

Policies Handbook
for the
Worcester Public Schools



2008-09

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

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL'S CALENDAR 2008-09

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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31						

SEPTEMBER						
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Tuesday, August 26, 2008: First day of school for students.

Friday, June 12, 2009*: Last day of school. Last day of school for seniors: May 29, 2009

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

End of marking quarters:

1. October 31, 2008
2. January 23, 2009
3. April 10, 2009
4. June 12, 2009 or last day

= DAYS WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION FOR STUDENTS

2008

August 25 – Teacher/Staff Reporting Day
 August 26 – First Day of School
 September 1 – Labor Day
 October 10 – Staff Development
 October 13 – Columbus Day
 November 11 – Veterans' Day
 November 26-28 – Thanksgiving
 December 24-January 2 – Holiday Vacation

2009

January 1 – New Year's Day
 January 19 – Martin Luther King
 February 16 – Presidents' Day
 February 17-20 – Winter Vacation
 March 13 – Staff Development
 April 10 – Non-School Day
 April 20 – Patriots' Day
 April 21-24 – Spring Vacation
 May 25 – Memorial Day
 June 19 – Last Day of School

MAY						
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JUNE						
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mayor Konstantina B. Lukes - Chair

Brian A. O'Connell, Esquire - Vice Chair

Robert A. Bogigian

John L. Foley

Dorothy J. Hargrove

John F. Monfredo

Mary Mullaney

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

The Worcester Public Schools is pleased to present the 2008-09 Policies Handbook to inform students and parents/guardians of the important policies and procedures that are in effect in our school system.

Thank you for reviewing this handbook with your child and for keeping it for future reference. Best wishes for a successful 2008-09 school year.

James A. Caradonio, Ed.D.

Directory of Additional or Amended Policies for 2008-09

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REGISTRATION

Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center

Open All Year Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

768 MAIN STREET
SHATTUCK BUILDING
JACOB HIATT COMPLEX

Phone: (508) 799-3299, (508) 799-3068, (508) 799-3069,
(508) 799-3194, (508) 799-3450

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

1. Date of Birth
2. Legal Guardianship (Adults other than parent providing shelter to a child must have a temporary order for guardianship issued by Worcester Probate Court).
3. Worcester residence or completed STUDENT ADDRESS VERIFICATION FORM
4. State mandated immunizations
5. If available, records from previous school

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

All elementary school students (pre-school - grade 6) registering for, or transferring into, or within the Worcester Public Schools, including Woodland Academy, must do so at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center.

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

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

New students registering for grades 7-12 including Claremont Academy must do so at their quadrant secondary school. If you are uncertain as to what quadrant you live in, you may obtain this information by calling the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center at (508)799-3194.

School Immunization Requirements*

	Day Care	Kindergarten Preschool	Grades 1-6	Grade 7-12	College
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses for all health science students and all full-time undergraduate and graduate students
DTaP/DTP/ DT/Td	>4 doses DTaP/ DTP	5 doses DTaP/ DTP	>4 doses DTaP/ DTP or >3 doses Td	4 Doses DTaP/DTP or >3 doses Td plus 1 Td booster If more than 5 years since last DTP	1 Td booster within last 10 years
Polio	>3 doses	4 doses	>3 doses	>3 doses	—
Hib	1 to 4 doses	—	—	—	—
MMR	1 dose	2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella	2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella	2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella	2 doses measles, 1 dose mumps, 1 dose rubella
Varicella	1 dose	1 dose	1 dose Grades 1-6 only	<13 yrs. - 1 dose >13 yrs - 2 doses	—
Meningococcal	---	---	---**	1 dose for all new students (applies to residential schools only)	1 dose for all new students (applies to colleges that provide housing only)

*For additional Health Department requirements for admission please refer to page 38.

**These requirements also apply to all new "enterers."

Registration Policy

Elementary (K-6)

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

Secondary (Grades 7-12)

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

Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy

I. Conditions for Out-of-District Transfers

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

- a. There must be space available in the receiving school.
- b. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage greater than 15 percentage points above the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- c. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage less than 15 percentage points below the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- d. Voluntary transfer requests will be considered for properly documented medical disabilities and other unique circumstances.
- e. Spanish Bilingual, Structured English and Special Education Programs are offered in certain schools. Any student requiring these services will be enrolled in the school that will meet his/her assessed needs.
- f. When a student changes residence and would enter grade 6, 8 or 12, he/she may finish the year in that school provided that he/she is a resident of Worcester and has received the out-of-district principal's permission to remain in that school.
- g. Students who enroll in an out of district magnet program or the Worcester Technical High School must complete the year in the out-of-district school.

II. Procedures for Applying for a "Voluntary Transfer"

- a. Applications and a policy statement are available at the Parent Information Center or the Quadrant Manager's Office:
Parent Information Center: (508) 799-3194
Burncoat/South Quadrants (508) 799-3264
Doherty/North Quadrants: (508) 799-3221
* Technical Quadrant: (508) 799-3499
- *Applications for Worcester Technical High School may be obtained in all secondary guidance offices or at the Technical School Admissions Office.
- b. The application must be filled out and returned to the appropriate office.
Elementary (K-6) Parent Information Center
Secondary (7-12) Quadrant Managers' Office
- c. A written approval or denial will be sent to the home of the parent/guardian and copies will be forwarded to the principals of both the sending and receiving schools.
- d. A copy of the application and the approval or denial letter will be kept on file in the appropriate Quadrant Manager's Office.

III. Hardship Appeals Process

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

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

Adopted September, 1980

Revised August 18, 1983

Revised December 17, 1987

Revised January 18, 1990

Revised May, 1992

Revised March, 1996

Revised February 3, 2000

Revised January 4, 2005

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

J-1 Non-resident Foreign Student

Admission:

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

Criteria for Attendance:

- Foreign exchange students must provide certified proof of prior academic performance from the high school(s) in his/her native country.
- Transcripts from intermediary or sponsoring agencies will not be accepted as appropriate documentation for determining past academic performance unless they bear the seal of the school and/or are presented in a sealed envelope from the school.

- Acceptance to the Worcester Public Schools will be on a one (1) year basis with the sponsoring organization or guardian required to reapply annually for continued study.
- Once admitted, the foreign student will be subject to all rules, policies, regulations and procedures as they relate to all students in the system.
- The system will provide an academic record of the foreign student's participation while a member of the system to the sponsoring organization or the parent/guardian, as required.
- Foreign students holding J-1 visas participating in this program are exempt from paying tuition.
- Award appropriate city (general) diplomas and/or school diplomas if students can demonstrate through appropriate documentation and verification that they have met the prerequisite requirements of the Worcester Public Schools.

LEGAL POLICIES

Due Process

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

Section I

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

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

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

Section II

Where a student has been charged with a violation of either Rule 3, 7, 8 (except Rule 8c), 18 or 20 and expulsion or a long-term suspension by a school principal is a possibility, then the student shall be notified, in writing, of an opportunity for a hearing before the school principal.

- a. The student shall be given written notice of the charges.
- b. At the hearing before the school principal, the student has the right to be represented by counsel or an advocate. The student also has the right to present witnesses and to cross-examine witnesses.
- c. Any student who has been expelled or issued a long-term suspension by the school principal for a violation of either Rule 3, 7 or 8 (except 8c) and Rule 20 may appeal to the Superintendent. The appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the expulsion or a long-term suspension. The student has a right to be represented by counsel or an advocate at a hearing before the Superintendent.

Section III

Where the injury to another person or property or the effect of the student's conduct on the school community is so severe as to warrant more than a ten-day suspension, or where expulsion or a long-term suspension by the School

Committee is a possible penalty, the matter shall be referred to the Superintendent or his designee within two (2) school days of the initial suspension. The student shall be informed of the discipline referral by the school administrator.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section IV

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

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

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

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

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

Nondiscrimination

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Title IX

ADA Title I Section 504/Chapter 622 Grievance Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

Level I

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

Level II

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

Level III

- a. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall meet within five (5) business days thereafter with the aggrieved person and attempt to settle the grievance.
- b. The grievance shall be answered in writing. In the event that the grievance shall not have been disposed of to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party at Level III, or in the event that no written answer has

been received within ten (10) business days after the meeting on the grievance, the aggrieved person may forward the grievance with a copy of the answer, if any, to the Clerk of the School Committee within ten (10) business days.

Level IV

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

Waiver

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

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

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

Massachusetts Commission
Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.)
One Ashburton Place - Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
617-994-6000
Worcester Office
455 Main Street, Room 100
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 799-8010

Additional Agencies include:

Massachusetts Department
of Education
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023
781-388-3300

United States Department of Education
Region 1 - Office of Civil Rights
John W. McCormack Post Office
and Courthouse - Room 701
Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-4557
617-223-9662

Retaliatory Action

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

Findings of Discrimination

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

Record Keeping

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

Sexual Harassment Policy

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

Definition

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

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

Considerations

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

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

Violations

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

Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures

Preface

A formal grievance may be filed at any time by a student, employee, administrator, and/or applicant who believes that his/her rights as outlined in the sexual harassment policy have been violated. Each student, faculty member, administrator, or staff member has an obligation to make every effort to resolve problems informally as they arise. All members of the Worcester Public Schools community are urged to resolve problems fairly and informally so that they do not become sources of grievances to be pursued formally through the grievance procedure. If a suitable solution cannot be reached informally through independent means, which may include consultation with the Human Resource Manager, a formal grievance may be initiated.

Definitions

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

Step I (Informal)

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

Step II

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

The following individuals will be notified pursuant to Paragraph b:

1. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a teacher, notify the teacher and the principal of the school.

2. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a non-instructional staff member, notify the person and his/her immediate supervisor.
 3. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a principal or administrator, notify the person and his/her immediate supervisor.
 4. If the person charged with sexual harassment is the Superintendent, notify the person and the Chairperson of the School Committee.
 5. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a student, notify the principal of the student's school.
 6. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a non-school personnel, notify the person and the principal of the school and/or the immediate supervisor of the school.
- c. Within ten (10) working days of receipt of the grievance, the aggrieved party, (as well as the accused) and the appropriate supervisor, as noted above, shall meet with the Human Resource Manager to discuss the grievance.
 - d. The Human Resource Manager shall respond in writing within five (5) working/school days following the discussion.

Step III

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

Step IV

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

Step V

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

Miscellaneous Provisions

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

Penalties in Cases of Sexual Harassment

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

Any admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of the verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and action taken to provide appropriate relief may be a sufficient resolution. At the informal stage, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive and

not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if no resolution can be agreed to at the formal stage, the Superintendent and/or the School Committee may deem it necessary to take appropriate action that can include formal letters of reprimand, suspension, or a recommendation of dismissal.

Tolerance

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

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

Anti-hazing Law (G.L. c. 269, §§ 17-19)

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

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

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 secondary school and public and private school or college shall issue to every group, team or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledgee or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received said copy of sections seventeen and eighteen.

Weapons Carrying

An Act Relative to Weapons Carried on School Grounds (G.L. c. 269, § 10)

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

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

Tobacco Use

An Act Prohibiting the Use of Tobacco in the Public Schools (G.L. c. 71, § 2A)

Section 2A. It shall be unlawful for any student, enrolled in either primary or secondary public schools in the Commonwealth, to possess, use, or distribute tobacco products of any type on school premises or at any school sponsored activity.

Each school committee shall establish a policy dealing with students who violate this act. This policy may include, but not be limited to, mandatory education classes on the hazards of tobacco use.

Drug Free School Zones

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

Child Abuse

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

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

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

Education of Homeless Children

The Worcester Public Schools complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B - Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in January 2002. When a family is enrolling a student or students in school or changing an address, but is unable to provide the usual form of address verification, or is sharing housing with others or is temporarily sheltered in some other alternative arrangement, the family member will be asked to verify the current living situation on the Student Address Verification Form so as to determine whether the student(s) is/are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for required supplementary supportive services and legally-mandated exemptions from certain enrollment requirements. In keeping with these requirements:

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

Selective Service

Peacetime Registration Requirement of Selective Service System

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

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 reiterates that the various branches of the United States armed forces may have access to directory information of 11th and 12th grade high school students. However, the Family Rights to Privacy Act states that parents and guardians may deny this access if they so

wish. Directory information includes your son/daughter's name, address, phone number and age. If you wish for the Worcester Public Schools NOT to divulge your child's directory information, you must make your request in writing to your child's principal.

Sex Offender Registry

Public Information

Massachusetts has created a sex offender registry by enacting Chapter 239 of the Acts of 1996. Under this law persons convicted of certain sex offenses are required to register with the police department where the offender lives and works. The designation for any particular offender is given by the State Criminal History Systems Board. The law requires that any person requesting sex offender registry information appear in person at police headquarters to obtain sex offender registry information. For further information you may contact the Worcester Police Department at (508) 799-8600.

Pledge of Allegiance and "Moment of Silence" Policy

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

Standardized Testing Schedule

In the Fall and Spring, students will take standardized tests. Teachers use information from these tests to revise curriculum and to help prepare students for the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) tests mandated by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993.

In addition, Worcester Public Schools' students in grades 2 through 10 are tested in the fall, winter and spring in Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments. These assessments are used for measuring growth in the core academic subjects and are state-aligned computerized adaptive tests that accurately reflect the instructional level of each student and measures growth over time. The information from these assessments helps teachers to make informed decisions about effective instruction in the classroom.

For the 2008-09 school year, the Worcester Public Schools will administer the following tests:

Preliminary SAT (PSAT): Fall 2008, grade 11
SAT I Fall 2008, grade 12: Spring 2009, grade 11
SAT II Fall 2008, grade 12: Spring 2009, grade 11
MCAS tests (State-mandated): Spring 2009, grades 3-10
MCAS retests: November 2008, grades 11 and 12; March 2009, grades 11 and 12

Subject areas tested at each grade level are:

Grade 3	Reading and Math
Grade 4	ELA, Long Composition and Math
Grade 5	ELA, Math, Science and Technology/Engineering, History and Social Science
Grade 6	ELA and Math

Grade 7	ELA, Math, Long Composition and History and Social Science
Grade 8	ELA, Math and Science and Engineering Technology
Grade 9	Students in grade 9 taking a high school science course in biology, chemistry, physics or technology/engineering must take the appropriate test. Parental “opt-out” option is available for grade 9 students only.
Grade 10	ELA, Long Composition and Math. Also, grade 10 students taking a high school science course in biology, chemistry, physics or technology/engineering must take the appropriate test. There is no “opt-out” option available for 10 th grade.
Grade 11	U.S. History

For English Language Learner Students K-12:

MELA-O: Spring 2009 for all English Language Learner (ELL) students in Kindergarten, and ELL students in grades 1-12 who did not participate in the Spring 2008 MELA-O

MEPA-R/W: Spring 2009 for all ELL students in grade 3 and ELL students in grades 4-12 who did not participate in the Spring 2008 MEPA-R/W

MEPA or IPT: Spring 2009, grades K-12

For students entering Kindergarten:

Early Screening Inventory Revised (ESI R)

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

All Grade 1 Students:

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills - fall, winter and spring

The Worcester Public Schools complies with all testing requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

During the school year, the school department may also participate in additional testing programs and activities. Through school newsletters and notices, principals will continue to notify parents/guardians of additional testing activities.

Students whose first language is not English are administered an oral reading and a writing proficiency test to determine language dominance. All students that are English language learners participate in testing mandated by Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71A. These tests evaluate the progress that the student has made in acquiring speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in English. Students are also tested in English for mastery of academic content in core subjects.

Questions regarding testing in the Worcester Public Schools should be addressed to Dr. Patricia Mostue, 799-3019.

Standardized Test Interpretation Policy

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to use the results of all standardized tests including but not limited to the SAT in accordance with procedures for proper statistical analysis and the test developers' directions for validity in interpreting test score results.

Student Records

Regulations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Types of Student Records

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

The student's record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information, regardless of form or characteristics, concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way such student may be individually identified.

1. **Transcript** - Minimum administrative records necessary to reflect the student's educational progress and to operate the educational system.

Data is limited to:

- Name (student and parent/guardian)
- Address (student and parent/guardian)
- Telephone number (student and parent/guardian)
- Date of birth
- Course titles
- Grades or equivalent
- Course credit
- Grade level completed
- Year completed

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

2. **Temporary Record** - All information in the student record not contained in the transcript which is clearly of importance to the educational process. This information may include:

- Standardized test results (including MCAS results)*
- Class rank
- Extracurricular activities
- Evaluations
- Educational plans
- IEP, 504, Regular Education Accommodation and Behavior Support Plans
- Student Support Process Reports
- Individual Student Success Plans
- Health records
- Attendance
- Incident reports involving student suspension or the violation of criminal acts
- School Discipline Records

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

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

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

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

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

3. Access to Student Records

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

- a. School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider who work directly with the students.
- b. Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche who process information for the student's records. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- c. The Evaluation Team which evaluates children pursuant to Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
- d. School health personnel and local and state health department personnel in the performance of official duties.
- e. The following persons serving in a parental role shall have access to a student's records:
 - The custodial parent(s) (parent with physical custody)
 - The student's guardian
 - A person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of or in conjunction with the student's father, mother or guardian, assuming this father, mother or guardian has physical custody.
 - Non-custodial parents **shall not** have access to a student's records when:
 - The parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial parent.
 - or
 - The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation.
 - or
 - The parent's access to the child or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the student information described in the statute.
- f. The student, if age fourteen (14) or upon entering grade nine (9).
- g. Authorized school administrative personnel may examine records for administrative reasons even if they are not providing direct service to the student.
- h. Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents, as necessary, in connection with the enforcement of federal and state education laws. Personally identifiable data shall be protected and destroyed when no longer needed for enforcement purposes.
- i. Worcester Public Schools will forward student records to authorized school personnel of the school to which a student transfers or seeks to enroll [603 CMR 23.07 (4)(f)].

- j. Upon the receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the eligible student or parent/guardian is notified in reasonable time that (s)he may seek to have the process quashed, as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66A, § 2(k).
- k. The Department of Social Services (DSS).
- l. A probation officer.
- m. A justice of any court.
- n. The Department of Youth Services (DYS).
- o. Bureau of Special Investigation on Welfare Fraud may inspect enrollment and attendance records of any student who is being investigated for welfare fraud or of any student who is the child, ward or dependent of someone who is being investigated for welfare fraud. The law prohibits the Bureau from obtaining access to academic, medical and evaluative records.
- p. Appropriate parties, including the local police department and the Department of Social Services, in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapon reports, if knowledge of the information may be necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
- q. Schools are required by state law to "flag" or mark the student record of a child who has been reported missing, and should notify the police whenever there is an inquiry regarding the records.
- r. In line with federal regulations a school may release a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletics teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian. This serves as Worcester Public Schools public notice of the types of information it may release. **Eligible students and parents/guardians who do not want this information disclosed to any third party must submit a written request to the principal of the school.**

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

Amending Student Records

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

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

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

Policy on Parental Notification Relative to Sexuality Education

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

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in the Worcester Public Schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum offered that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The principal of each school will be responsible for sending notice(s) to the child's residence. The parental notice will include the date and time for a parent/guardian meeting to be held at the school. At the parent/guardian meeting, the school's health or biology teacher will describe the course in detail and answer questions and concerns which parents/guardians may have about course content and delivery.

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

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

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

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

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

After following the school district's problem-resolution process, a parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied can write to the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education at 350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148 to request a review of the issue(s) in dispute.

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

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

Voluntary School Uniform Policy

The School Committee approved the following Voluntary Uniform Policy:

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

Students' Dress Code Policy

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

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

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

Worcester Technical High School Shop and Uniform Policy

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

No Child Left Behind Act 2001

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

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

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

If parents/guardians would like to receive any of this information, they must contact the principal of their children's Title I school.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy

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

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

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

School-Imposed Discipline

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Disruptive Conduct

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

Rule 1. - Damage or Destruction of School Property

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

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

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

Rule 3. - Physical Assault on a School Employee

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

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

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

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

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

Rule 5 - Verbal Assault on a School Employee

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

Rule 5A. - Threatening a School Employee

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

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

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

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

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

Rule 7. - Policy on Possession or Use of Weapons

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

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

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

long-term suspension from the school by the principal regardless of the size of the knife.

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

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

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

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

Rule 9. - Excessive Tardiness

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

Rule 10. - Repeated School Violations

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

Rule 11. - Search and Seizure

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

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

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

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

Rule 13. - Sounding False Alarms

A student shall not, without reasonable cause, by outcry, bells, or otherwise cause a false alarm of fire (Such action shall be reported under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 13).

Rule 14. - Smoking and Tobacco Products

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

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

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

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

Rule 16. - Demerits

Students can be suspended when they have earned a specific number of demerits.

Rule 17. - Policy on Gangs and Obscene Clothing

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

Rule 18. - Students Charged with or Convicted of a Felony

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

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

Rule 19. - Disruption of School

- a. In addition to complying with Rules 1 through 18 stated above, a student shall not use violence, force, threat, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct in order to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function in school.

- b. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building/grounds without supervision by a staff person of the Worcester Public Schools before, during and after normal school hours. Students are not permitted access to the school building/grounds until 30 minutes before the official start of the school day or when personnel of the Worcester Public Schools are available for supervision.

Rule 20. - Bomb Threats

- a. No student shall communicate or cause to be communicated any information in any form whatsoever that a bomb or any type of explosive device is located in or on any building or property under the control of the Worcester Public Schools or is at any school sponsored situation, including but not limited to transportation provided by the Worcester Public Schools, either directly or by contracted services. Any student found in violation of the provisions of this rule may be expelled by the School Committee after all appropriate due process proceedings as specified in the Legal Policies – Due Process section of the Policies Handbook for the Worcester Public School.
- b. Before the readmission to the Worcester Public Schools of any student suspended or expelled for violation of this rule, such student shall perform ten (10) days of supervised community service, which has been approved by the School Administration, for each day which school has been disrupted by such threat. Such community service shall be performed at a time when the Worcester Public Schools is not scheduled to be in session (e.g., summer vacation, February or April vacation, etc.).

Rule 21. - Extracurricular Activity

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

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

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

Bullying

Bullying is the act of intentionally causing harm to others through verbal harassment, physical assault, or other more subtle methods of coercion, such as manipulation. Cyber-bullying is an unwelcome electronic act where a student feels coerced, intimidated, harassed or threatened and, under the circumstances, may cause: 1) physical or emotional harm to a student, or 2) disruptive or hostile school environment.

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

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

Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities

General

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

Academic Requirements

1. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses. In addition, beginning with the winter sports season of 2008, students need a minimum GPA of 2.0.

2. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses that would provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional yearlong major English courses.
3. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received credit for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional yearlong major English courses.
4. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determining only on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents/guardians of all students.
5. Incomplete grades may not count towards eligibility.
6. A student who repeats work upon which he/she once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
7. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Attendance

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

Chemical Health MIAA Rule 62

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

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

See MIAA Blue Book for penalties.

Reasonable Conduct

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

Students are also expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions include, but are not limited to, insubor-

dination, fighting, taunting, negative attitude, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, and inappropriate language or gestures and all other infractions as stated in the Worcester Public Schools' Policies Handbook and school handbooks.

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

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

Felony Charge/Conviction

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

Team Management Plan

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

Discipline of Students Under Section 504 and ADA

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

1. Definition

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

2. Procedure

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

- a. If the student has not been identified as disabled, the principal or his/her designee must consider whether the circumstances surrounding the disciplinary incident suggest the existence of a disability.
- b. In the event that the principal or his/her designee concludes that there is no reason to suspect a disability, the student may be disciplined according to the regular disciplinary sanction under the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct.
- c. If the circumstances suggest that the student may be disabled, the principal or his/her designee shall refer the student to the 504 Committee to evaluate whether the student has a disability.
- d. If the student is identified or has previously been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504, prior to taking disciplinary action which would result in a suspension of one (1) to ten (10) days the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student's misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability and assure that all disciplinary actions are consistent with the mandates of Section 504.
- e. If the student is identified or has previously been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504 and/or is so identified upon an initial 504 evaluation and the disciplinary sanction, or cumulative disciplinary sanction could result in a suspension from school for more than ten (10) days, and the 504 Committee determines that:
 - (i) The student is, or continues to be, disabled and his/her misconduct has a direct and substantial relationship to his/her disability.
 - (ii) The violation of school rules is a direct result of a failure to accommodate the student's disability or an inappropriate or unimplemented 504 plan.

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

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

3. Evaluation/Re-evaluation

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

Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services

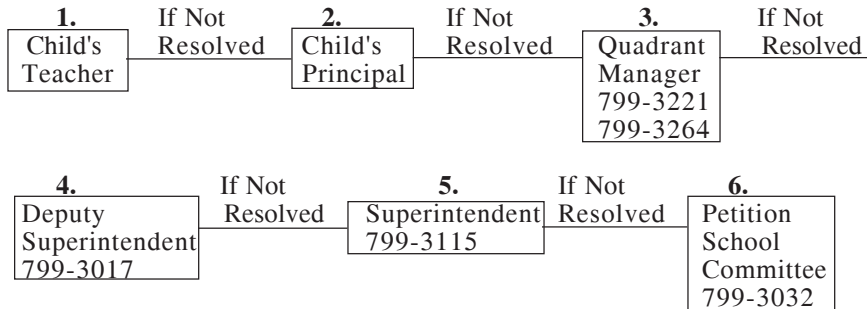
1. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability and a record will be kept of such notices.
2. When it is known that the suspension of a student with a disability may accumulate to more than ten (10) days in a school year, a review of the IEP as required by Federal Special Education Regulations (IDEA '04) will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement or program. The team will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's violation of the discipline code and his/her disability.
 - a. If the IEP Team finds that the student's violation of the discipline code is related to his/her disability or the team determines that the current IEP is inappropriate, the team will develop an amended IEP.
 - b. If the student's violation of the discipline code is not related to his/her disability or to an inappropriate IEP, a suspension may be imposed. The team will determine a placement in which the student will receive services during periods of suspension beyond ten (10) days, which provides access to the general curriculum and addresses his/her IEP goals.
 - c. If a student carries a weapon to school or to a school function, or if the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function, the Principal may order the change of placement for forty-five (45) days. The placement will be determined by the IEP Team.
 - d. In cases where a student's violation of the discipline code presents a danger to other students, staff, or the student himself/herself, and the parent/guardian does not accept the proposed placement, the School Committee will immediately seek court approval to suspend or exclude the student from the Worcester school premises.
 - e. Any dispute regarding the IEP will be resolved through the special education dispute resolution process. If a hearing is requested, the student will stay in his/her current placement unless a court determines otherwise or the parent/guardian agrees to an alternate setting pending resolution of the dispute.

Resolving School-Related Problems

Procedure

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

If a problem arises, contact:



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

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

Criteria for reporting will include the following:

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

HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Department of Public Health Regulations

1. Immunization - All Massachusetts public school students must be immunized for Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B and Varicella. Hib vaccine is required for child-care attendance and preschool entry. The number of primary doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins. (102 CMR 7.07 and 105 CMR 220.00). Students lacking proper documentation of required immunizations shall be excluded until proof of such immunization is provided. If a parent/guardian refuses to have a child immunized because of religious or medical reasons, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and M.G.L. c. 111, ss 3, 6, 7, 109, 110, 111, 112 and 105 CMR 300.000, the non-immunized student will be excluded from school during outbreaks of diseases for which the student is not immunized.

2. Lead Poisoning - Children must present documented evidence of lead poisoning screening prior to entrance into kindergarten (105 CMR 460).
3. Physical Examinations - required for students in grades K, 4, 7 & 9. It is recommended that this examination be done by the primary care physician or health care facility. Forms will be provided.
4. Screening Programs - Vision, hearing and postural screening will be conducted according to Massachusetts Department of Public Health mandates.
5. Inspection – All students in grades K-6 will be inspected as necessary for pediculosis. If this condition is found, the student will be excluded until all live lice and nits are removed. Students must be checked by school nurse before returning to class.
6. Dismissals - Students who are found to be ill will be dismissed by the school nurse or building principal. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing a means of transportation home. Parents/guardians are required to provide the school with a home telephone number, or an alternate phone number in case of emergency.

Administration of Medication

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

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

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

Because most medications must be given between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and because some nurses may have to service three (3) schools within a short period of time, principals are asked to:

- notify the Nursing Department (508) 799-8554 before 10:00 a.m. if the student who receives medication is absent
- arrange for students to be brought to the nurse
- identify, when necessary, the students for the nurse
- Unless a student has a medical emergency, please do not have the student waiting to see the nurse who is covering the school for medications. Classroom head checks will also not be an available service. The procedure for the delegation of medication for field trips and other short-term events involves the following:
- Completion of the Field Trip Waiver - "Medication Administration Plan" signed by the parent/guardian.
- At least two (2) weeks advance notice to the nurse so that the nurse may train the designated person on how to administer the medication as well as any special side effects requiring intervention.

HIV-AIDS Policy

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

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

Guidelines:

- No one except the student and/or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) necessarily needs to know of a student's AIDS diagnosis or HIV infection. There are several medical reasons that a student and/or his or her parent/guardian may wish to disclose the diagnosis to the school nurse or school physician, even though they are not obligated to do so:
 - A student who has AIDS/HIV may be at a greater risk of contracting infections. If there is an occurrence of a contagious disease in school such as chickenpox or influenza, the school nurse or physician who is aware of a student's HIV status may be able to alert the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), who then may consult their personal care physician for preventive treatment.
 - A young student with AIDS/HIV infection may be taking medications that should be administered by a health care professional; he or she may require immunizations different from those of other students. (See Administration of Medication during School, page 39)

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

- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or the students themselves, under certain circumstances, may inform the school nurse or school physician directly.

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

NOTE: This is only a summary; complete guidelines are available in the principal's office, the nurse's office, and school library. You are encouraged to read the policy in its entirety, and a copy is available to you upon request. Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health: The Comprehensive School Health Manual, January 1995.

911 Procedures

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

Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use

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

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

School Based Health Centers

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

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Program

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Busing Privileges

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

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

Transfer Students

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

Homeless

Refer to transportation services described on page 16 under Education of Homeless Children.

Two Mile Limit

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

School Bus Stops and Routing

Students will walk to a common bus stop. Bus stops will be set up, approved, and verified by the Worcester Public Schools Transportation Department only. Students are not entitled to street-to-street or door-to-door

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

SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR

Riding School Buses

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

1. Only pupils and school personnel assigned to the bus shall be allowed to ride in a school bus unless permission is granted by the Director of Transportation.
2. Students should be at the pick-up point at the time designated and prepared to get on the bus with the least possible delay in order to keep the bus on schedule.
3. While at a bus pick-up point, students must:
 - Conduct themselves in an orderly manner
 - Stay out of the street
 - Respect nearby private property rights
 - Remain at least eight (8) feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move toward the bus only when the door opens
4. Students should ride only the bus to which they are regularly assigned.
5. Students should take seats promptly after boarding the bus and remain in their seats while the bus is in motion.
6. Students shall not open or close windows or emergency doors except when asked to do so by the driver or the bus monitor. Students must keep arms and heads inside the bus.
7. While a passenger on a bus, a student must not:
 - Smoke
 - Throw any objects on the bus or out the windows
 - Disturb the driver or other students
 - Litter
 - Make loud or unnecessary noises
 - Eat food or drink

- Transport items which may endanger the health or safety of any other passengers
 - Damage or deface any part of the bus
8. Students must remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
 9. Students who exit from the bus should pass ten (10) feet in front of the bus and look in both directions before crossing.
 10. In the event of a road emergency, students are to remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the driver of the bus.
 11. After exiting the bus, students should enter the school directly for safety purposes.
 12. A student who has been issued an identification card by school authorities should carry such card with him/her at all times and show it when requested.
 13. Bus drivers/monitors must report violations of the above rules and regulations to the school official on Bus Conduct Forms. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently when the student's behavior warrants it.

Science Laboratory Safety

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

- Sign a safety contract which emphasizes their responsibilities in the science lab;
- Have parents/guardians co-sign the contract to alert them to these responsibilities;
- Be aware of measures to be taken should an accident occur;
- Know classroom evacuation procedures in case of an emergency; and
- Use protective equipment (gloves, aprons, goggles, etc.) provided as instructed.

Security Measures

Physical Restraint

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

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

Policy

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

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

Student Lockers

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

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

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

For security reasons, students will not be permitted to wear outerwear (coats and jackets) or carry large book/gym bags with them throughout the school day.

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

Access to Students During School Hours

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

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

1. The custodial parent (the parent with physical custody) or guardian or personnel or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, § 34H, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request to the school principal for such access. For further information, contact your child's principal.
2. A student, age 14, or upon entering grade 9, may consent to meet with an individual.

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

1. School administrators, teachers and counselors who work directly with the students.
2. Administrative office staff and clerical personnel who process information for the students' records.
3. The Evaluation Team which evaluates the students.

4. School health personnel when such access is required in the performance of official duties.
5. Appropriate parties including the local police department, and the Department of Social Services in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapons reports, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
6. Employees of the Department of Social Services who are investigating child abuse cases may be allowed to interview a child without parental consent if it appears that the child may be placed at risk of further abuse by parental notification. This interview may take place in the presence of a teacher or other school professional to provide help and reassurance to the child.
7. Probation Department employees, Department of Youth Services employees, or an employee from the Bureau of Special Investigation on welfare fraud.

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

Visitors in the Schools

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

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

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

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

Use of Motor Vehicles

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

1. Automobiles must be parked in the assigned student parking areas.
2. Students who leave the campus in motor vehicles during the school hours without following established dismissal procedures will be suspended.
3. Students must drive slowly and carefully on or near school grounds, always remembering that pedestrians have the right of way.
4. Cars may not be visited during the school day except with the approval of the principal.

5. Parking privileges will be revoked or suspended for the following reasons:
 - a. Speed in excess of 15 m.p.h.
 - b. Any act endangering life or property while on school grounds.
 - c. Parking in areas other than student parking areas.
 - d. Parking privileges will not be available without an appropriate school registration and parking permit.

STUDENT SERVICES

Child Study Department

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

Child Study Department services include:

- Collaborative consultation with teachers
- Individual and group counseling - (bilingual and monolingual)
- Individual assessments
- Collaboration with community agencies
- Referral and case management services
- Parent Consultation and Support
- Supervision of attendance
- Mediation
- Participation in SSP and 504 committees as requested by building principal
- Risk/lethality assessments
- Crisis intervention and stabilization services
- Specialized case management, service coordination and support for students in the care of DSS and for homeless students.

Special Education

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

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

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

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

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

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

If a student is entering his/her final year at the current school, he/she may remain if special transportation can be arranged without the allocation of additional resources. If it is not possible to transport the student without additional resources being required, the student must transfer to the home quadrant school if space is available in the program.

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

If a student moves out of his/her home quadrant school after October 1st, he/she should be allowed to remain for the duration of the school year (consistent with the current policy of the Worcester Public Schools) if special transportation can be arranged without the allocation of additional resources.

Employment Information and Procedures

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

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

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

Occupation Restrictions

Minors under 14 may not work

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

Home Instruction

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

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

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

Home Schooling

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

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

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

INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

Homework Policy

The School Committee recognizes that a reasonable amount of study and preparation is necessary for the scholastic growth of all students. It is also aware that the amount of preparation should increase as the child progresses through the grades.

Homework should have a relationship to the on-going educational program and should be connected to learning objectives, curricula, and MCAS preparation and remediation. Teachers are responsible for examining and evaluating the quality of assignments with their students. Principals are responsible for evaluating the utilization of homework as an integral part of the learning process. Generally, homework should be assigned for non-classroom time, although teachers may introduce assignments in the course of the instructional period.

In order for the homework policy to be effective, parents/guardians need to be active partners with teachers to:

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

Elementary Schools

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

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

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

- K-grade 2 Introduction to homework. Students might be asked to finish papers that were started in school. Teachers may have students copy over classroom assignments to improve handwriting. Students may practice lists of words from the English language arts curriculum so they can improve their sight vocabulary.
- grade 3 Formal homework is introduced at this level. Students are assigned between 15 and 30 minutes of homework on a daily basis.
- grade 4 Students are assigned between 45 and 60 minutes of homework on a daily basis.
- grades 5-6 Students are assigned between one and one-and one half hours of homework on a daily basis.

Secondary Schools

Homework assignments should be regular practice for all teachers and students and should be related and/or connected to MCAS and the Massachusetts Frameworks. Assignments should be an extension of class lessons that provide students with opportunities to (1) increase or practice learning objectives, (2) practice skills, (3) reinforce recent concepts, (4) work on open-ended questions and writing skills or (5) project work.

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

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

- Linking assignments to learning objectives that reflect and support the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, WPS curricula, School Improvement Plans, and WPS benchmarks
- Providing learning experiences that are both important and meaningful and that can be completed independently by the student;
- Ensuring that homework is an extension of learning that takes place in the classroom and applying the same standards of performance as applied to classroom work;
- Assigning homework that is explicit and of reasonable length;
- Ensuring that the quality of homework is more important than the quantity;

- Completing and evaluating assignments as part of the students' progress;
- Showing how homework is factored into the student grade; and,
- Never assigning homework as punitive work.

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

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

Process for Assigning Textbooks

Students and parents/guardians are responsible for books and all other equipment issued to a student of the Worcester Public Schools. All books and equipment shall be returned by the student and in the condition in which they were issued.

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

Promotion Policy

General

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

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

Elementary (K- 6)

Promotional Subjects

Grade 1	Grades 2-6
English Language Arts: (Reading, Language and Writing)	English Language Arts: (Reading, Language and Writing)
	Mathematics

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

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

Grades 7-8

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

Core Academic Courses (full year)

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

Pathway/Enrichment Courses may include:

Academic Literacy or Word Study
 Academic Numeracy
 AVID
 Art
 Music
 Industrial Technology
 Computer Literacy
 Health/Physical Education
 Family/Consumer Science
 Other: Dance, Theatre, etc.

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

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, plagiarism and forgery are considered to be academic dishonesty. A failing grade of zero (0) will be recorded for any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or completed by means of academic dishonesty or deception, including information obtained from the Internet and not properly cited. In addition, violation of this policy may result in suspension under Rule 2.

Attendance/Truancy Policy

The Worcester Public Schools has adopted an Attendance/Truancy Policy which includes standards of attendance for grades K-12 and is aligned with the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and the Massachusetts Department of Education's established attendance criteria of 95%.

Elementary (K-6)

Inherent in the standards is an understanding that parents and the school need to work together in encouraging pupil attendance on each day that school is in session. Attendance emphasis in the elementary schools recognizes developmental factors of educational growth and responsibility.

Punctuality and regularity of attendance are important to the child from the very first day of school. The earlier a child learns that school is her/his job and that she/he has something important to do, the more satisfactory will be her/his growth and development.

Elementary

- a. A student shall not be repeatedly absent from school without legitimate cause. A student enrolled is expected to be present and punctual each day school is in session. Parents/guardians will report each absence by telephone prior to the absence or by written note within two (2) days.
- b. Fourteen (14) absences per year will be considered excessive. Excessive absences may result in retention according to the Promotional Policy of the Worcester Public Schools.
- c. After five (5) unexcused absences, the principal (or his/her designee) will notify the parent or guardian in writing and, when appropriate, request a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the student's attendance.
- d. Each elementary school will develop and announce to parents/guardians its procedures for improving the attendance of those students who have more than five (5) unexcused absences during the school year. The school procedures may include the following options, as needed: parent/guardian conference(s), Student Support Process meetings, referral to school nurse, referral to Child Study personnel, referral to social service agencies, a petition to the court, withdrawal of privilege to attend a non-district school or program, a mandated behavior modification plan, demerits, and/or detention.
- e. When a student accumulates seven (7) or more unexcused absences, the principal (or his/her designee) may file an appropriate action with the Juvenile Court.

The school will exercise judgment in justification for illness, extended hospitalization, or placement out of home during which school attendance is not reasonably expected.

Absences for religious holy days and for a death in the student's immediate family require a note from the student's parent or guardian. Notes are due within two (2) school days of the absence. Upon receipt of the appropriate note from the parent or guardian, these absences will not count toward the fourteen (14) days. All other absences will count towards a loss of academic credit.

Family vacations taken during school time are absences. Families should plan their vacations during the regularly scheduled school vacations and make appointments after school hours.

Grades 7-8 School Attendance and Academic Credit Policy

1. Class Attendance
 - a. A student who enrolls in a course is expected to be present each time class is in session. Students who have more than fourteen (14) absences per school year will not receive credit for the course.
 - b. Courses meeting daily:
fifteen (15) or more missed classes per school year result in no credit. This is to be consistent with the promotional policy.
 - c. After five (5) absences, the principal (or his/her designee) will notify the parent/guardian in writing and, when appropriate, request a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the student's attendance.

- d. Each middle school will develop and announce to parents/guardians its procedures for improving the attendance of those students who have more than five (5) absences.
- e. The school will exercise judgment in justification of absences for illness.

Absences for religious holy days and for a death in the student's immediate family require a note from the student's parent or guardian. Notes are due within two (2) school days of the absence. Upon receipt of the appropriate note from the parent/guardian, these absences will not count toward a loss of academic credit. All other absences will count towards a loss of academic credit.

Family vacations taken during school time are absences. Families should plan their vacations during the regularly scheduled school vacations and make appointments after school hours.

2. Tardiness
 - a. A student who is not in his/her seat at the start of homeroom or class will be considered tardy. A student who is absent for more than one-half (1/2) of a class period will be considered absent from the class.
 - b. Four (4) unexcused tardinesses to a class in any semester will equal one (1) absence in that class.
 - c. Excused tardiness does not count under "a" of this section.
3. Dismissals
 - a. A student who misses more than one-half (1/2) of a class period due to dismissal will be considered absent for that class.
 - b. A student who misses less than one-half (1/2) of a class period will be considered dismissed for that class.
 - c. Four (4) unexcused dismissals from a class in any semester will equal one (1) absence in that class.
 - d. Excused dismissal does not count under "a" or "b" of this section.
4. Faculty Responsibility
Faculty members will record all absences, tardiness, and dismissals of students from their assigned classes using the code found on Page 1 of the Massachusetts School Register for the purpose of recording attendance. As students may miss some classes more frequently than others, each faculty member will be responsible for notifying the Assistant Principal on occasions when notification must be sent to a parent or guardian.
5. Appeal Procedure
 - a. The following areas may be considered in the appeal process:
Documented illness [Parent's, guardian's, or physician's note due within two (2) school days of absence]
Mandated school-sponsored activities
School-sponsored field trips
Alternative Education Programs
Home tutoring assigned by the school
 - b. Appeals for waiver of the policy will be heard by the Principal or his/her designee.
 - c. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Principal or his/her designee to the Quadrant Manager.
 - d. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Quadrant Manager to the Superintendent.

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

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

High School Attendance and Academic Credit Policy Grades 9-12 Overview

The administrators and teachers in the Worcester Public Schools believe that students' attendance in school and in class is essential, not only for the academic learning process, but also for the personal and social growth of students as they mature into responsible adults. Daily interactions among teachers and students is an irreplaceable component of the high school learning experience.

School is a student's "work." After graduating from high school, students will take with them into higher education and/or employment the positive attendance habits acquired during schooling.

These policies reflect the important connections between achievement and attendance.

Notification to Students and their Parents/Guardians

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for monitoring their child's attendance in class and in school. High school staff will assist parents/guardians by providing the following information:

1. Interim progress reports [at five (5) weeks into each marking period]
2. Report Cards [every ten (10) weeks]. The high school report card shows students' absences from each class and students' total absences from school.
3. Written notification at the student's 5th absence from school and every multiple of five (5) up to thirteen (13) absences.
4. Written notification of student's loss of credit due to exceeding fourteen (14) absences.

The failure of parents/guardians to receive these notifications does not change the facts or consequences regarding a student's absences.

Each high school will design and announce to parents/guardians and students its procedures for improving the attendance of those students who have more than five (5) absences during the school year.

Attendance required to earn credit

A student who has enrolled in a class is expected to be present each time the course is in session. For the 2008-09 school year, high school students will not receive full credit when they exceed the following number of absences:

- fourteen (14) class absences per one-credit course
- seven (7) class absences for courses less than one credit
- vacation days taken during regularly scheduled school time are absences

Absences not Resulting in a Loss of Credit

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

1. **Religious holy days.** The student's religion must require that the student does not attend school on the specific holy day or that school attendance would interfere with required religious observances. The parent/guardian must notify the school in writing within two (2) school days before or after the absence.
2. **Death in the immediate family:** Up to five (5) consecutive days for bereavement due to the death of a member of the student's immediate family: mother, father, sister, brother. One (1) day to attend the funeral of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces or nephews. The parent/guardian must notify the school in writing within five (5) school days after the absence(s) occurred.
3. **Court appearance.** The student must have been subpoenaed to appear in a court of law. The student must be a witness, plaintiff, or defendant in a court proceeding. Within five (5) school days before or after the required court appearance, the parent/guardian must notify the school in writing and provide documentation from the court.
4. **Extended hospitalization.** The parent/guardian must submit to the school release papers from the hospital documenting the student's extended hospitalization. Because of a serious illness documented in writing by a doctor, any student who will be out of school for fourteen (14) consecutive days or for a chronic illness of less than fourteen (14) days for each occurrence, will receive home or hospital instruction. (For more information, refer to Home Instruction, page 49.) If a hospitalization takes place in an institution that also provides educational services, the student should be withdrawn from the Worcester Public Schools for the period of hospitalization.

Days out of school because of out-of-school suspensions are absences which do not count towards a loss of academic credit. Students who are absent because of out-of-school suspensions must make up missed assignments, homework, and/or tests.

The principal has the right to require and seek additional medical opinions and diagnosis regarding a student's absence(s) due to illness. The principal can determine that other extenuating circumstances justify absences which do not merit a loss of academic credit.

Tardiness and Dismissal

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

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

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

A specific number of unapproved tardies or dismissals will not equal absences. Each high school principal will meet with the school's faculty to determine how a student's unauthorized tardies or dismissals will lower his/her grade. The Superintendent will review and approve the high schools' procedures to ensure that there is consistency among all high schools.

Truancy

Chronic truancy, defined as seven (7) or more days of unexcused absences, and/or excessive or repeated tardiness to school may be addressed by the school filing an appropriate action with Worcester Juvenile Court. This procedure applies to all grade levels 1-12.

Attendance Buyback Program

During the 2008-09 school year, eligible high school students will be able to voluntarily participate in an Attendance Buyback Program. Through this program, students can make up the credit(s) which they lost due to excessive absences. To be eligible for the Attendance Buyback Program, students must have passed a course and must have between 15 and 22 absences. Eligible students who complete additional hours of instruction on Saturday mornings can then receive full credit for the course. Students will not be able to change their passing grade for their course. Eligible students who are interested in this program should contact their high school guidance counselor for additional information.

Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members will record all absences, tardiness, and dismissals from their assigned classes using the code found on Page 1 of the Massachusetts School Register for the purpose of recording attendance. As students may miss some classes more frequently than others, each faculty member will be responsible for notifying the Assistant Principal on occasions when notification must be sent to a parent or guardian.

Administrative Procedure for Loss of Credit

- a. In any case where a student fails to receive credit for any course, the final course grade will still be recorded on that student's permanent record card.
- b. In the case where no credit is received for a course required for graduation (e.g., American History) and in which a passing grade has been received, it would be strongly recommended that the course be repeated.
- c. A minimum of twenty-four (24) units is required to receive a diploma subject to budget allocation.

Appeal Procedure

- a. The following areas may be considered in the appeal process:
 - Documented illness [Parent's, guardian's, or physician's note due within two (2) school days of absence]
 - Mandated school-sponsored activities
 - School-sponsored field trips
 - Alternative Education Programs
 - Home tutoring assigned by the school
- b. Appeals for waiver of the policy will be heard by the Principal or designee.

- c. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Principal or designee to the Quadrant Manager.
- d. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Quadrant Manager to the Superintendent.
- e. The parent or guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Superintendent to the School Committee. Appeals to the School Committee must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, who will place the parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal on the School Committee agenda for the next regular meeting. The parent/guardian is to be notified of the date, time, and place of the School Committee meeting.

Policy Regarding Televised Broadcasts

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

Acceptable Use Policy for Computer Networks and Internet Access

In order to use networked and Internet resources, all students and parents/guardians must sign and return the signature page as contained on the back cover of the Policies Handbook, and those under age 18 must obtain parental permission. The activities listed below are not permitted. The list of activities described below is not meant to be comprehensive. The Worcester Public Schools reserve the right to make judgements both as to what constitutes inappropriate behavior and the consequences that apply.

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Giving personal information, such as complete name, phone number, address or identifiable photo, without permission from teacher and parent or guardian
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others (cyber-bullying)
- Damaging or modifying computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords
- Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud.

Penalties

1. Violations may result in a loss of access.
2. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level, consistent with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
3. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

The Worcester Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy may be viewed at www.wpsweb.com/infosystems/tpaup.asp

Field Trip Policy*

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

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

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

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

Honor Roll Policy - High School

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

Eligibility

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

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

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

Honor Roll Policy - Middle School

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

Eligibility

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

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

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

High School Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, all students must:

- Receive a passing score of 220 on both the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics sections of the Grade 10 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS).
- Receive a passing score of 220 on a science section of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) beginning with the class of 2010.
- Earn twenty-four (24) credits subject to budget allocation.
- Worcester Technical High School students must also complete the minimum required credits and required graduation subjects established for them by the School Committee.

MCAS Appeals Processes

The Worcester Public Schools carries out the State Department of Education's appeal processes for regular and special education high school students who have not passed the MCAS. There are strict eligibility requirements relative to student achievement in English Language Arts, Mathematics, attendance and participation in tutorial and remediation efforts. Further information on these processes is available through your child's school.

School Committee Required Graduation Subjects

4 years English	3 years Math	2 years Science
3 years Social Studies (includes 2 years of U.S. History)	and Technology/	
1/2 year Health	2 years Physical Education	Engineering

Massachusetts State College and University Minimum Required Courses for Admission

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

*Introductory Spanish/French Part I and/or Part II are considered together as a one-credit course by the State College and University System. Students will need to take Spanish/French 2 (a third year of the same language) in order to meet the entrance requirements of the University and College System.

Advanced Placement Policy

The policy for acceptance to Advanced Placement Courses is as follows:

1. Students who are interested in Advanced Placement Courses must notify their Guidance Counselor by completing an Advanced Placement Request Form. In order to establish consistent, city-wide guidelines for the student selection process for Advanced Placement courses, the following prerequisites are recommended:

- Successful completion of suggested pathway courses in the appropriate subject area(s). However, this should not preclude consideration of a student.
- Recommendation of current or most recent subject area teacher.
- Recommendation of AVID teacher, if applicable.
- Meeting with principal and appropriate department head to resolve questions or issues.
- Participation in meeting for all A.P. candidates with A.P. teachers to discuss expectations and course work.
- Students' grades

- Signature of parents/guardians and students on A.P. contract committing to meeting summer and course assignment requirements.
 - Satisfactory completion of assigned A.P. summer work by the start of the school year.
 - Recommendations noted on A.P. Potential Report based on PSAT scores.
2. A student is allowed to take two Advanced Placement Courses per academic year. In the case of extraordinary circumstances and through the strong recommendations of the department and the principal, a student may be allowed to take additional Advanced Placement Courses.
 3. Students who take Advanced Placement Courses must pay for their own Advanced Placement exam. Scholarships and reduced fees are available for eligible students through the Guidance Office. Any student in an Advanced Placement Course who passes the course, but does not take the Advanced Placement examination, will receive credit for an honors course.
 4. All Advanced Placement Courses have a Guide Book as prepared by the College Board. Each department prepares a syllabus for the department course. The Guide Book and syllabus are available in the Guidance Office at the time of application.

Class Rank Grade Point Average

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

Average	A.P.	Honors	College
95-100	10	9	8
90-94	9	8	7
85-89	8	7	6
80-84	7	6	5
75-79	6	5	4
70-74	5	4	3
65-69	4	3	2
Below 65 or withdrawn	0	0	0

Marking System

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

College Courses for High School Students

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

Anna Maria College	College of the Holy Cross
Assumption College	Quinsigamond Community College
Becker College	Worcester Polytechnic Institute*
Clark University	Worcester State College

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

With permission of the principal, and approval by the college, students may take one college course per semester on a space-available basis for high school credit. College credit may also be awarded. For GPA computation, all courses taken by Worcester public school students at colleges will receive the same weight as honors courses.

GENERAL SCHOOL ISSUES

Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal/ School Cancellation Policy

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

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

Delayed AM School Opening

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

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

Early Dismissal

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

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

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

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

Step 2 - Tier 2 Schools will be dismissed at **1:25 p.m.**
Burncoat Street Preparatory School
Canterbury Street Magnet Computer-Based School
Columbus Park Preparatory Academy
Lincoln Street School
Union Hill School
Vernon Hill School

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

Step 4 - Tier 4 Schools will be dismissed at **1:25 p.m.**
Belmont Street Community School
Claremont Academy
Goddard School of Science and Technology
Roosevelt School
Woodland Academy

Step 5 - Tier 5 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (2:50 p.m.)**
Bancroft School
Our Lady of the Angels School

Step 6 - Tier 6 Schools will be dismissed at **2:00 p.m.**
Chandler Magnet School
Clark Street Developmental Learning School
Elm Park Community School
Flagg Street School
Grafton Street School
Heard Street School
Lake View School
May Street School
McGrath Elementary School
Midland Street School
Quinsigamond School
Rice Square School
Tatnuck Magnet School
Thorndyke Road School
Wawecus Road School
Worcester Arts Magnet School

Step 7 - Tier 7 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (3:10 p.m.)**.
Forest Grove Middle School
Sullivan Middle School
Seven Hills Charter School (2:45 p.m.)

Step 8 - Tier 8 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (3:10 p.m.)**.
Gates Lane School of International Studies
Nelson Place School
New Jewish Academy
St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School
Venerini Academy
West Tatnuck School
Yeshiva Academy

Special Schedule:
Chandler Elementary Community School 3:20 p.m. **Regular Time**
City View School 4:10 p.m. **Regular Time**
Head Start **11:45 a.m.**
Jacob Hiatt Magnet School 3:30 p.m. **Regular Time**

No School/Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal Announcements
Announcements of no school or a delay in the opening of school will be made on the following radio and television stations:

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

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

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

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Parent Advisory Councils School Parent Advisory Council

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, Section 53, requires the establishment of school councils in all schools, comprised of parents/guardians, teachers, students, and community representatives and co-chaired by school principals. The council will meet with the principal and assist in identifying the educational needs of students, reviewing the annual school budget, and in formulating a school improvement plan. For additional information please contact your child's school principal.

English Language Learners (ELL) Parents' Advisory Council

Parents/guardians of English language learner students who are enrolled in Structured English Classrooms meet to discuss issues and advise the Department of English Language Learners of concerns relative to the programs. In addition to this PAC, there is the following sub-PAC:

Latino Parents' Advisory Council

Parents/guardians of Spanish-speaking students who are English language learners meet once each semester with the Director of English Language Learner Programs. For further information, call the Department of English Language Learners, (508) 799-3093.

Special Education Advisory Council

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

Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council (CPPAC)

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

1. To involve parents/guardians in addressing relevant issues in the Worcester Public Schools including integration and changing (increasing/decreasing) enrollment.
2. To provide an open forum for discussion between parents/guardians and administrators regarding school issues and voted policies.
3. To give its members the responsibility of keeping their respective schools informed.

Title I Parent Advisory Council

Title I parent involvement procedures are available on the Federal Programs section on the WPS website.

Community Support Volunteers

Parents/guardians trained to give assistance to parents of children who have special needs. For more information, call (508) 799-3093.

Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Support

- **Family Ties, Worcester Family Ties Network**
Worcester families with children ages 0 – 3 years
Play groups, GED and ESOL classes, parent groups and workshops
160 Leeds Street, Old Greendale School, Worcester, MA 01606
Contact: Beth Vietze (508) 799-3136
- **PAL Worcester Chapter (Parent/Professional Advocacy League)**
Support/information for families who have children with mental health concerns and special needs. Contact: Cindy Cesaitis, Yvette Rodriguez (508) 767-9PAL (9725)
- **Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Mass**
Educational and multi-service center for Asian families.
Southeast Asian Center of Worcester, 120 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01609
Contact: David Nguyen and Trung Nguyen: (508) 791-4373
- **Uniting Our Voices and Having Our Say – A Community Coalition Investing in the Education of African American, Native American and Black Children**
Educational assistance for students and their parents/guardians.
Contact: Ogretta McNeil at (508) 595-0219 or
Robert Layne/Monica Bond at 26 Queen Street, Jacques Bldg., Room 310, Worcester, MA 01610 (508) 856-6506 www.unitingourvoices.org
- **Communities of Care**
Help for parents/guardians of children with mental health concerns.
275 Belmont Street, Worcester, MA 01604
Contact: Yvette Rodriguez (508) 856-5223, Anthony Irsfeld (508) 856-5105

- **Worcester Community Connections at Worcester Community Action Council**
Parent-to-parent support and help for families with everyday educational needs.
484 Main Street, 2nd floor, Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 754-1176
Contact: Olga Lopez-Hill ext. 155; Mayra Nieves ext. 124
- **The Latino Education Institute**
Educational services for Latino students and their families.
Located at Worcester State College, 486 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01602 (508) 798-6507
- **Parental Stress Line**
A 24-hour helpline for parents/guardians who want to talk about problems they are having with their children. Calls are anonymous and confidential.
1-800-632-8188
- **Worcester Youth Guidance Center**
Parent advocacy and help for parents/guardians of children with mental health concerns.
275 Belmont Street, Worcester, MA 01604
Contact: Joanne Carey (508) 421-4460

Volunteer Staff Regulations

Application Process

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

Screening Process

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has mandated that all school volunteers must complete the CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) screening process. This process must be completed before the volunteer begins in any school or program. As the CORI check can take several weeks, all volunteers are encouraged to complete the CORI form as soon as possible.

Placement of volunteers

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

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

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

Volunteer Organizations

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

Some of these include:

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

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

Parent Volunteers who bring Children

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

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

These volunteers must not operate machinery such as:

- paper cutters
- duplicating machines

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

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

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Burncoat	(508) 799-3300
Claremont Academy	(508) 799-3077
Doherty Memorial	(508) 799-3270
North	(508) 799-3370
South High Community	(508) 799-3325
The Gerald Creamer Center	(508) 799-3476
Worcester Technical High School	(508) 799-1980
Alternative	(508) 799-3245
School Age Mothers Program (SAMS)	(508) 856-7373
University Park Campus	(508) 799-3591
Fanning Learning Center	(508) 799-0077

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

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

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Belmont	(508) 799-3588	Lincoln	(508) 799-3504
Burncoat	(508) 799-3537	May	(508) 799-3520
Canterbury	(508) 799-3484	McGrath	(508) 799-3584
Chandler Elementary	(508) 799-3572	Midland	(508) 799-3548
Chandler Magnet	(508) 799-3452	Nelson Place	(508) 799-3506
City View	(508) 799-3670	Norrback	(508) 799-3500
Clark	(508) 799-3545	Quinsigamond	(508) 799-3502
Columbus Park	(508) 799-3490	Rice Square	(508) 799-3556
Elm Park	(508) 799-3568	Roosevelt	(508) 799-3482
Fanning Alternative	(508) 799-3250	Tatnuck	(508) 799-3554
Fanning Elementary	(508) 799-3250	Thorndyke	(508) 799-3550
Flagg	(508) 799-3522	Union Hill	(508) 799-3600
Gates Lane	(508) 799-3488	Vernon Hill	(508) 799-3630
Goddard School of Science and Technology	(508) 799-3594	Wawecus	(508) 799-3527
Grafton	(508) 799-3478	West Tatnuck	(508) 799-3596
Heard	(508) 799-3525	Woodland Academy	(508) 799-3557
Hiatt	(508) 799-3601	Worcester Arts Magnet	(508) 799-3575
Lake View	(508) 799-3536		

Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center ... (508) 799-3299, (508) 799-3068,
 (508) 799-3069, (508) 799-3194,
 (508) 799-3450

MANAGERS' OFFICE

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

To All Parents and Guardians:

The Worcester Public Schools and the School Committee consider the violation of the Weapons Policy found in this booklet to be a serious matter. Please spend some time discussing this policy, as well as other policies located within this booklet with your children.

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

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

As a parent/guardian of a student within the Worcester Public Schools, I acknowledge receipt of the 2008-09 Policies Handbook for the Worcester Public Schools . The Worcester Public Schools does participate in out-of-district School Choice, but students residing outside of the City can attend the Worcester Public Schools only if they are accepted for enrollment under this program. Unless accepted under this program, I pledge residency in the City of Worcester.

(Student's Name)

(School)

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(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

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

(Student Signature)

(Date)

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CUT HERE AND RETURN TO HOMEROOM TEACHER