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to inquiries related to Title VI 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, and the Age Act.

Should you wish to file a complaint alleging discrimination of a student you may contact:

Sherrie Stevens
Civil Rights Coordinator for Students
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
45 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581-6152
(508) 836-7703

Should you wish to file a complaint alleging discrimination of an employee based on disability, age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity you may contact:

Dr. Daniel Mayer
Assistant Superintendent
Civil Rights Coordinator for Employees
45 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581-6152
(508) 836-7701

THREATS OF VIOLENCE POLICY

Communication between home and school is an important element in every child's education. Ensuring student safety is the highest priority of all administrators and parents. All Principals will assess school safety annually and include measures to address security as part of their School Improvement Plan. Parents have the right to be informed in matters of safety that affect their children. Using his/her discretion, the Principal will make the decision concerning parent notification based on his/her assessment of factors including but not limited to the scope of the threat or violence, the immediacy of the threat, the identity of the (alleged) perpetrator and the form of the threat. In general, decisions regarding parental notification of such issues will be made in the following manner:

Notification:

Priority: Unless there is a public safety issue (see below), the principal will notify parents if.

- Their child (ren) are specifically threatened as individuals or as a group such as one class.
- Explosives or weapons are found at school.
- A verbal or written threat is very detailed and demonstrates realistic elements of planning.
- A well-defined threat is related to a significant incident at an area school.
- Public Safety Issues refer to Police, Fire or Health Department Investigations.

Non-priority: If, in the Principal's judgment, the following do not pose a real threat, parents will not be notified of:

- Copycat messages
- Wall graffiti
- Writing on desk or furniture
- Notes on scrap paper or book covers
- Pranks

Communication methods:

In order to prevent confusion when the Principal/Superintendent chooses to communicate with the parents concerning threats to safety, he/she will send out one uniform message. Channel 12, letter, call-in line at each school or any other methods he/she may utilize may convey this message. Principals will periodically update parents through either the Parent Group newsletter or the Principal's newsletter concerning the issue of security.

School staff members will also be apprised of threatening situations.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Overview:

School health services are a specialized department contributing to the process of education. The goal of these services is to identify health problems and to facilitate any intervention programs needed to maximize student health. In cases of chronic health problems, the nurse contacts the parent and/or student to assess the student's current health status, especially in regards to current medications, therapies or special school needs.

Food Allergies:

Food allergy occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks a food protein. Ingestion of the offending food may trigger the sudden release of chemicals, including histamine, resulting in symptoms of allergic reaction. The symptoms may be mild (rashes, hives, itching, swelling, etc.) or severe (trouble breathing, wheezing, loss of consciousness, etc). A food allergy can be potentially fatal. A major health issue such as this one needs to be taken very seriously. For the safety and well-being of our students, the following general precautions will be observed:

- Parents will be notified if any student in their child's class has a serious allergy.
- Thorough and proper hand washing is essential. Parents of food allergic students should instruct their child to always wash with soap and water prior to eating. Likewise, parents and teachers of all students should have their children wash hands and face after eating a food product containing the allergen, such as, peanut, tree nut, milk, etc., as well as, change their clothing if they have spilled food.
- Strict avoidance of the offending food is the only way to prevent a reaction. No sharing or trading of food or eating utensils will be allowed.

** If your food allergic child will be purchasing a school lunch, please consult with the food services director in advance regarding the ingredients.*

- A peanut/tree nut restricted table will be provided in the cafeteria for students with these allergies. If you would like your child to sit at this table, please inform the principal, the school nurse and your child's teacher in writing.
- Common areas of the school that are used by all students, such as, the library, the computer lab, the gymnasium and the fine arts room have been designated food and drink-free areas. No foods or drinks are allowed in these areas.
- No food or drinks are allowed on the bus. Parents are encouraged to notify their child's bus driver on the first day of school, in writing, as to their child's allergy.
- Edible birthday treats are not allowed.
- On occasion, classroom celebrations may include food. The teacher or room parent will contact the parent(s) of food allergic student(s) within the classroom to determine safe choices for the classroom. All food must arrive with an affixed food ingredient label.
- Parents of students with food allergies are encouraged to contact the school nurse and classroom teacher prior to the start of school. Further classroom accommodations will be determined on an individual basis according to the student's needs.

Click on the link for the full [WPS Food Allergy Protocol](#)

School Health Services Medication Policy Overview:

The Westborough School Committee approves the following policies governing administration of medications in the schools under its jurisdiction. These apply to all programs operated by Westborough Public Schools and all staff shall comply with these policies.

1. A **written licensed prescriber's order** for the medication, (this applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medicines) and a **signed parental request form** must be brought to the school.
2. The medication must be brought to the school by an adult, **not** the child, and must be picked up by an adult at the end of the school year.
3. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy labeled bottle. The label must include the child's name, the name, dosage and frequency of administration of the medicine, and the licensed prescriber's name. Over the counter medication must be in the purchased container
4. **Any changes to a medication order must come from the licensed prescriber.** This includes changes in dosage, timing, and route of administration or discontinuation of a medication.

If this policy is not followed, the nurse will be unable to administer the medication and the parent/guardian will have to come to the school and personally administer the medication.

Mandated Screening Programs For Elementary:

Hearing: grades K-3

Vision: grades 1-3

Height and weight: grade 1

Physical exams: on admission to school and grades 2, 5, 8 and 11

If you elect to have any mandated screening or physical exam done by your doctor, please provide the nurse with the findings promptly.

Injuries:

In the event of injury the child will be kept at school if at all possible until the parent or other adult designated on the emergency card can pick him/her up. In the event of a 911 emergency, an ambulance will be called and the child will be transported to the hospital. (A school representative will go along with the child.) If a student is recovering from an injury and unable to participate in recess or Phys. Ed. classes, a note from the student's healthcare provider excusing the student from these activities is required.

Illness:

Please do not send acutely ill children to school. If a child becomes ill while in school, the nurse or person acting on her behalf will notify the parent or person listed on the emergency card. Students who feel ill are not to directly contact their parents for dismissal without first seeing the nurse or her designee.

Sometimes knowing when to keep your child at home is difficult decision for parents. Little learning takes place for the child when sent to school sick. Illnesses can be spread quickly in a classroom. Keeping your ill child at home is an important way to limit the spread of germs at school. Here are some helpful guidelines when making the decision about sending your child to school:

- Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. (Fever is defined as 100 degree F or higher.)
- Children with a positive strep culture must be treated with prescribed antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Children awaiting results from a throat culture must remain at home until a negative result is known.
- Children that have been vomiting or have had diarrhea must remain home until the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- Children recovering from an illness who are still too ill to participate in typical school activities such as gym or recess must remain home until able to resume all school activities, including outdoor play.

Head lice:

Parents should check their children routinely for head lice. If you discover that your child has head lice, please notify the school nurse immediately so that the appropriate measures can be taken to limit the spread. Children may return to school after being treated but must be examined by the school nurse before returning to the classroom. As a courtesy, parents should notify close contacts of their children.

With questions or concerns, please call the school nurse. In depth information on Head Lice and its treatment and prevention can be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/>

<http://identify.us.com/head-lice/>

www.headlice.org

Student Biographical Verification Sheets:

Student Biographical Verification Sheets must be updated every year. Please be sure that both parents' work/cell numbers are listed. Also list two people who would be able to pick up your child in the event of illness or injury if you are not available. Listing their name gives us permission to dismiss your child to their care. In the event of illness or injury, a child can be released only to a parent or responsible adult on the verification sheet. **If you change jobs or home/cell phone number during the school year, remember to give the school your new number.**

WHEN YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD

Over the course of your child's school career, you will probably have times when you are concerned about how things are going in the classroom. You may be worried about your child's academic progress or behavior, how he/she is getting along with the teacher or other students, or how a particular problem is being handled. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage your input and inquiries in order to resolve any issues.

The first step is always to talk directly to your child's teacher. They know your child best, and usually have first-hand knowledge about any problems or incidents that have taken place. Most issues can be resolved at this level through the sharing of accurate information and observations.

Since teachers spend most of their day teaching your child, the best way to reach them is to send a brief email or a short hand-written note with your child in the morning. If you call the school, you may leave voicemail. Please leave the phone numbers and hours when you can be reached.

Please arrange for a meeting with the staff member in advance, rather than just dropping in, as they will not be available to talk with you at that time. The staff member will contact you within 48 hours once they have received your message.

If you still have concerns after meeting with the teacher, ask for suggestions on where to go next. This may include a meeting with the principal and/or guidance staff, a child study meeting with school personnel, or other appropriate suggestions.

Please don't hesitate to call us. Although you often look to friends and neighbors for guidance, we urge you to contact us directly when you have questions about your child's education. The professionals are here to help you and your child have a successful school year.

“KID’S FUND”

A Kid’s Fund has been established at our school with the help of the Parent Group and private donations. This fund provides financial assistance to families in need who do not qualify for other state or federal programs. The Kid’s Fund can provide payment for such things as scholarships, school lunch, snacks, field trips, school supplies, and other items needed in school. All Kid Fund transactions are kept totally confidential. Parents should contact the principal school counselor or school nurse for further information.

GIFTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

A public employee may not accept any gift worth \$50 or more that is given by an individual because of the position he or she holds. The state Ethics Commission recently created an exemption to permit class gifts to teachers. A teacher may accept a gift or several gifts during the school year, from public school students and/or their parents and guardians, with an aggregated value of up to \$150, if the gift is identified only as being from the class and the identity of the givers and the individual amounts given are not identified to the recipient.

Gifts may be given to a public school, or a particular classroom, and the \$50 limit does not apply. Example: A Parent-Teacher Organization wants to give \$75 gift cards to teachers to buy classroom supplies. The teachers may accept the gift cards but must use them to buy classroom supplies, and should keep receipts to show that they did so. Supplies bought with the gift cards are the property of the school, not the teachers.

Any questions, please feel free to contact the superintendent’s office or your building administrator.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

School closing for inclement weather:

The Superintendent will make the decision about closing school for inclement weather by 6:00 AM. The policy is to have school unless a safety hazard exists for children. Parents should use discretion in sending children to school on stormy days. Listen to the radio or TV for announcements.

Channels 4, 5, and 7

Channel 12 (local cable)

WTAG – Worcester 580 AM

WRSR – Worcester 96.1 FM

WBZ – 1030 AM

WHDH – 850 AM

Connect5– This contact system works only if we have **accurate telephone numbers** for your family.

WPS Website (www.westboroughk12.org)

If conditions warrant, there may be a one or two hour delay instead of closing schools. Half-day kindergarten will meet if there is a one hour delay, but will not meet if there is a two hour delay.

Full day kindergarten will come in with grades 1 –3. Connect5 will also be used if there is an emergency school –wide dismissal prior to the end of the school day.

*Preschool AM students will not have school in the event of a 2 hour delay. PM Preschool students will have school if there is a 2 hour delay.

PARENT/VISITOR/VOLUNTEER POLICY

CORI Checks:

M.G.L. c. 71 38R requires all schools in Massachusetts to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The CORI law requires a school or district to notify all persons for whom a CORI is requested that such information is being or may be obtained. Prospective employees and volunteers are required to complete and sign a CORI Request Form which is available through the school secretary at each of the schools, as well as the administration office at Forbes building. The Request Form is used to document that we have provided you with notice that a CORI is being conducted and to verify your identity through a government issued form of photographic identification (usually a driver's license).

All parents, visitors and volunteers must come in the front door and come to the office. They must sign in and get a volunteer or visitor's badge before going to other parts of the building. This policy is for the safety of all our students and staff.

If you wish to speak to a teacher, please send in a note, e-mail or call the office to leave a voice message. We ask that parents not show up at a teacher's door unannounced to talk to him/her. If you must speak with a teacher on an emergency basis, please contact the office and we will be happy to assist you. Classroom instruction may not be interrupted.

LOST AND FOUND

Teachers spend a great deal of time trying to locate owners of lost clothing and other items each year. We realize that you spend a great deal of money and effort to provide clothes for your children that are warm and clean. We wish to assist in your effort to keep them.

DO...

Mark clothes and other school items with your child's name, especially lunch boxes, sweatshirts, and jackets.

Check with teachers if the item doesn't show up after your child has looked for it.

Encourage your child to check the Lost and Found box located in the cafeteria. Any items left in the Lost and Found will be donated to charity at the close of school year.

DON'T...

Send children in with items that can't be replaced.

Allow things to stay in school.

Give up looking for things after one try.

Students are not to bring in toys, hand-held electronic devices, including cell phones, collector's cards and other items that may detract from the learning environment. This rule is to keep the children's minds on their schoolwork and to prevent the loss of valuable items. If such an item is brought in, it is the responsibility of the student in case of loss or damage. School personnel will not investigate the loss.

Of course, there are many times during the year when students are encouraged to bring in items from home for special projects, study units or show-and-tell.

MANDATED REPORTING

All Westborough school personnel are mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 119, Section 51a-51f, to report child abuse/neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 is suffering from neglect and/or serious physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, the incident of abuse/neglect will be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services within 24 hours of the incident. A written report will be submitted to the Department of Children and Family Services within 48 hours of the incident. School personnel will also consult with the principal regarding the School District's specific policies on abuse/neglect and mandatory reporting procedures. In most cases, the school will notify parents that a report has been filed unless there are extenuating circumstances.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

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

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

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

M.G.L. c.71, §§34A-H and 603 CMR 23.00: Massachusetts statutes and regulations also provide for the maintenance, disclosure and amendment of student records maintained by Massachusetts public schools. The following is a summary of parent and student rights under these laws and regulations:

I. Inspection of the Student Record

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old (eligible student), has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The parent and/or eligible student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating materials. The record must be made available to the parent or eligible student no later than ten (10) calendar days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and/or eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

II. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H and 603 CMR 23.07 specify detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. The Westborough Public Schools is in compliance with these regulations and while we encourage parents to be involved and informed about their children's education, we must protect the rights and safety of all parties. Non-custodial parents who wish to access student record or information therefrom regarding their child must annually submit a written request to the school principal. Additional information regarding access procedures for non-custodial parents required by M.G.L. c.71, §34H can be obtained by contacting the building principal and or his/her designee.

II. Confidentiality of Student Records

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent(s), student, and authorized school personnel are eligible to access information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the parent or the student. One such exception is the authority of the school district to forward, without consent, the complete student record to schools or school districts to which a student transfer or enrolls..

III. Amendment of the Student Record

Eligible students and/or parents have the right to add additional information, comments, data, and/or other relevant material to the student record. Eligible students and/or parents also have the right to request in writing that the student record be amended. Any such request should be directed to the principal. The building principal will render a written decision on such a request within one week. A denial of a request to amend a student record may be appealed to the Superintendent.

IV. Destruction of Student Records

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed within seven (7) years of a student's transfer or graduation. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and eligible student must be notified, and provided with the opportunity to obtain a copy of any records to be destroyed.

V. Directory Information

Federal and state regulations authorize school districts to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Westborough Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

If you do not want directory information from your child's education records disclosed without your prior written consent, please notify the Principal in writing. The Westborough Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Email address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

The above is only a summary of some of the more significant provisions of federal and state regulations pertaining to student records that relate to student and parent rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be obtained from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These state regulations are designed to insure parent and student rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records. The regulations apply to all information kept by a school committee on a student in a manner such that the student may be individually identified. The applicable regulations may be found at 603 CMR 23.00.

Transfer Students

All students transferring into the Westborough Public Schools must provide a complete copy of their previous school district student record at the time of their enrollment. Students who do not have a copy of their student records must provide the Westborough Public Schools with written authorization to obtain the student's record from the previous school district. M.G.L. c.71, §37L.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent Conferences are held during the school year for the purpose of sharing information. Parents sign up for a specific time slot during Open House. **Parents may request conference appointments at any time if they have a specific concern about their child's progress.**

In the event a parent contacts a staff member by phone, note or email, the district standard states the staff member should respond to the parent within 48 hours of receiving the message.

Student Report Cards:

Report cards are released online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal to all students on a regular basis to keep parents informed about their child's progress in school. Students receive grades which reflect their progress relative to grade level benchmarks. They also receive grades indicating how well their behavior and effort meet expectations. Report cards are issued three times a year on the following dates (approximately):

First Trimester – Mid December

Second Trimester – Late March

Third Trimester – The last day of school

Kindergarteners receive only a February and end-of-the-year report card. If parents have any questions about their child's report card, they should contact the teacher to discuss their concerns.

*Note: Special Education Progress Reports coincide with trimester report cards.

ELEMENTARY SPECIAL DAYS

Open House:

Each fall, children invite their parents to their school. Children, acting as tour guides, show their parents their classrooms and other areas of the school. This is the time for parents to meet the child's teachers and to schedule a conference with the teacher.

Birthdays:

Please know children will not be able to distribute birthday invitations in the classroom. The school cannot provide addresses for such. Please refer to your School Directory once published.

District Wellness Policy:

You will find the District Wellness Policy at www.westboroughk12.org under [School Committee/District Policies](#)

RESTRAINING ORDERS/CUSTODY ISSUES

District policy states in the event that a restraining order is obtained against a particular family member or individual, we ask that you notify school and provide us with a copy of the order immediately. This gives us legal backing in order to protect your child. Without such paperwork we cannot be held accountable. These documents will be kept confidential.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council is made up of the principal, teachers, parents, and a community representative. It is mandated under the Massachusetts Education Reform Act to guide the school in four major areas:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school.
2. Identifying the educational needs of students
3. Reviewing the annual school budget
4. Formulating a School Improvement Plan.

The 1993 Education Reform Act required the establishment of a school council for each school in Massachusetts. The mandate of these councils is to assess the educational needs of the schools and to prepare school improvement plans based upon the needs assessments. The councils have other statutory requirements as well, the details of which can be obtained from any School Council member.

The School Council is comprised of the Principal, faculty representatives, elected parent representatives, and one or two community representatives. The council meets monthly in open meetings, the minutes of which are available for review in the school office. Terms for council members are staggered from one to three years to preserve continuity and yet provide for new representation. An election for parent representatives will be held during the fall when there is an open position.

CURRICULUM SUMMARY

The Westborough School System utilizes an ongoing curriculum review process. Review committees are continuously examining Westborough's curriculum to insure updating in relation to national standards of excellence and the unique needs of the Westborough community. Our curriculum has been adapted to meet the Massachusetts State Frameworks. For more specific information please reference the Westborough Public Schools website.

GROUPING/PLACEMENT

The Westborough School System is committed to three values in relation to grouping:

- Respect of diversity
- Importance of self-esteem
- Equal opportunity to learn

In order to promote these values while fostering high student achievement, heterogeneous grouping has been adopted for all subjects in kindergarten through grade six. Staff development has focused on strategies designed to facilitate this commitment. Major emphasis has been placed on a balanced reading approach, individual learning styles, cooperative learning and thematic units.

LITERACY

The Westborough Public School staff builds upon the rich language experiences that all children bring to school. These experiences serve as the foundation for formal reading and writing instruction.

Our beliefs about language arts instruction stem from current research and from our experiences with and knowledge about how children learn to read and write. Guided by the standards-based Westborough English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, our teachers instruct using literature to create a balanced literacy program. In a balanced literacy framework, students engage in read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, and systematic word study. In addition, they participate in modeled writing, shared writing, interactive writing, guided writing, writer's workshop, and independent writing.

Above all, we strive to provide our students with extensive language opportunities that will develop lifelong readers and writers.

MATH

Westborough is committed to helping all learners know and understand their grade level mathematics skills and concepts as outlined by the Common Core. Our goal is to ensure that students have procedural fluency, conceptual understanding, and can apply their mathematics skill in new and unfamiliar situations. In other words, we are preparing our students to become proficient mathematicians who use higher level thinking skills to problem solve.

To meet these goals the district uses *Everyday Math* in kindergarten through grade two. We believe that *Everyday Math* is the program that best meets the needs of the students at these grade levels. These lessons are developmentally appropriate and concrete modeling is emphasized as a way to develop abstract understanding. In addition, students focus on fewer targeted skills and concepts for longer periods of time in order to maximize mastery of the concepts.

Eureka Math has been adopted for grades three through six because this program best meets the needs of that age group. *Eureka Math* teaches children how to be both literate and fluent in mathematics. In doing so, our students

will know what process to use when solving a problem as well as understand why that process works. Problem-solving and application to real world problems are embedded throughout this program.

Both of these programs have been carefully crafted to maximize student learning and conceptual understanding as well as to capitalize on student interest. It is the teacher, however, who makes the math come alive and no one program can meet all learners' needs. Consequently, teachers will also use additional resources to complement *Everyday Math* and *Eureka* to ensure all grade level skills and concepts are mastered. Our overarching goal is to provide all students with experiences in the classroom that will help them truly understand the mathematics they are doing as well as enjoy math!

ELEMENTARY HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

The Westborough Public Schools support the belief that meaningful and appropriate homework can be an integral part of a student's educational program. Homework builds independence, responsibility, and develops lifelong organizational and learning skills. Homework should complement, supplement, and reinforce classroom academic and non-academic goals. It should also provide an opportunity for integrating home and school experiences.

Parents are encouraged to use everyday occurrences in their lives as homework. Noticing the length of daylight and how it affects playtime outside; taking a trip and discussing direction, routes, maps; listening to the special music at holiday season, etc., are all natural ways to encourage children's learning and development.

Parents are urged to be involved in their child's homework. We encourage you to show your support by checking homework, providing a quiet workspace, and offering advice and suggestions. Developing good work habits at an early age will pay dividends as children progress through the grades. Building responsibility is a joint effort among parents, teachers, and students. Parents are asked to check their child's backpack on a daily basis and to help their child organize it the night before. Helping students develop responsibility and organizational skills will help them immensely in later years.

A *general guideline* for homework at each grade level is as follows:

- Kindergarten Nightly reading
- First Grade Nightly reading, nightly math practice, weekly word practice
- Second Grade Nightly reading, nightly math practice (addition & subtraction facts), weekly word practice, home projects during the school year
- Third Grade Nightly reading, nightly math practice, weekly word practice, language practice, cursive practice, home projects during the school year

Vacation Homework:

Extended absences from school for family trips, vacations, etc. are discouraged as this can be very disruptive to your child's education. According to school policy, we do not provide homework for students who miss school due to family trips or vacations. Instead, we suggest that students keep a daily journal of their experiences and continue reading daily. If there are concerns regarding missed work, please schedule a meeting with your child's teacher upon your return.

Art and Music:

All schools have a formal arts education program that provides .5 kindergarten students with 30 minutes of art and music each week; Full day K-3 have 40 minutes of art and music weekly. Third grade students also have the option of learning to play the violin or viola.

The visual arts program is designed to develop literacy in art through a sequential curriculum that emphasizes understanding of the elements and principles of design, art history, and art criticism. Teachers often work collaboratively to make connections with science, social studies, and historic themes at each grade level.

The music program is grounded in the development of musical skills and concepts through singing and playing instruments, stressing both technical and conceptual musical skills. Teachers frequently work together to integrate music with other content areas through school and grade level themes.

Both the art and music programs complement the multicultural focus of the school through lessons that incorporate different cultures, art exhibits, and music concerts that celebrate the diversity within our school.

Physical Education:

Physical Education classes meet twice a week – 40 minutes for full kindergarten through third grade, 30 minutes for half day kindergarten. All students are expected to wear sneakers and comfortable clothing on these days.

The overall emphasis in our Elementary Physical Education program is to give students a positive experience with movement and physical activity. Fundamental skill development, physical fitness, and good sportsmanship are taught consistently throughout the course of the school year.

Library and Media Center:

All schools house a full Library/Media Center, which is visited by each class on a weekly basis. Knowing that the library has a lifelong influence on students, our goal is to encourage and develop a love of books and reading, as well as competency in seeking and using information. Our students are exposed to a wide variety of print and non-print materials, and have opportunities to coordinate their classroom explorations with library research. Students may check out a library book each week provided they have returned their book from the previous week.

Technology:

Our Technology Strategic Planning Committee developed the following mission statement for the use of technology in our classrooms:

The profound influence of information technology on how we live, learn, and work, makes it imperative that the Westborough Public Schools ensure that all students are taught to effectively use technology to learn, research, communicate, and collaborate.

In addition, the committee developed the following guiding principles:

- We understand that the teacher-student relationship is central to creating and maintaining an effective learning environment and that students need experienced teachers to guide them in their development of the knowledge and skills they'll need to “learn effectively and live productively in an increasingly global and digital world. (ISTE)”
- We envision technology will be used as a dynamic tool that will enhance teaching and learning as we prepare our students to be continuous learners and innovative, knowledgeable, and contributing members in the world community.
- Technology needs to be functional and available when and where it's needed in order to properly and effectively support and enhance critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication for all stakeholders in the learning environment.

For more information, go to the [WPS Technology](#) website.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Curriculum Specialist, Literacy:

To provide assistance in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's K-6 literacy curriculum and to provide appropriate training and modeling for teachers in the implementation of a balanced literacy approach to instruction.

Curriculum Specialist, Math and Science:

To provide assistance in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's K-6 mathematics and science curriculum and to provide appropriate training, modeling, and curriculum support for teachers in the implementation of both a mathematics and science approach to instruction that effectively meet the new standards.

Reading Specialist:

Reading services are provided for children who require specialized reading instruction to supplement their regular classroom reading program. Reading Specialists work with individual or small groups to provide instruction in another setting in order to support the development of reading and writing strategies and skills. In addition to supporting students, Reading Specialists act as literacy consultants to teachers and parents.

School Counselor:

The Westborough Public Schools K-12 Counseling and Guidance Program assists all students with academic, career, and personal/social development in accordance with national state standards. Students participate in a wide variety of school counseling services that are developmentally appropriate for each grade level, and are designed to help students acquire attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills necessary for success in and out of school. Our goal is to promote and enhance student learning by providing a developmental guidance curriculum within each classroom on a wide variety of topics from friendship and self-esteem to organization and communication. Our sequential school counseling program guides students to become self-aware, resilient, self-sufficient citizens who contribute to society in a positive, productive, and responsible manner.

The School Counselor responds to the needs of students through small group counseling, short-term individual counseling, crisis counseling, and collaboration with outside agencies. The School Counselor is available for parent consultation on a variety of issues and concerns. Many issues in a child's life can impact their ability to be successful in school. Home/School communication can be invaluable at times of stress, death of a loved one or even a cherished pet, sleeping/eating issues, friendship issues, family difficulties/illness, or general worries. Parents can call the School Counselor anytime between 8:30 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. – Monday through Friday and can feel free to leave confidential message or voicemail.

School Psychologist:

The School Psychologist collaborates with teachers, parents, and school personnel about learning, social, and/or behavioral problems. The Psychologist assesses individual students as part of the special education process to gain a picture of their intellectual, academic, and emotional functioning. He/she provides information and support to teachers on the inclusion of students with specific disabilities in the regular classroom, and works with parents focusing on home issues that might affect a child's academic progress.

EIT:

If a teacher suspects that a student may be at risk academically, socially, emotionally they can contact the School Counselor to initiate the EIT process. Parents are notified about this process by the classroom teacher and/or school counselor.

The EIT is a group of school professionals who gather to identify areas of strength and difficulty for an individual student. They work to design interventions that are intended to break down barriers to learning and accommodate student learning style and/or needs within the classroom. These intervention strategies are monitored, reviewed, and adjusted as needed throughout the school year.

Special Education Coordinator:

The Special Education Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the special education programs, referrals and evaluation process. He/she also supervises special education services and staff, reviews student progress, and chairs team meeting.

Special Needs:

Special Education services are provided to students that are identified as having a qualifying disability and, as a result of that disability, requires specialized instruction to make effective progress in school. Students are referred for evaluations of eligibility for special education services through the parents and teachers, and are overseen by the Special Education Coordinator. Students found eligible for Special Education services may be seen in or out of the classroom by a variety of specialists including Speech Pathologists, Occupational and Physical Therapists, Special Education Teachers, and Behaviorist.

Section 504 Services:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Students eligible for 504 assistance are those who (1) have a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) have a record of such impairments; or (3) are regarded as having such an impairment. Students whose disabilities do not significantly impact academic performance, but do affect a major life function such as speech, mobility, or attention may qualify for support/accommodation through a Section 504 plan. The School Counselor oversees the implementation of Section 504 in the schools, and should be contacted if you have any questions.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Community Ed/Extended Day Programs:

Child care (Extended Day Program) services are available through Community Ed. The program is run by Maryellen Feeney, the Westborough Community Education Director. The Westborough Public Schools Community Education Office is housed at the High School. The phone number there is (508) 836-7765, 7766. Please call their office to inquire about the after school classes or child care. Information will be sent home regarding course selections, payment and registration throughout the year.

Westborough Recreation Department:

The WRD Offers several activities year-round for a nominal fee. Contact them at the Town Hall at (508) 366-3066.

Westborough Library:

Provides year-round programs for children. Visit the Children's Room on the lower level of the library, or call (508) 366-3053.

Other community activities, such as soccer, football, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts, are offered throughout the year. Flyers for these activities are included in the weekly News and Notes section of the Westborough Schools' websites. Students may occasionally bring home flyers for these activities; extra copies are usually available in the office.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Members of our school community have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others. This includes all curricular, co-curricular and special events, both on and off campus, to and from school.

To assist in the maintenance of an orderly educational system, disciplinary regulations have been established and apply to all students. Teachers, support staff, students and parents are expected to bring violations to the attention of our administrators. Our assistant principals and principal will interpret the rules and policies and apply them in a manner consistent with their intent. Every effort will be made to balance consistency with fairness and reason in the use of our regulations.

Teacher and administrative interventions, corrective education, along with parent conferences, represent the preferred consequences with student accountability. However, behavior that threatens others, violates the law or disrupts the environment for learning represent legitimate cause for short-term suspension from school, long-term exclusion. The consequence in each instance will be defined by the seriousness of the infraction, and an individual's overall record of citizenship.

Grounds for Short Term External Suspension

Students are subject to short-term suspension (one to ten consecutive school days) for the following violations:

- theft or destruction of property (restitution may also be imposed)
- fighting, roughhousing, negligent behavior
- throwing food or objects of any form
- disrespect, verbal abuse, harassment, taunting or threats of any form
- slanderous, defaming statements or libelous written attacks on the character of anyone
- disruption of the educational process
- bullying
- use of obscene or abusive language or gestures including racial, religious, ethnic, sexual or homophobic remarks
- smoking including electronic/vapor pens or cigarettes (anywhere on campus at any time)
- skipping an AP detention
- endangering the safety of themselves or others
- leaving school grounds, or being in restricted areas without permission
- failing to identify themselves when asked by a faculty or staff member
- repeated acts of defiance or insubordination
- truancy and cutting classes
- violation of the Medication Policy.

Students on suspension will be afforded the opportunity for makeup, including tests, quizzes and homework. An unexcused absence will be recorded in each subject for each day of suspension.

Because all members of our school community are subject to both the laws of the Commonwealth and Town ordinances, our school will report acts, which may violate the law to the police as appropriate and to the State Department of Education.

Grounds for Long-Term Suspension

Students are subject to long-term suspension (greater than ten consecutive days) or expulsion for the following acts:

- Detonation of fireworks in the school building or on school grounds
- Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, regardless of quantity
- Physical assault on any member of our school community
- Sexual / discriminatory harassment (see below)
- Threats of violence against anyone
- Hazing (see below)
- Theft and receiving stolen property
- Extortion
- Forgery of doctor's notes, court appearances, parent notes, etc.
- Possession, use, sale or distribution of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons or drug paraphernalia.
- Possession of weapons
- Acts of arson or pulling a fire alarm
- Bomb threats
- Tampering with safety equipment or emergency exits
- Compromising the security of the building

Suspended students will be excluded from participating and attending extracurricular and athletic activities. Any student considered by school authorities to be a danger to themselves or others may be subject to Emergency Removal.

Expulsion

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, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from our school or school district by the principal.

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.

Disciplinary Procedures

Definitions

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Short-term Suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term

suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Principal: The primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

Due Process

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 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.

Principal's Hearing for Non-Statutory Offenses

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.

Long-Term Suspension: I At a hearing to consider a student's suspension in excess of ten (10) consecutive days for violations of a school rule 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 will be afforded 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.

At a hearing to consider a student's suspension in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or expulsion for violations 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 afforded the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, and the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

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. 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.

If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

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.

Academic Progress

Any student who is serving a 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. 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, in accordance with the school's education service plan. M.G.L. c.76, §21.

Appendix A: Massachusetts Statutes Pertaining to Student Conduct

MGL Ch. 71 Sec. 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, associate 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 his 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.
- (f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.
- (g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate

and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

MGL Ch. 71 Sec. 37H ½

- (a) 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.

- (b) 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, §37H3/4.

- (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 other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.
- (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.

M.G.L. c.76, §21

Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

M.G.L. c.71, §37L

Section 37L. 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.

M.G.L. c.76, §5

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.

M.G.L. c.269

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

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

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

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

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

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections

seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

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

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