

Message from the Principals

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

For a school community to fulfill its mission, implement its values and achieve its goals, there must be clear expectations and guidelines for all its members to follow. We hope that this handbook will help familiarize you with the practices and procedures of the Cunniff, Hosmer, and Lowell Elementary Schools.

The protocols in this document are ones that are common to all 3 schools. At the beginning of each school year, you will also receive a document from your child's individual school that outlines school specific protocols that differ between schools due to the uniqueness of each building.

Please refer to this handbook regularly and review the information presented in it with your child(ren). It is important that students, parents, staff and administration work together to achieve the standards we set for our community of learners.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to the coming school year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Watertown Public Schools Vision Statement

The Watertown Public Schools promote high achievement through inquiry, problem solving, collaboration, creativity and hard work. We provide students with a robust education so they will acquire, apply, and practice the knowledge and skills needed for self-actualization and lifelong learning. All programs support diverse learning styles, civic interaction, global awareness, and personal success.

WPS District Strategic Goals

- Support High Academic Achievement
- Foster the Capacity for Life-long Learning
- Promote Local and Global Citizenship

School Committee

The Watertown School Committee establishes goals, policies, and the budget for the Watertown Public Schools. The School Committee hires the Superintendent and works closely with that individual in developing policies and practices to improve the school system. The School Committee also is responsible for conducting collective bargaining with all employee organizations and has other responsibilities as outlined by Massachusetts General Laws.

The School Committee consists of seven members. Six are elected on a town-wide basis for four-year terms. The Town Council President serves as the seventh member and is elected to a two-year term. In January of each year the School Committee elects a chair, vice-chair, and secretary from among its members. The School Committee also organizes itself into subcommittees to conduct its business.

Members: (as of August 2017)

- John Portz, Chairperson
- Kendra Foley, Vice-Chairperson
- Guido Guidotti, Secretary
- Eileen Hsü-Balzer
- Candace Miller
- Mark Sideris
- Elizabeth Yusem

Kindergarten Entrance Requirements

Any child meeting the requirements of the various other policies and agreements of the School Committee concerning the availability of services may enter kindergarten during the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of five (5) on or before the seventh (7th) day of September. Parents, guardians, or legal representatives may petition for permission to enroll a child who will reach the age of five by December 31st, in writing, to the Superintendent of the Watertown Public Schools on or before April 1st of such year. The Watertown Public Schools shall review each such petition for early admission and, pursuant to completion of any testing deemed appropriate by the Watertown Public Schools and paid for at the petitioner's own expense, may admit such a child at its discretion, which judgment shall be final.

Exception to the deadlines for written application for a waiver as set forth in this policy may be granted by the Superintendent upon the showing of extraordinary circumstances. **For more information, please see School Committee Policy File: JEB.**

School Arrival

Please refer to your individual school procedures for specific school arrival procedures.

School Hours

Lowell: Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m.
Cunniff: Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m.
Hosmer: Arrival at 8:30 a.m. and dismissal at 2:45 p.m.

Please notify the office if you will be late, as some children become stressed and upset when they are not picked up on time. Teachers will bring any child who has not been picked up back into the building. We will arrange for the child to be supervised by the after-school program. There is a fee for this service.

Bus Transportation

Students may take the bus to school only if a parent/guardian has signed up and paid for a bus pass at the Central Office. Only those students who have a bus pass will be permitted to board the bus. For questions about the bus, contact the Central Office at 617-926-7716.

Bus Information: Students will be informed of bus stop pick-up when the bus pass is issued. **All disciplinary policies apply to the students riding the bus since the bus is an extension of school. If necessary, the administration may suspend a child from the bus either temporarily or permanently. For additional information regarding student conduct on school buses, please refer to School Committee Policy JICC.**

Late Arrivals

Parents are responsible for getting children to school on time each day. Attendance is taken 5 minutes after the scheduled arrival time. Students who arrive late must check in at the office and receive a tardy slip. In the case of students who live out-of-district, habitual tardiness may be cause for rescinding the out-of- district transfer approval.

Dismissals

Please refer to your individual school's procedures for specific school dismissal procedures.

Dismissal Plans

It is very important that we are aware of the plan you have made for your child at dismissal. We want to be sure we have the best information and that you sanction all plans. We know your contact information, but we need the actual plan, i.e. "My child may walk to our home independently." Read and fill out the dismissal form, sign that you are in agreement and return it to school. We will keep this plan on file should questions arise. In the event that your regular plan changes, please fill out a revised form for the file.

On days when your dismissal plan changes, for **that day only**, please send a signed note or email to your child's teacher. Phone calls are not acceptable. Thanks for your help in this important aspect of ensuring the children's safety.

Early Dismissal

If you need to have your child released from school early, please send a note to the classroom teacher or call the office. An authorized adult should report to the school office to pick up your child. No child will be allowed to leave the school grounds without the authorization of a parent or legal guardian. The adult responsible for the student must sign the child out in the log at the school office and wait for the child there.

Early Release Days

Early release days are scheduled on some Wednesdays during the year for staff professional development. Students are released at 12:15 p.m. following lunch. Additional full days of staff professional development occur during the school year. Children will not attend school on those days. Please consult your school calendar, newsletters, and local newspapers for these important dates.

School Closings and Delayed Openings

State law requires 180 days of instruction, and also requires that any snow days be made up before June 30th. Snow days and delayed openings are announced through an automated phone message and listed on the website, www.watertown.k12.ma.us.

No school announcements are also made on the following radio and television stations:

WCVB Television (Channel 5)

WHDH Television (Channel 7)

WBZ Television (Channel 4) and Radio (AM 1030)

Cable Television Service - If available, check the local community channel

WBUR Web site - part of National Public Broadcasting (Radio - FM 90.9)

No School

Announcements usually begin between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m.

All parents and students are urged to refer to the above communication services.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL the School Department, Police Department, or Fire Department for school cancellation information. These lines must remain open for emergency situations.

Delayed Openings

When a delayed school opening is announced, school will open **up to two hours** after the regularly scheduled time. Lunch will be served at the regular time, and school will close at the regularly scheduled time.

**Please do not call the police, fire, or school departments*

Attendance

Student attendance is a critical component of learning. Research studies show that higher attendance is related to higher achievement. **To focus attention on the importance of attendance the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) , which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or No Child Left Behind, specifically mentions this measure of attendance which reflects the increasing awareness that chronic absence is a key indicator for assessing school and student success. Chronic absence differs from truancy in that it tracks both excused and unexcused absences.**

Massachusetts state law (M.G.L 76 Sections 2 and 4: School Attendance) requires parents/guardians to have their children attend school.

To support attendance, Watertown Public Schools has a process to monitor and encourage school attendance. The protocol would apply to elementary school students. The Middle School and High School have their own policy.

If a student has at least five (5) days in which he/she has missed two (2) or more periods unexcused in a school year, or if a student has missed five (5) or more school days unexcused in a school year, the school principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of the student to develop action steps for the student's attendance. These action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or his/her designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

Definition of Tardy:

An elementary student is considered tardy if he or she is not in their classroom 5 minutes after the start of school.

Absences

Your child's safety is very important to us. After attendance is taken in the classroom, an automated phone call will be made to the home of each student who is recorded as absent. If you receive an absence phone message, and your child is home on that day, no further action is necessary. Please call the school immediately and only if you believe that your child is in school and has been reported as absent.

If your child is going to be very late or absent for the day, you may choose to email your child's teacher directly. Please do not call the office, as our message system is also electronic. If your child is going to be absent for an extended period of time please notify the classroom teacher or Guidance Counselor.

It is very important that we have accurate emergency contact information for every child. Please update any changes in emergency contact information immediately. For additional information regarding school absences, please refer to School Committee Policy JH.

Medical and Health Services

School Medical Services are designated to protect the student's health and to enable each student to reach and maintain the highest possible state of well being for effective learning. A school nurse is assigned to each elementary school.

School Health Records

Physical Examinations, including proof of immunizations, are required for students entering kindergarten, fourth grade, and new students entering the school. The physical must be dated within 6 months of entry to the grade or within the six months following entry.

Medication Policy

The nurse will administer medications to students as indicated during school hours according to the following procedures.

1. All prescription medication must be delivered to the school nurse by a parent or guardian.
2. Medications are in the original bottle with a prescription label showing the student's name, medication, doctor's name and instructions.
3. The parent or guardian must provide written permission from parent and doctor, in order for the nurse to give the medication to the student.
4. Parent permission is needed for the nurse to administer over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Advil or Tums.

All orders or permission for medications must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. **For additional information regarding the District's medication policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JLCD.**

Emergency Illness or Injury protocol

In case of an accident or illness during school hours, a parent or guardian will be notified. When indicated, the student will be dismissed to the parents or another adult designated by the parent. The school is responsible for providing appropriate care to the student until the parent arrives.

If emergency medical attention is needed, the school will contact you and an emergency response team.

For your child's protection, it is essential for the school to maintain accurate emergency contact information. Please notify the office immediately when emergency contact information is

changed. For information regarding procedures for emergency illness or injury at school, please refer to School Committee Policy JLC.

When to keep your child home from school

Please keep your child home from school if he or she has:

Fever – Fevers are generally signs of infection. Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or above must stay home from school. No child should be sent to school with a fever. Do not treat fever with medication and then send child to school. If your child gets a fever at school of 100o F or higher, they will be sent home from school.

Cold, Sore Throat, Cough – Children average 6-8 colds per year. If your child has a cold and cough with a fever or they do not seem to get better, call your doctor. A sore throat, along with a fever and swollen glands, may be signs of strep throat. Children diagnosed with strep throat are still contagious the first 24 hours on antibiotics and must remain home.

Stomachache, Vomiting, Diarrhea – A child with vomiting and/or diarrhea should be kept home until symptoms have resolved for approximately 24 hours and the child is able to keep down liquids and food. Consult your doctor if fever and stomach pains do not go away or your child is not eating well and appears dehydrated (dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, urinates less than 4 time in 24 hours).

Pain – Earaches – Consult your doctor. If there is no fever with an ear infection they may attend school.

Headache – A child should be kept at home if headache is severe and is not relieved with medication. Call your doctor if the headache continues.

Red Eyes – When the white part of the eye looks red and there is a yellow or green discharge, call your doctor. Your child may have conjunctivitis, a common but troublesome condition that may be a contagious infection. Your child may need an antibiotic eye ointment. Children are still contagious the first 24 hours on antibiotic ointment and must remain at home.

Rash – A rash is usually a sign of an illness. It also may be a reaction to a medication or chemical (plants, detergents). If your child has an unusual rash, contact your doctor. Do not send your child to school with a rash. Consult your doctor for clearance to attend school.

Head Lice/ Nits – Children may not return to school until all hair has been treated and all eggs/nits have been removed. If your child has head lice please contact the school nurse so that she can check classmates.

Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent illness.

Watertown Concussion Procedures

Watertown Concussion Procedures have been developed in accordance with Watertown Policy and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) regulation 105 CMR 201.000 Head Injuries and Concussions in Extra-curricular Athletic Activities, mandated by Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Relative to the Safety Regulations for School Athletes. **For information regarding the District's concussion policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JJIF.**

Food Services

Breakfast Program

Breakfast may be purchased between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. in the school cafeteria.

Lunch

Children may purchase a full school lunch daily. Milk and fruit juices are available to supplement a bag lunch. Upon entering the Watertown Public Schools, each student is given a personal identification number (PIN) to use for prepaid purchases in the school cafeteria only. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for lunches, milk, or snack to limit the need for students to carry money to school. If a student does not have money they will be served lunch and payment collected the next day.

Monthly lunch menus are posted in local newspaper and online. Prices are published at the beginning of each school year.

Free or reduced meals

Parents need to complete a free and reduced meal form yearly. Forms are reviewed by administration to determine eligibility.

Snack

You may send a mid-morning snack with your child each day. Healthy snack options are encouraged.

Visitors

For the safety of all children, the school doors are locked 5 minutes after designated arrival time.

- Visitors may use the intercom at the front door to speak to the main office and gain admittance.
- All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must sign in at the reception desk or main office during school hours.
- Visitors are given a visitor badge at the sign in location and are asked to wear a visitor badge throughout their visit.
- All visitors are required to sign out when they leave the school building.

The principal or his/her designee district reserves the right to deny any visitors entry to the school buildings when there is reason to believe that such an individual's presence would be detrimental to the operation of the school and its learning environment. These procedures are in effect for the safety of the children, staff and the visitors. It is imperative that the front office be aware of all persons in the building should an emergency situation arise.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROCEDURES:

Parents (or individuals authorized by parents), accompanied by school personnel, are welcome to visit the school to observe classes and tour the building as long as the reason is educationally sound and does not disrupt the educational process. To ensure the safety of the children and to avoid disrupting the educational process, these visits are arranged through the Principal.

Our goal is to make the visit as productive as possible. To do this, the following guidelines are in place:

SETTING UP A CLASSROOM OBSERVATION:

Call the Principal to schedule a date and time when activities/instruction you are most interested in will be occurring. You will be asked to provide him/her with the following information:

1. Names and roles of the observers.
2. What are you interested in observing in regard to your child's performance and progress? Please specify if you are interested in observing a current classroom or a proposed classroom.
3. Are there any related services you are interested in observing, e.g. occupational therapy, speech/language, physical therapy?
4. In order for us to best coordinate the visit, please be able to supply convenient dates and times for you.

5. The length of time of the visit will be predetermined through conversation between you and the building principal/designee. Please understand that lengthy visits may, at times, interrupt the integrity of the program. Your child's right to quality education is important to us as well the educational rights of other students. You should plan to discuss the length of time you feel is needed to accomplish your observation goal.

6. There may be times during a school day when schedules include activities that may breach another student's right to confidentiality. Classroom visits will not be scheduled during these times. On behalf of all students, please respect the school professionals to make that judgment call.

7. In order to maintain confidentiality, please understand that no information will be provided about other students and their educational needs, performance, and programs. There are times when observers may, despite the district's best efforts, receive information that identifies another student. Observers will be asked to sign a statement that information about other students will not be disclosed.

OBSERVING IN THE CLASSROOM:

Whenever visitors enter a school building, they must report to the school office to sign in and receive a Visitor's Pass. A member of the school staff will accompany the visitor throughout the visit. Before the visit, a place in the classroom will be designated for the visitor to sit and observe. We ask all observers to be sensitive to the following observation criteria:

1. Students can often be curious and easily distracted by visitors. If there is more than one observer, please do not converse during the observation. We encourage note-taking to facilitate conversation after the observation. Please bring with you something on which you can write notes and/or questions.

2. During the visit, the visitor will not be able to talk with the teacher, service providers or students, including the child. Their job at that time is to provide instruction/therapy. However, if the visitor has questions to discuss, arrangements can be made for a follow up discussion.

* Please refer to individual school procedures for further information.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of a child's educational program. There are a number of different goals and purposes for assigning homework, including the following:

Provide a link between home and school

- Help children take personal responsibility for their learning
- Foster confidence and self-discipline

- Promote the understanding that learning happens outside of school.
- Expand and/or enrich classroom work
- Reinforce learning by providing additional practice
- Help teachers monitor student understanding
- Promote high expectations for students

The School Committee Policy Manual states the following recommendations that parents provide an environment conducive to studying and working independently. They may help students organize time, space and materials so children can complete their homework effectively. Parents are encouraged to help clarify directions and ask questions that may help students to organize their thinking and recall information from class lessons. Because teachers carefully select assignments, parents should encourage their children to work independently.

Teachers assign homework to support student learning. Assignments reflect ongoing studies and provide a review of previously learned materials. In some cases, assignments may be long term. Homework will vary in intensity and degree at different grade levels. While we recognize that students work at different paces and have different learning styles, general guidelines established by School Committee policy indicate that first grade students receive 10 minutes of homework per night, and then 10 additional minutes are to be assigned each successive year.

Since homework supports daily classroom instruction, we do not assign specific homework to be completed while a student is absent from school due to a family vacation. We do suggest that students read daily and write in a journal during their vacation. As previously indicated, we always encourage families to schedule vacations in accordance with the district school vacation calendar to avoid disruption in the educational process.

*Please refer to individual school and classroom procedure documents for more information regarding homework guidelines.

Student-Centered Parent/Teacher Conferences

We schedule two sets of student-centered parent/teacher conferences in the fall and the spring. Student-centered conferences allow for students, as well as parents/guardians, to reflect on their strengths, progress, and areas that need improvement. Students also have the opportunity to plan future goals. All students are expected to attend their conferences with their parents or guardians.

Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled at any time during the school year when cluster teachers have common planning time. If you would like to meet with your child's teachers at any time, please set up a conference through the Guidance Department

504 Accommodation Plans

A 504 Accommodation Plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the American Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in education. A 504 Accommodation Plan is designed to articulate and implement a program of instructional services, including general classroom modifications, to assist students with significant disabilities. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and is a regular education entitlement. In order for a student to qualify for a 504 Accommodation Plan he or she must meet certain federal requirements. They include the following: Referral, Non-discriminatory Evaluation, Eligibility, Placement Procedures, Procedural Safeguards (Due Process), and the writing of the Individual Accommodation Plan.

The Watertown Public School District acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504 to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practices in the school district.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 covers qualified students with disabilities who attend schools receiving Federal financial assistance. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such impairment.

A physical or mental impairment is defined as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. This list is not exhaustive.

Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. This list is not exhaustive. In the ADA Amendments Act 2008 Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Congress also provided a non-exhaustive list of examples of "major bodily functions" that are major life activities, such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. An impairment that is episodic or in

remission, is also considered a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

Under Section 504, the school district has the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. Any questions concerning the implementation of policy and procedures may be directed to: _____

A student with disabilities has the same legal rights as “a handicapped person.” As stated under the federal law, the definition is as follows:

Handicapped person means any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities (ii) has a record of such impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such impairment.

For further information, contact your child’s guidance counselor or the Special Education Coordinator.

Special Education Services

The Watertown Public Schools provides special education and related services for eligible students in accordance with state and federal law. Under Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972, the Massachusetts Special Education Law (603 CMR 28.00), a student identified with a disability that impacts upon his or her education must be provided with a free, adequate and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that includes specially designed services and/or programs that meet his or her individualized educational needs. A student is entitled to special education services if he or she meets all three of the criteria listed below:

- The student has an identified disability.
- The student is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the provision of specially designed instruction.
- The student requires specially designed instruction and/or services to make effective progress.

Special education laws are grounded in six basic principles: parent and student participation; free and appropriate public education; appropriate evaluation; Individualized Education Plan (IEP); least restrictive environment; and procedural safeguards.), if a student has one or more of the disabilities specified in the statute and, of, as a result of the disability(ies) is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the provision of one or more related

services, then the IEP Team shall determine that the student is eligible and develop an individualized education program (IEP).

Students who are found, after evaluation, to be eligible for special education services will receive and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by the Special Education Team, which includes parents/guardians, teachers and specialists, involved with the child. In accordance with Public Law 94-142, special education co-teachers work as part of a team to develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for children when eligible. The team may consist of the classroom teacher, parents, principal, guidance counselor, psychologist, school nurse, and special education administrator. To deliver services, the special education co-teachers work with classroom teachers within the classroom. There they help students strengthen reading, writing, math, and organizational skills.

If you believe your child may be in need of special education services please contact the Principal, Special Education Coordinator or counselor to assist you with the process. State regulations governing the Chapter 766 process and the “Notice of Procedural Safeguards” brochure are available in all schools for review. For more information about special education please feel free to contact the Director of Student Services at the Central Office.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

In addition to formative and summative assessments in the classroom, students participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) designed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). At the elementary level MCAS assessments are administered in grades three, four and five. Parents will receive individual results and town wide results are published. The school also gives other diagnostic instruments to students as needed to inform instruction, set goals, and guide curriculum planning.

Grievance Procedure for Students, Parents and Guardians

The aggrieved party should attempt remediation through a conference with the teacher involved. The aggrieved party, if dissatisfied, may present his/her grievances to the Principal who, after hearing the facts and after consultation with the teacher, takes any action he/she thinks is indicated. If the aggrieved party feels that the solution or decision is not agreeable to him/her, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, after consultation with the Principal, takes action and his or her decision shall be final.

Nondiscrimination

No student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability as required by state and federal law.

For more information, please see the following School Committee Policies: AC Nondiscrimination, ACA Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, ACAA Harassment, ACAB Sexual Harassment, ACE Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap.

Participation and Access to Extracurricular Activities

No student shall be denied the opportunity in any implied or explicit manner to participate in an extra-curricular activity because of the race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness of the student except as provided by state law.

Code of Conduct

The Caring School Community Program is implemented at the Cunniff, Hosmer and Lowell Elementary schools to promote a school community where everyone is respectful, responsible, fair and helpful.

Each elementary school has established a clear code of conduct to foster a respectful and safe learning environment to ensure that all students can be successful.

*Please refer to your individual school procedures for specific information regarding your school's guidelines.

Discipline

The Watertown Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sections 37H, 37H½ and 37H¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

The Principal shall have **discretion** in the administration of disciplinary consequences.

The following are some **examples** of student behavior that violate school policy when they occur at school or during school activities. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. A student **may** be disciplined or suspended for any of the following violations:

- Possession, transmission, and/or use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol
- Insolence, disrespect, or insubordination
- Use of inappropriate language
- Fighting
- Rowdy behavior such as pushing or shoving at recess or in the school
- Leaving the classroom, school activity, or school without permission

- Class tardiness or truancy
- Vandalizing, damaging, or stealing school or private property
- Threatening, bullying, or causing bodily harm to any person
- Bringing a dangerous item to school (e.g. knives, replicas)
- Any behavior on the school bus and/or school property that endangers the safety of any student or community member.
- If a student received a bus report for misconduct or behavior that endangers the safety of students, the student may be suspended from the bus at the discretion of the Principal or the Assistant Principal.

POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES:

Students who violate school rules may be subjected to discipline, including but not limited to the following consequences: loss of recess; logical consequences relative to the behavior exhibited (e.g. cleaning or repairing school property); loss of special privileges such as field trips, special assemblies or school events; lunch detention; written reflection or research; etc.

SUSPENSION:

Pursuant to the Due Process Procedures outlined below, a student may be assigned to either an in school or out of school suspension.

Students **may** be suspended for the following reasons (this is not an inclusive list):

- Striking a teacher or other school personnel
- Fighting or any assault or act of violence committed against another student or adult
- Discrimination or harassment
- Use of obscene, abusive, or profane language or gestures which are disruptive to the education process or school activity
- Any behavior on the school bus and/or school property that endangers the safety of any school member
- Violation of any criminal law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts not already covered by the school rules
- Any other behavior that endangers the safety or well-being of fellow students
- Smoking on school property before, during or after school and at all school activities
- Hazing as defined by Mass. General Laws, CH269. Sec 17
- Leaving the classroom or activity without permission
- Vandalizing, damaging or stealing school or private property

In-School Suspension Procedures pursuant to ch. 71, sec. 37H^{3/4}:

Due Process Procedures for In-School Suspension:

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

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

Notice of In-School Suspension:

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

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

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

Parent Meeting:

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

No Right to Appeal:

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

Out-of-School Suspension Procedures pursuant to ch. 71, sec. 37H^{3/4}:

Due Process Procedures for Out-of-School Suspensions:

There are two types of out-of-school suspensions, Short-Term Suspensions and Long-Term Suspensions under ch. 71, sec. 37H^{3/4}. The principal or his/her designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal or his/her designee shall afford the student, additional rights as described below, in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school. All students facing out-of-school suspension shall have the right to oral and written notice, as described below.

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension:

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

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

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

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

Emergency Removal of Student:

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

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR. 53.08(3)(b);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent;

- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

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

Short Term Suspension Procedures Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, s. 37H¾:

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

Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension:

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

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

No Right to Appeal:

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

Long Term Suspension Procedures Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, s. 37H^{3/4}:

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The principal or his/her designee, may, in his or her discretion, may allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71, § 37H^{1/2}, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension:

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

- (b) In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:
1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
 3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
 4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
 5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- (c) The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (d) Based on the evidence, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal or his/her designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
 3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
 5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the

home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

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

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing:

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

will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

- (6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension.
- (7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.
- (8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

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

Exclusion and/or Expulsion pursuant to C. 71, sec. 37H:

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

- a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in

- his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
 - e. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan.
 - f. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal.
 - g. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Felony Complaint or Conviction under Ch. 71, sec. 37H½:

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H½, the following procedures shall be implemented for students charged with or convicted of a felony:

- a. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of this right to appeal and the reasons for such suspension taking effect. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such

suspension; provided however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

- b. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.
- c. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect of the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.
- d. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.
- e. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and

other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal.

- f. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Education Services and Academic Progress Pursuant to Sections 37H, 37H¹/₂ AND 37H³/₄:

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

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

The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

Discipline Provision for Students with Disabilities:

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

1. Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) school days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities and in accordance with the due process procedures in this handbook.
2. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

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

1. If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal is considered a “change of placement”. A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.
2. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change of placement, the school may convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address your child’s problematic behavior.
3. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must inform you that the law requires the school district consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is related to your child’s disability. This consideration is called a “manifestation determination”. Parents have a right to participate in this process. All relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, and evaluations reports.
4. At a manifestation determination meeting, the Team will consider:
 - a. Did the student’s disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct in question?
 - b. Was the conduct a direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP?
5. If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was related to the disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the special circumstances or parents agree). The Team will review the IEP or Section 504 Plan and any behavioral intervention plans and may amend those plans as appropriate. The Team will complete a functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plan if it has not already done so.
6. If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was not related to the disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according the school’s code of conduct. The Team may, as appropriate, complete a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modification, to address the behavior so that it does not recur. For students with IEPs, during the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension under federal law, however, state law does provide all students with the rights to receive educational services during periods of suspensions lasting longer than ten days.

Special circumstances for exclusion

Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event.

Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension under federal law, however, state law does provide all students with the rights to receive educational services during periods of suspensions lasting longer than ten days.

School personnel will provide Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. Parent, guardian and/or student may petition Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504).

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for Special Education or a 504 Plan:

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
 - a) The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
 - b) The parent had requested an evaluation; or
 - c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel
 - d) specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.
 - e) The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures

consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

3. If the student is found eligible for an IEP or 504 Plan, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Anti-Bullying Procedures

The Watertown School Committee policy and procedures are compliant with MGL c 71, Section 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, which was enacted May 3, 2010.

All forms of bullying and cyber bullying by Watertown Public Schools students or staff members are hereby prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying or cyber-bullying in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline. This policy is in effect while students are on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned and/or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct creates a hostile environment or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of the school. Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

All schools under the direction of the principal and the guidance department, provide ongoing professional development and training to the staff throughout the school year. Additionally, faculty meetings and other professional time will be devoted to ensure that our schools are bully free zones and that they optimize learning in a safe and caring environment.

A quick response and investigation of any alleged bullying incident will be conducted. This will include notification, resolution, consequences and other necessary steps depending on the exact nature of the situation. It is important that our children and staff work to create a school where all children are respected, cared for and encouraged, and capable of achieving their fullest potential.

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is defined as “the repeated use by one or more students, or by a member of a school staff, of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to oneself or of damage to one’s property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.”

Definition of Cyber-bullying: Cyber-bullying is defined as “bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited. Making false allegations, providing discriminatory statements, and making defamatory statements is prohibited and engaging in such activity will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Teachers and staff are **required** by law to report incidences of bullying to the principal in their building. The principal will establish a procedure which will include the following steps:

Completion of an Incident Report Form;

An interview with the target of alleged bullying ;

An interview with the child accused of bullying ,

An interview of witnesses as appropriate.

Determination by the Principal or his/her designee that bullying occurred;

Plan for intervention and notification of parent(s) or guardian(s).

Students, parents/guardians or others who wish to report bullying or other activities that concern them to school administrators and School Police may do so using the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form which may be found at https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bwk8p35cZwi_QkRLenFKTzhtM2R5NVA5QUp3WGg4NzZW_eHRF/view. It is not necessary for this form to be filled out, but it is helpful. An anonymous bullying report may also be submitted on the website at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfvJmKPYJ5EeSzkmkQLsFoebju1qD7yNzuRkbc2KnZTgDH0w/viewform>.

Whenever an incident of bullying is determined to have taken place, the parents of all students involved will be notified of the incident and of the actions being taken by the school to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

A Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be developed to help both the target and aggressor. These will be individualized to the students with the goal of preventing further bullying and to restore a sense of safety and support for all involved. For additional information regarding the District's Student to Student Harassment/Bullying policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JBA.

Educational programs will be offered to parents about MGL c. 71, Section 370, "An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools" during the school year. Information on these programs will be posted on the district's website and in school newsletters.

The complete text of the Watertown Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan may be found on the District's website at <https://sites.google.com/a/watertown.k12.ma.us/watertown-k12-ma-us/>.

Personal Electronic Devices

To better protect students from misuse of handheld devices the following guidelines have been established:

1. In the school building, personal electronic devices (PED) should be off, unless specified otherwise by the teacher. PEDs may be used during school hours under the supervision of the teacher only.
2. Any use of these PEDs outside of teacher supervision is strictly **prohibited**. Faculty/staff have the right to confiscate a PED and turn it into the principal's office.

The student may pick up the device at the office at the end of the school day.
Repeated offenses may require the parent to pick up the device.

3. PEDs should not be used during the school day for communication between students and parents. Urgent messages between parents and students must be communicated via the main office.
4. The school is not responsible for the maintenance, loss, theft or damage of any personal electronic device.
5. All use of personal electronic devices is commensurate with the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

Field Trips:

Students are invited on field trips throughout the year. In order to participate on a field trip, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior and citizenship during school and at school-sponsored events. Students not meeting these expectations may be excluded at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee. Under such circumstances, the school will provide an alternate learning experience at school on the day of the field trip.

All field trips will be staffed by school personnel and by invited parent chaperones who have satisfied school volunteer requirements, including CORI and fingerprint-based CHRI checks as appropriate. Classroom teachers will notify those parents who will be accompanying the trip as chaperones. For safety reasons, as well as space needs on some trips, we will not be able to accommodate additional adults on field trips.

Dress Code

Students are expected to attend school appropriately dressed and properly groomed. Low-cut pants, low necklines, shirts exposing midriffs, short skirts or short shorts are not appropriate for school. Hats may be worn to school but will be removed upon entering the building. In addition, clothing cannot discriminate, demean or be derogatory towards any group or individual. Apparel that contains statements or symbols that make negative statements about race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, stereotypes or that has sexual connotations or sexual innuendo is not permitted at school. We will call parents if a change of clothing is needed.

Student clothing should also present a healthy, clean and safe atmosphere for students. Flip-flops, beach shoes and slippers are not permitted as they pose a safety risk on stairs, at recess and in the event of an emergency. Shoes with wheels are not to be worn to school.

NON-VIOLENT PHYSICAL CRISIS INTERVENTION/PHYSICAL RESTRAINT:

All schools and programs within the Watertown Public Schools strive to maintain safe learning environments for all students and staff. As part of a comprehensive approach to safety, all schools have a physical restraint policy in place with procedures, which follow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations (766 Reg. 603 CMR 46.00 et seq.). If a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent harm, he/she may be restrained until calm in accordance with these regulations. Qualified, trained staff carries out specific procedures and parents/guardians are notified. For further information, contact your child's school.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING PROHIBITED

No motor vehicle idling shall be allowed on school grounds at any time.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE:

The Watertown Public Schools has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors and awards received, (10) post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act, unless the parent or eligible student specifically directs otherwise.

Watertown Public Schools appreciate your help and cooperation.