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The following items will be discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues to be held virtual and/or in-person on Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building:

ros #0-9 - Administration (September 23, 2020)

RENNIE CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH & POLICY – REPORT ON THE TECHNOLOGY SECTION FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN

ros #1-7 - Administration (April 7, 2021)

RENNIE CENTER-PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

(Consider these items together.)

c&p #2-5 - Clerk (February 3, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to an Instructional Assistant at Worcester Technical High School.

c&p #2-6 - Clerk (March 25, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to:

- a. a teacher at Burncoat High School and
- b. a systemwide teacher

c&p #2-7 - Clerk (March 30, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

gb #2-21 - Ms. Novick/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider eliminating the test out option within the employee vaccination requirement.

gb #2-22 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider implementing a student vaccination requirement for participation in extracurricular activities.

gb #2-30 - Administration - (January 19, 2022)

To consider approval of the proposed 2022-23 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

Committee Members
Laura Clancey, Chair
Molly McCullough, Vice-Chair
Jermaine Johnson

Administrative Representative
Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Jennifer Boulais

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

AGENDA #5

The Standing Committee on GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES will hold a virtual and/or in-person meeting:

on: Thursday, May 12, 2022
at: 4:30 p.m.
in: Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. GENERAL BUSINESS

ros #0-9 - Administration (September 23, 2020)

RENNIE CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH & POLICY – REPORT ON THE TECHNOLOGY SECTION FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN

gb #0-28 - Mayor Petty/Miss Biancheria/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

To create an Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the Worcester School Committee to consider changes to the school committee rules, meetings and agendas to make the work of the School Committee and our meetings more effective and better aligned with the focus on the strategic direction of the district. These changes should reflect best practices and address the recommendations included in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s report from 2017.

gb #0-109 - Mr. Monfredo (March 16, 2020)

Request that the School Committee submit to the Clerk any proposed changes to the Rules of the School Committee.

gb #0-210 - Ms. Novick/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough (June 10, 2020)

To conduct an equity audit of the Worcester Public Schools' policies and student handbook.

gb #0-288.1 - Administration/Ms. Novick/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough (September 22, 2020)

Response of the Administration to the request to outline in writing under what circumstances the Department of Children and Families is called regarding a family or child, particularly with regard to student attendance.

gb #0-368 - Ms. Novick/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough (November 23, 2020)

To create Worcester School Committee operational norms.

ros #1-7 - Administration (April 7, 2021)

RENNIE CENTER-PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

ros #1-10 - Administration (July 14, 2021)

To update the Superintendent's Goals and to consider changing the evaluation cycle to reflect the school year

gb #1-285 - Administration (October 14, 2021)

To formulate a policy regarding the use and replacement of Chromebooks and their accessories.

gb #1-322.1 -Administration/Ms. McCullough/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Monfredo/
Ms. Novick (January 12, 2022)

Response of the Administration to the request to review the policies for athletic eligibility.

c&p #2-5 - Clerk (February 3, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to an Instructional Assistant at Worcester Technical High School.

c&p #2-6 - Clerk (March 25, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to:

- a. a teacher at Burncoat High School and
- b. a systemwide teacher

c&p #2-7 - Clerk (March 30, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

gb #2-21 - Ms. Novick/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider eliminating the test out option within the employee vaccination requirement.

gb #2-22 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider implementing a student vaccination requirement for participation in extracurricular activities.

gb #2-24 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider what observances are recognized by the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #2-25 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey/Ms. Kamara (January 12, 2022)

To make provision within all WPS secondary schools of space for prayer during the day for those whose religious observance requires it; relatedly; to add to the student handbook notification to students and families that such provision will be made as needed.

gb #2-30 - Administration - (January 19, 2022)

To consider approval of the proposed 2022-23 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #2-119 - Novick (March 31, 2022)

To consider a one-year alteration to the district policy limiting excused absences to 7 days, in light of quarantine requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion gb #2-6 - Administration - (January 4, 2022)

To consider input from the School Committee's student representatives.

Facilities

Create more single use bathrooms, limit the locking of bathrooms and enhance the HVAC and heating systems.

V. ADJOURNMENT

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

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Administration (September 23, 2020)

RENNIE CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH & POLICY – REPORT ON THE TECHNOLOGY SECTION FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIOR ACTION:

10-1-20 - Superintendent Binienda introduced Dr. Chad d’Entremont, Executive Director of the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy and Vibha Honasoge, Operations Coordinator at the Rennie Center. Its mission is to improve public education through well-informed decision- making based on deep knowledge and evidence of effective policy making and practice.
Dr. d’Entremont, Ms. Honasoge and Ms. Nyamekye provided the following overview of the Technology and Operations section of the Strategic Plan. **(Continued on page 2.)**

BACKUP: (Consider with ros #1-7)

Annex A (9 pages) contains a copy of the Benchmarks for Success in 2023.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

10-1-20 - The district's plan supports increasing use of technology, opening up the possibility for educators to look beyond textbooks for instructional content. By investing in educator professional development related to technology, the district is encouraging individual flexibility and creativity with technology use.

In response to student and educator feedback on the need for technology support, the WPS launched a teacher leadership model in which 100 certified Google trainers known as "iTeachers" train their colleagues.

To complement this training, WPS has increased technology ratios. Starting in the 2020-21 school year, WPS is providing a device for every student and 5,000 hotspots for students who need WiFi access at home.

Educators used technology to connect with families in new ways by engaging in two-way communication with families through videoconferencing and family-school communication apps. The district's response to COVID-19 has furthered strategic plan goals and exemplified a district-wide commitment to technology access and equity.

District leaders are also developing a WPS Caregivers Academy, based upon the urgent need to support families with remote learning. When in-person schooling resumes, the district must develop a plan to repair and/or replace devices at appropriate intervals.

Mayor Petty allowed Ms. Maria Drury to speak.

Ms. Drury stated that she believes that the students need to be in the classroom with the teachers and the technology.

Ms. Novick questioned how the Rennie Center was being paid and how much to which Superintendent Binienda stated that they are being paid \$25,000 through the Barr Grant and that the grant is good until November.

Ms. Novick questioned how much was spent on technology since the pandemic to which Mr. Allen replied that about \$6.2 million dollars was spent or committed to be spent for technology purchases since March.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the three year Technology Plan will be completed this year and will be forwarded to the School Committee at that time.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

8-10-21 - (Considered with ros #1-7.)

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES

Jennifer Davis Carey and Eric Kneeland discussed the proposed plans to update the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Kneeland stated that one of the proposed objectives will be to:

- assign a Community Engagement Committee (CEC) which will incorporate lessons learned through the Strategic Plan
- reflect current circumstances caused and exacerbated by the pandemic and
- provide community engagement and input on appropriate benchmarking, outcomes and data metrics for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.

He proposed that working groups be established for each of the five subsections which would include members of the Community Engagement Committee and one member of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

Ms. Davis Carey proposed that that WEC would provide summaries of each of the subsection in March 2022.

Ms. Novick requested that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the subsections of the Strategic Plan in order to be reviewed in meetings of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

Mrs. Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Novick amended Mrs. Clancey's motion as follows:

Request that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan and **work in collaboration with WEC and the Worcester Research Bureau.**

On a roll call of 3-0, the motion as amended was approved.

HELD

8-26-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING -On a roll call of 7-0, the School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee.

11-23-21 - (Considered with ros #1-7.)

Superintendent Binienda stated that the Administration provided backup for these items based on the Rennie Center data. The information provided by the Worcester Research Bureau contained some other areas that were not addressed in the Rennie Center plan that has not been addressed due to time constraints. She stated that the additional information requested will be presented at the next meeting.

Ms. Novick read the original motion which requested that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the subsections of the Strategic Plan in order to be reviewed in meetings of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 11-23-21 Chairman Clancey made the following motion:
(continued) Request that the items be held for a meeting in December and use the benchmarks for success to get the data in each of the subcategories. On a roll all of 3-0, the motion was approved. Superintendent Binienda stated that a full report was presented on MCAS and suggested that it be added as backup to these items.
HELD
- 12-2-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING -On a roll call of 7-0, the School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee.

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS in 2023 (Appendix B)

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Reduce Number of Schools Performing At or Below the 10th Percentile Statewide				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021*	2023
Benchmark	10	9	7	5
Actual	10	10	Not Issued by DESE	

* Spring 2020 MCAS was not administered
Spring 2021 MCAS was administered remotely or in person.

Increase the number of schools demonstrating or maintaining an SGP in ELA higher than state median 50%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	50%	50.33%	50.67%	51%
Actual	50%	52.1%	6.5%*	

* Spring 2020 MCAS was not administered
Spring 2021 MCAS was administered remotely or in person.

Increase the number of schools demonstrating or maintaining an SGP in Math to higher than state median 50%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	49%	49.33%	49.67%	50%
Actual	54%	60.9%	2.2%*	

* Spring 2020 MCAS was not administered
Spring 2021 MCAS was administered remotely or in person.

100% of top-performing schools maintain their performance levels on state-designated metrics				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	9 schools	9 schools (Minimum)	9 schools	9 schools
Actual	9 schools with accountability percentile >50	9 schools with accountability percentile >50	Not issued by DESE	

Leveling stopped in 2017 (with high schools) with the introduction of MCAS 2.0. Following that, with the pandemic, school classifications have focused on schools that are in need of technical assistance or intervention as required by the US Dept of Education.

100% of building leaders participate in Principal Academy.*				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	25%	45%	100%
Actual				

* The model changed to the implementation of principal networks.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Reduce proficiency gap to 75% in English Language Arts and Math*				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	50%	58%	67%	75%
Actual				

Metric cannot be calculated for this question.

47% of 3rd Graders Will Meet or Exceed Expectations in Reading				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	31%	36%	41%	47%
Actual	31%	37%	31%*	

* MCAS administration was both remote and in-person. MCAS was not administered in 2020.

49% of 3rd Graders Will Meet or Exceed Expectations in Mathematics				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	29%	36%	42%	49%
Actual	29%	30%	15%*	

* MCAS administration was both remote and in-person MCAS was not administered in 2020

49 % of 8th Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on English Language Arts MCAS

	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	33%	38%	44%	49%
Actual	33%	34%	22%*	

* MCAS administration was both remote and in-person MCAS was not administered in 2020

46 % of 8th Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on Math MCAS

	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	25%	32%	39%	46%
Actual	23%	23%	13%*	

* MCAS administration was both remote and in-person MCAS was not administered in 2020

100% of 12th graders enroll and pass a college or career success activity prior to graduation (e.g. AP, dual enrollment, internship)

	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	n/a	80%	90%	100%
Actual	TBD			

100% of students can engage in a digital learning experience (e.g., course or skill building activity in K-5)

	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	30%	53%	76%	100%
Actual (edtech exp)		NA	98%	
Actual (course exp)	13%	55%	53%	

- The education technology experience reflects the percentage of students using Clever to access education technology applications and platforms for learning. Tracking of this metric began in SY20 in the Clever platform ("Analytics" > "Edtech Analytics" > percentage of students logging into Clever) and was at 92%.
- The course experience reflects K-12 students taking any course that contains keywords such as digital or technology.

WELCOMING SCHOOLS

Reduce Chronic Absenteeism to 14% for Students				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	17%	16%	15%	14%
Actual	17%	15%	15%	

Reduce the Number of Students Disciplined for Non-drug, Non-violent, and Non-criminal offenses by 30%				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	71%	61%	51%	41%
Actual	71%	57%	32%	

Reduce the Percentage of Students Disciplined for Non-drug, Non-violent, and Non-criminal offenses by One-third				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	4.8%	4.48%	3.84%	3.2%
Actual	4.8%	3.7%	0.0%	

Reduce number of students suspended for nondrug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses by one-third in each subgroup -English Language Learners				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	4.7%	4.4%	3.8%	3.1%
Actual	4.7%	3.1%	0.1%	

Economically disadvantaged				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	6.1%	5.7%	4.9%	4.1%
Actual	6.1%	4.5%	0.0%	

Students w/ disabilities				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	10.4%	9.7%	8.3%	7.0%
Actual	10.4%	7.5%	0.1%	

High needs				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	5.5%	5.1%	4.4%	3.7%
Actual	5.5%	4.0%	0.0%	

American Indian or Alaska Native				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	11.4%	10.6%	9.1%	7.6%
Actual	11.4%	Not reported	Not reported	

Asian				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%
Actual	0.7%	0.6%	Not reported	

African American/Black				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	4.8%	4.5%	3.8%	3.2%
Actual	4.8%	3.8%	Not reported	

Hispanic/Latino				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	6.7%	6.3%	5.4%	4.5%
Actual	6.7%	4.7%	0.0%	

Multi-race, Non-Hispanic/Latino				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	6.6%	6.2%	5.3%	4.4%
Actual	6.6%	5.1%	Not reported	

White				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	3.1%	2.9%	2.5%	2.1%
Actual	3.1%	2.5%	Not reported	

100% of students engage in social and emotional support initiatives by graduation				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	n/a	33%	75%	100%
Actual				

SEL is embedded in school day activities. SEL support is available for students in need.

Reduce dropout rate to 1.8%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	2.2%	2%	1.93%	1.8%
Actual	2.3%*	2.6%	1.1%	

* Reflects graduating class of 2018 (then GC 2019 and 2021)

By 2023 all schools have a parent liaison trained in parent engagement best practices				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	20%	46%	72%	100%
Actual				

Model changed. WPS are increasing Wrap-around coordinators.

Increase the number of schools with an active site council representative of the school community by 50%				
	2017 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	10%	30%	50%
Actual				

All schools have school site councils. Baseline not listed so difficult to assess percentages.

80% of families report using student information and communication vehicles				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	26%	52%	80%
Actual				

TBD

EDUCATORS

100% of educators proficient or higher on evaluation				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	97.4%	97.6%	98.1%	98.5%
Actual	96.9%	97.5%	Not available	

INVESTING IN EDUCATORS

Increase Diversity of New Hires to 25%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	8%	17%	25%
Actual	22.4%	28.1%	25.5%	

50% of educators earn continuing education credits in priority areas of strategic plan				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	17%	33%	50%
Actual				

* 100% of educators earn professional development points

80% of educators report application of practices aligned with training area				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	27%	53%	80%
Actual				*

* 100% of educators earn professional development points based on demonstration of application of learning (through educator product)

80% of all leadership and educators will report that they have proficiency in the ISTE standards				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	26%	52%	80%
Actual				

* BrightBytes survey administered in SY22: Leadership+Educators were proficient on 6 of 7 ISTE standards

OPERATIONS

100% of School Committee meetings are guided by a consent agenda supported by mayor and superintendent				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	33%	75%	100%
Actual				

As of January 2022, 100% of the School Committee meetings are guided by a consent Agenda supported by the vice chair and superintendent.

Increase participation of the community in existing governance meetings by 40%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	<i>n/a</i>	13%	26%	40%
Actual				

Chairperson of Governance Sub-committee

increase Per-pupil Expenditure by 20%				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	0%	4%	12%	20%
Actual	N/A	4%	Not Available Yet	

Increase the revenue from in-kind or financial contributions within the community by 20%.				
	2018 BASELINE	2019	2021	2023
Benchmark	n/a	6%	13%	20%
Actual				

* To be provided by Finance and Operations.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Administration (April 7, 2021)

RENNIE CENTER-PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIOR ACTION:

4-15-21 - Superintendent Binienda stated that the Rennie Center partnered with the WPS in the formulation of the Strategic Plan and was given the task of looking at data, working with and interviewing personnel regarding the progress being made on the Strategic Plan.

Annelise Eaton, Research Director at the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, presented a mid-point progress report focusing on three sections:

Welcoming Schools

This section focused on the climate of schools in order to make students and families feel welcome along with discipline and attendance. She indicated that attendance was better and there was a decline in punitive discipline rates, but there is still a significant racial gap.

Academic Excellence

This section focused on career exploration. The work with Innovation Pathways and AVID were presented as bright spots. Culturally Responsive Teaching and elementary math instruction were areas in need of continued growth.

Culture of Innovation

This section focused on evidence based best practices and support of school leaders. The Reggio Emilia early childhood opportunity in Head Start and ST Math were highlighted as positives. Aligning and adapting high quality curricula were areas that still need to be addressed.

(Continued on Page 2)

BACKUP: (Consider with ros #0-9)

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 4-15-21 - Mr. Monfredo asked for an update on The Worcester Future Teachers Program. Superintendent Binienda stated that she met with Worcester State University on continuing the Worcester Future Teachers Program. Due to COVID, there will be no summer program for WFT, so a two-day program will be held. There is a partnership agreement in progress with Generation Teach which would involve 250 WPS students next summer.
Mr. Monfredo suggested recruiting more Latinx students for the Generation Teach program and also would like to have them as mentors assigned to assist on the attendance issues facing Latinx students. He also suggested having businesses provide incentives and rewards to Latinx students to encourage greater attendance.
Mr. Foley requested that representatives from the Worcester Education Collaborative and the Worcester Research Bureau be present at the next update of the Strategic Plan in order to provide community perspective and feedback. Ms. Novick stated that having a five-year Strategic Plan is no longer considered among best practices within other school districts. The district should be looking at building a culture within the schools that encourages students to stay and become teachers as well as enticing them to want to part of the WPS.
On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.
- 8-10-21 - (Considered with ros #0-9.)
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES
Jennifer Davis Carey and Eric Kneeland discussed the proposed plans to update the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.
Mr. Kneeland stated that one of the proposed objectives will be to:
- assign a Community Engagement Committee (CEC) which will incorporate lessons learned through the Strategic Plan
 - reflect current circumstances caused and exacerbated by the pandemic and
 - provide community engagement and input on appropriate benchmarking, outcomes and data metrics for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.
- He proposed that working groups be established for each of the five subsections which would include members of the Community Engagement Committee and one member of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues. Ms. Davis Carey proposed that that WEC would provide summaries of each of the subsection in March 2022.
Ms. Novick requested that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the subsections of the Strategic Plan in order to be reviewed in meetings of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.
Mrs. Clancey made the following motion:
Request that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan.
Ms. Novick amended Mrs. Clancey's motion as follows:
Request that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the five subsections of the Strategic Plan and **work in collaboration with WEC and the Worcester Research Bureau.**
On a roll call of 3-0, the motion as amended was approved.
HELD
- 8-26-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING –On a roll call of 7-0, the School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

11-23-21 - (Considered with ros #0-9.)

Superintendent Binienda stated that the Administration provided backup for these items based on the Rennie Center data. The information provided by the Worcester Research Bureau contained some other areas that were not addressed in the Rennie Center plan that has not been addressed due to time constraints. She stated that the additional information requested will be presented at the next meeting.

Ms. Novick read the original motion which requested that the Administration provide the school district data for each of the subsections of the Strategic Plan in order to be reviewed in meetings of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

Chairman Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the items be held for a meeting in December and use the benchmarks for success to get the data in each of the subcategories.

On a roll all of 3-0, the motion was approved.

Superintendent Binienda stated that a full report was presented on MCAS and suggested that it be added as backup to these items.

HELD

12-2-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING -On a roll call of 7-0, the School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Clerk (February 23, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to an Instructional Assistant at Worcester Technical High School.

PRIOR ACTION:

3-3-22 - Roger Nugent, EAW President, requested that the staff of Worcester Technical High School be authorized to donate sick days to an Instructional Assistant and indicated that he would provide the information to Human Resources.
Mayor Petty requested that the appropriate number of sick days be provided until a vote is taken at the Standing Committee.
On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Novick), the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the petition.



February 22, 2022

Mayor Joseph Petty
c/o Dr. Helen Friel Clerk of School Committee
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

VIA Email Scan

Dear Dr. Friel,

I would like to speak at the next School Committee meeting on March 3rd

I will be speaking on behalf of the Worcester Tech staff about donating sick days to an Instructional Assistant co-worker.

Please let me know when I will be presenting.

Please let us know when we will be presenting.

Sincerely,

Roger Nugent

Roger Nugent
EAW President

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Clerk (March 25, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to:

- a. a teacher at Burncoat High School and
- b. a systemwide teacher

PRIOR ACTION:

4-7-22 - (Considered with c&p 2-7.)
Roger Nugent, EAW President, requested that the donation of sick days be authorized to a teacher at Burncoat High School and two systemwide teachers and that he would provide the information to Human Resources.
Mayor Petty requested that the appropriate number of sick days be provided until a vote is taken at the Standing Committee.
On a roll call of 7-0, the items collectively were referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the petition.



March 25, 2022

Mayor Joseph Petty
c/o Dr. Helen Friel Clerk of School Committee
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

VIA Email Scan

Dear Dr. Friel,

I would like to speak at the next School Committee meeting on April 7th. I will be speaking about donating sick days for two different teachers from their co-workers. One is a teacher at Burncoat High the other is a Systemwide teacher.

Please let us know when we will be presenting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Roger Nugent'.

Roger Nugent
EAW President

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Clerk (March 30, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

PRIOR ACTION:

4-7-22 - (Considered with c&p 2-7.)
Roger Nugent, EAW President, requested that the donation of sick days be authorized to a teacher at Burncoat High School and two systemwide teachers and that he would provide the information to Human Resources.
Mayor Petty requested that the appropriate number of sick days be provided until a vote is taken at the Standing Committee.
On a roll call of 7-0, the items collectively were referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the petition.



March 30, 2022

Mayor Joseph Petty
c/o Dr. Helen Friel
Clerk of School Committee
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609
VIA Email Scan

Dear Dr. Friel,

I would like to speak at the next School Committee meeting on April 7th. I will be speaking on behalf of the Systemwide Teachers about donating sick days to a Systemwide co-worker. Please let us know when I will be presenting.

Please let us know when we will be presenting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Roger Nugent'.

Roger Nugent
EAW President

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Ms. Novick/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider eliminating the test-out option within the employee vaccination requirement.

PRIOR ACTION:

1-20-22 - On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

The Administration recommends that the district continue to follow the City of Worcester's policy on employee vaccination.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Ms. Novick/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider implementing a student vaccination requirement for participation in extracurricular activities.

PRIOR ACTION:

1-20-22 - On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

The Administration recommends that the district continue to follow the city regulations on immunization of students.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2022

ITEM: Administration (January 21, 2022)

To consider approval of the proposed 2022-23 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

PRIOR ACTION:

- 2-3-22 - On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.
- 4-4-22 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES
On a roll call of 3-0, the item was filed.
- 5-5-22 - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

BACKUP:

- Annex A (6 pages) contains a copy of the proposed changes for the second and third sections of the 2022-23 Student Handbook.
- Annex B (55 pages) contains a copy of the second and third sections of the 2022-23 Student Handbook with the proposed changes.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO 2022– 23 STUDENT HANDBOOK

PAGE	PROPOSED CHANGES
Page 31	<p>Non-Discrimination</p> <p>DELETE (https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Nondiscrimination% 20Grievance%20Procedures.pdf) (ADD https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Grievance-Complaint-Process-for-Civil-Rights-and-Discrimination-Issues-and-Section-504-Compliance-for-Students.pdf)</p>
Page 35	<p>Policy on Caregivers Notification Relative to Sexuality Education Third paragraph delete the word or biology after the words school’s health.</p> <p>Fifth paragraph add at the end For more information regarding the 3Rs health education curriculum, visit https://worcesterschools.org/sexual-health-education-curriculum-information-sessions/</p>
Page 36	<p style="text-align: center;">Insert the following which was approved on 9-23-21 by the full School Committee:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNUAL NOTICE TO CAREGIVERS ON THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)</p> <p>The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) gives parents and students (18 years or older or emancipated) certain rights when a school conducts student surveys, collects and uses information for marketing purposes, and administers certain physical exams to students. Parents have the right to:</p> <p>1. Consent before students can be given a survey concerning one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; • Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family; • Sex behavior or attitudes; • Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; • Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; • Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; • Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or • Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility. <p>2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others; • Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; and • Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law.

	<p>3. Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected information surveys of students; • Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and • Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. <p>These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.</p> <p>Please note that parents are not required by PPRA to be notified about the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students.</p> <p>The Worcester Public Schools protects student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The District's Office of Research and Accountability reviews all internal and external requests to conduct surveys to ensure compliance with ethical and legal requirements.</p> <p>Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Student Privacy Policy Office US Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-58520 For more information visit their website at: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oeped/sppo/index.html</p>
<p>Page 36</p>	<p>Student Records The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act First paragraph add the word privacy after the words is a Federal. Add at the end of the first paragraph - This serves as the Worcester Public Schools required annual public notice of the types of information it may release and under what conditions.</p>
<p>Page 37</p>	<p>Student Records The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act After #3 – letters a though i - delete the periods at the end of each line Delete and at the end of h. Add j. State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization, for the care and protection of the student, pursuant to State and tribal law.</p>
<p>Page 37</p>	<p>Student Records The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act</p> <p>Replace the two paragraphs After j with the following: FERPA allows schools to disclose, without consent, “directory” information, which is considered by the Worcester Public Schools, under state regulation 603 CMR 23.07, to include student’s name; address; date of birth; school; class and grade level; dates of attendance; honors and awards received; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and post-high school plans.</p>

	<p>Caregivers and eligible students may request that the Worcester Public Schools not disclose certain directory information by completing the Notification Concerning Privacy of Student Directory Information "Do Not Release" Form and returning it to your child's school.</p> <p>Student Data and Online Instructional Applications. Worcester Public Schools may share student data with vendors that provide online instructional applications that are used with students, which is an institutional function or service, but only when the vendor signs a student data privacy agreement with the school district or if an express written consent form has been signed by the student's parent/guardian/caregiver. A list of approved online instructional resources can be found at: https://sdpc.a4l.org/district_search_national.php?districtID=786</p> <p>Additional information on FERPA may also be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education at the following address:</p> <p>Student Privacy Policy Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-8520 (ADD For more information visit their website at: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oeped/sppo/index.html)</p>
<p>Page 37</p>	<p>Regulations Second paragraph delete the word be after may</p>
<p>Page 39</p>	<p>Types of Student Records #3 remove the number 3 before the words Access to Student Records</p>
<p>Page 40</p>	<p>Delete the last paragraph 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 caregiver. This serves as Worcester Public Schools public notice of the types of information it may release.)</p>
<p>Page 41</p>	<p>Delete the first paragraph Eligible students and caregivers who do not want this information disclosed to any third party must submit a written request to the principal of the school.</p>
<p>Page 41</p>	<p>#4 remove the number 4 before the words Access of other third parties. #5 remove the number 5 before the words Amending Student Records. #5, second sentence delete the word Education's and the web link http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/ims/sasid/</p>
<p>Page 42</p>	<p>Every Student Succeeds Act After #4 at the end of the second paragraph delete the period and add the following: ; and (ii) timely notice that the caregiver's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.</p>

	<p>Third paragraph add and by the state or school district which must include a policy, procedure, or parental right to opt the child out of such assessment, where applicable. after the word ESSA.</p> <p>After the last paragraph before Bullying and Harassment add the following paragraph:</p> <p>For a child who has not been identified as an English learner prior to the beginning of the school year but is identified as an English learner during such school year, a school must notify the child’s caregivers during the first two weeks of school of the child being placed in a language instruction educational program.</p>
Page 44	<p>Academic Requirements</p> <p>Delete the last sentence in item #1</p> <p>Delete the following from item #3:</p> <p>In addition, a student’s overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above. Students in grades 10, 11 or 12 are eligible for a <u>one-time-only</u> waiver during their high school years. The waiver is applicable if the student does not meet the C average (minimum of 70) on all yearlong courses in the previous academic year.</p> <p>Add “during the prior academic year” after the word above in item #3</p>
Page 45	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Item #3</p> <p>DELETE:</p> <p>Any student with five (5) or more unexcused absences will be excluded from the club or team for the remainder of the current sports season. A student with ten (10) or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for any club or team for the remainder of the academic year.</p> <p>REPLACE WITH:</p> <p>A student with fourteen (14) or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for any club or team for the remainder of the academic year.</p>
Page 46	<p>Reasonable Conduct</p> <p>Third paragraph update the page number (<u>Due Process, Page 22</u>) once the Student Handbook is complete.</p>
Page 47	<p>Procedures for Suspension(s) Not Exceeding 10 School Days</p> <p>First bullet, first sentence add at the end <u>unless there are a pattern of suspensions that constitute a change in placement</u></p> <p>Procedures for Suspension(s) Exceeding 10 School Days</p> <p>Fourth bullet, first sentence add the word <u>to</u> after the word district and replace <u>is related to</u> with <u>has a direct nexus to</u></p> <p>Second sentence</p> <p>Add the word <u>parents</u> before the word caregivers and add the word <u>team</u> before the word process.</p> <p>Third sentence</p> <p>Add the word <u>any</u> before the word information and add the word <u>parents</u> before the word caregivers.</p>
Page 48	<p>First bullet</p> <p>Add the words <u>the behavior falls</u> after the word unless, add the words <u>described below</u> after the word circumstances, add the words <u>the parents</u> before caregivers and add the words <u>that a change in placement is appropriate</u> to the end of the sentence.</p>

Page 50	Overview of School Health/Nursing Services Offered Second paragraph replace BMI with Body-mass index (BMI)
Page 50	School Health Advisory Council First paragraph, third sentence delete the word comprised and replace it with the word composed .
Page 51	Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use #7 at the end of the sentence delete the word pelvis and add the word hips .
Page 54	Student Services Social Emotional Learning Line #1 Replace the word " behavioral " with " emotional ". Line #2 ADD Office of and DELETE Department Bullet #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DELETE: Collaborative ADD: Collaboration and consultation with teachers
Page 54	Bullet #9 REPLACE SSP with ITSS
Page 56	Special Education Replace the first paragraph with the following: The mission of the Special Education Department is to provide support, technical assistance and service to schools, staff, students, families, and community stakeholders as we work collaboratively to promote safe schools where all children will accelerate and achieve success. Through our efforts we are committed to partnering with schools to ensure the fidelity of specially designed instruction, inclusion opportunities, professional learning, and rigorous outcomes for students with disabilities. The following key areas provides an overview of special education: First sentence after the words Child Find activities delete the words includes the district providing and replace with ensure that the district
Page 58	Homeschooling Third sentence delete the words The notification and replace with Templates for plans . Before the fourth sentence add the following: Plan templates are also available on the WPS website and parents can submit a plan that includes required information.
Page 59	Homeschooling Last paragraph update the page number (page 44) once the student handbook is complete.
Page 63	Update the page number (page 64) once the student handbook is complete.
Page 66	Standardized Testing For Information on Testing Second sentence delete School and Student Performance and replace with Research and Accountability . Third sentence delete the word also after the words assessments can .

<p>Page 71</p>	<p>Delete the title Early College Program: College Courses for High School Students Replace with: Dual Enrollment (College Courses for High School Students)</p> <p>Add the following before the first paragraph: Early College Worcester (ECW)</p> <p>The Early College Worcester (ECW) program is a secondary/post-secondary partnership involving Worcester Public Schools (WPS), Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), and Worcester State University (WSU).</p> <p>This program enables WPS high school students to participate in college and career readiness activities and college credit course offerings. The activities and courses are offered at the high school or on the QCC or WSU campuses. Students earn college and high school credits at the same time and can graduate from high school with a high school diploma and at least 12 college credits.</p> <p>The goals of the ECW program are to increase the percentage of students who are college ready, receive a high school diploma, enroll in college in the fall, and persist in college.</p> <p><i>Other Dual Enrollment Offerings</i></p> <p>The paragraph after <i>Other Dual Enrollment Offerings</i>, add the words or through Early College Worcester after the words in their high schools.</p>
<p>Page 72</p>	<p>Delete Becker College Delete the * after Worcester Polytechnic Institute Delete *Worcester Polytechnic Institute offers courses at reduced tuition to high school students. Delete the first sentence in the paragraph above MA Seal of Biliteracy and add the word all after the words courses taken at.</p>
<p>Page 74</p>	<p>Special Education Parent Advisory Council Second paragraph, second sentence delete the words four times after the words Caregivers meet.</p>
<p>Page 79</p>	<p>Massachusetts Parental Notice for One Time Consent to Allow the School District To Access MassHealth (Medicaid) Benefits Delete in two places Director and replace with Coordinator.</p> <p>Second paragraph after Dear Caregiver delete the word or after the word occupational and replace with , and.</p>
<p>After Page 80</p>	<p>The FERPA directory information opt-out form that should go at the end of the handbook. it is associated with the FERPA section (i.e., STUDENT RECORDS). 9-23-21 - This was approved by the full School Committee.</p>

**Nondiscrimination
Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Title IX
ADA Title I Section 504/Chapter 622 Grievance Procedure**

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, age,

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handicap (disability), genetics, military service, mental illness, sexual harassment or sexual orientation. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to a full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. The Chief Diversity Officer (Ivonne Perez 508-799-3115) is responsible for coordination of Title IX. The Manager of Social and Emotional Learning (Maura Mahoney, 508-799-3175) is responsible for Section 504 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Grants Manager (Greg Bares, 508-799-3108) is responsible for Title I. Timothy Sippel, Ed.L. (Secondary) and Marie Morse, Ed.D. and Ellen Kelley (Elementary) in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership (508-799-3499) are responsible for Chapter 622. These staff members are responsible for coordinating grievance procedures, which can be viewed at:

(DELETE [https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Nondiscrimination% 20Grievance%20Procedures.pdf](https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Nondiscrimination%20Grievance%20Procedures.pdf))

(ADD <https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Grievance-Complaint-Process-for-Civil-Rights-and-Discrimination-Issues-and-Section-504-Compliance-for-Students.pdf>)

and by contacting your child's school. For more information relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action contact the Chief Diversity Officer, Ivonne Perez at 508-799-3115, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609.

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.
4. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser
5. 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.
6. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered an educational or economic consequence as a result of the harasser's conduct.

Complaint Procedure

1. Any member of the school community who believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident(s) to one of the grievance officers. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:

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- a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
 - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain their response to the complaint.
 - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
 - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation they may:
 - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
 - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or their designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings, the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Worcester Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

State and Federal Remedies

Nothing in this policy or procedure shall be deemed to affect a complainant's right to pursue other remedies at law, including administrative appeals or lawsuits.

Considerations

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

1. A male, as well as a female, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a female, as well as a male, may be the harasser.
2. The harasser does not have to be the victim's superior.

ANTI-HAZING LAW (G.L. c. 269)

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$3,000.00 or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in Sections 18 and 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the

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physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section 17 and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to their self or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and Sections 17 and 18 to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18 to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said Sections 17 and 18, that each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants has received a copy of Sections 17 and 18 and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and Sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and Sections 17 and 18 and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and

participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

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Child Abuse

MGL c. 119, §§51A and 51B govern the reporting of child abuse and neglect and require all professional school employees to report suspected cases of abuse of students to the Department of Children and Families.

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

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

Drug Free School Zones

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

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

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

Education of Homeless Children

The Worcester Public Schools complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B – Education for Homeless Children and Youth) reauthorized in January, 2002 and the amendments to this act under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The Worcester Public Schools will:

1. Establish safeguards that protect homeless students from harassment and/or discrimination on the basis of their homelessness
2. Ensure that all children and youth will receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools
3. Inform caregivers/students of their right to appeal the district's enrollment or transportation decisions to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or their designee, consistent with the Homeless Education Advisory 2003-7; McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Dispute Resolution process
4. Follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act

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

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1. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing, assuming transportation arrangements are feasible and are in the best interest of the student;
2. Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they get permanent housing;
3. Students who choose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them;
4. If a homeless student arrives without records, the student will be enrolled immediately and the district's designated Homeless Education Liaison must assist the family and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records;
5. To the extent feasible, transportation will be provided for students in order to maintain continuity of their attendance in a single school over the course of the school year;
6. When a student is residing outside of the city due to circumstances related to homelessness (in accordance with the statutory definition of "homeless") efforts will be coordinated with the district where the student is temporarily residing to provide transportation to the school of origin if this is the preference of the caregivers and student;
7. Persons living in battered person's shelters or a safe house can give school officials the Post Office Box or mailing address of the shelter office, along with verification from the shelter director that the children are residing in that facility in lieu of the street address. Transportation arrangements will be made in a manner that seeks not to disclose such shelter addresses.
8. Questions or concerns regarding issues pertaining to homeless students should be referred to the Office of Social and Emotional Learning at (508) 799-3175.

POLICY ON CAREGIVERS NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION

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

At the beginning of each course, all caregivers 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 caregivers. The caregivers notice will include the date and time for a caregiver meeting to be held at the school.

At the caregiver meeting, the school's health (**DELETE or biology**) teacher will describe the course in detail and answer questions/concerns which caregivers may have about course content and delivery.

At the time of enrollment, principals will give this written notice to caregivers 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, caregivers will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before changes are implemented. **(ADD For more information regarding the 3Rs health education curriculum, visit <https://worcesterschools.org/sexual-health-education-curriculum-information-sessions/>)**

Each written notice sent to caregivers will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy and will inform caregivers 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. Caregivers who request to exempt their child can send to their child's principal a letter or the reply form attached to the caregiver notice. The

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caregiver 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 caregiver 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 caregivers and others to the extent practicable. Caregivers may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school, and you may review through the Office of Curriculum and Professional Learning, 20 Irving Street, 508-799-3470.

A caregiver, 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 caregiver who is still dissatisfied can write to the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education at 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148 to request a review of the issue(s) in dispute.

ANNUAL NOTICE TO CAREGIVERS ON THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

Insert the following which was approved on 9-23-21 by the full School Committee.

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) gives parents and students (18 years or older or emancipated) certain rights when a school conducts student surveys, collects and uses information for marketing purposes, and administers certain physical exams to students. Parents have the right to:

4. Consent before students can be given a survey concerning one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

5. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others;
- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; and
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law.

6. Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Please note that parents are not required by PPRA to be notified about the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students.

The Worcester Public Schools protects student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The District's Office of Research and Accountability reviews all internal and external requests to conduct surveys to ensure compliance with ethical and legal requirements.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-58520

For more information visit their website at:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/sppo/index.html>

SELECTIVE SERVICE

Peacetime Registration Requirement of Selective Service System

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

The Every Student Succeeds Act reiterates that the various branches of the United States armed forces may have access to directory information of 11th and 12th grade high school students. However, the Family Rights to Privacy Act states that caregivers may deny this access if they so wish. Directory information includes student's name, address, phone number, and age. If the caregiver wishes for the Worcester Public Schools not to divulge their child's information, the caregiver must make that request in writing to the school principal.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal (**ADD privacy**) law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive federal funds. (**ADD This serves as the Worcester Public Schools required annual public notice of the types of information it may release and under what conditions.**)

FERPA gives caregivers certain rights with respect to their child's education records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Under FERPA, caregivers and eligible students have the following rights:

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1. To inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless it is impossible for caregivers or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee if copies are requested.
2. To request that a school add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record. If the school decides not to amend the record, the caregiver or eligible student then has the right to a conference with the principal. After the conference, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the caregiver or eligible student has the right to appeal to the Superintendent and has a further right to appeal to the School Committee.
3. To have control over the disclosure of personal identifiable information from the education record. Generally, schools must have written permission from the caregiver or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

(Delete the periods at the end of each bullets a-i)

- a. School officials with legitimate educational interest.
- b. Other schools to which a student is transferring.
- c. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- d. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
- e. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- f. Accrediting organizations.
- g. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- h. Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- (DELETE and)**
- i. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
- j. **(ADD State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization, for the care and protection of the student, pursuant to State or tribal law.)**

Replace the two paragraphs After j with the following:

FERPA allows schools to disclose, without consent, "directory" information, which is considered by the Worcester Public Schools, under state regulation 603 CMR 23.07, to include student's name; address; date of birth; school; class and grade level; dates of attendance; honors and awards received; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and post-high school plans.

Caregivers and eligible students may request that the Worcester Public Schools not disclose certain directory information by completing the Notification Concerning Privacy of Student Directory Information "Do Not Release" Form and returning it to your child's school.

Student Data and Online Instructional Applications. Worcester Public Schools may share student data with vendors that provide online instructional applications that are used with students, which is an institutional function or service, but only when the vendor signs a student data privacy agreement with the school district or if an express written consent form has been signed by the student's parent/guardian/caregiver. A list of approved online instructional resources can be found at: https://sdpc.a4l.org/district_search_national.php?districtID=786

Additional information on FERPA may also be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education at the following address:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

(ADD For more information visit their website at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/sppo/index.html>)

Regulations

In compliance with Chapter 71, Section 34D of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Worcester School Department is notifying the caregivers 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 (**DELETE** maybe) be asked to complete a questionnaire which relates to identifying information, family background, interests and plans for the future. Any questions which students and/or caregivers feel should not be answered may be omitted. This information is necessary in order to keep school records up to date.

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

Types of Student Records

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

The student's record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, according to 603 Code of Massachusetts Regulations, Chapter 23.00. It includes all information, regardless of form or characteristics, concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way such student may be individually identified.

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

- a. Name (student and caregiver)
- b. Address (student and caregiver)
- c. Telephone number (student and caregiver)
- d. Date of birth
- e. Course titles
- f. Grades or equivalent
- g. Course credit
- h. Grade level completed
- i. Year completed

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

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

- a. Standardized test results (including MCAS results)*
- b. Class rank
- c. Extracurricular activities
- d. Evaluations
- e. Educational plans
- f. IEP, 504, Regular Education Accommodation, Behavior Support Plans and Safety Support Plans
- g. Student Support Process Reports
- h. Individual Student Success Plans
- i. Health records
- j. Attendance
- k. Incident reports involving student suspension or the committing of criminal acts
- l. School Discipline Records

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

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

Teachers' notes and similar information that is not accessible to authorized school personnel or third parties are not included in the student record. Such information may be shared with the student, caregiver, 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 their caregiver 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 their 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. Caregivers 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.~~ (remove number) 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 Worcester Public Schools or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the Worcester Public Schools 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 caregivers role shall have access to a student's records:
 - i. The custodial caregiver with physical custody
 - ii. The student's caregiver
 - iii. A person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of or in conjunction with the student's caregiver, assuming this caregiver has physical custody.

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- f. Non-custodial caregivers **shall not** have access to a student's records when:
 - i. The caregiver has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial caregiver or
 - ii. The caregiver has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation or
 - iii. The caregiver's access to the child or to the custodial caregiver has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the student information described in the statute.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 § 34H requires the non-custodial caregiver to submit a written request for access to the student's records to the school principal. For further information contact your child's principal.

- g. The student, if age fourteen (14) or upon entering grade nine (9).
- h. Authorized school administrative personnel may examine records for administrative reasons even if they are not providing direct service to the student.
- i. Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents, as necessary, in connection with the enforcement of federal and state education laws. Personally identifiable data shall be protected and destroyed when no longer needed for enforcement purposes.
- j. To authorized school personnel of the school to which a student transfers or seeks to enroll [603 CMR 23.07 (4)(f)].
- k. Upon the receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the eligible student or caregiver is notified in reasonable time that they may seek to have the process quashed, as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66A, § 2(k).
- l. The Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- m. A probation officer.
- n. A justice of any court.
- o. The Department of Youth Services (DYS).
- p. Bureau of Special Investigation on Welfare Fraud may inspect enrollment and attendance records of any student who is being investigated for welfare fraud or of any student who is the child, ward or dependent of someone who is being investigated for welfare fraud. The law prohibits the Bureau from obtaining access to academic, medical and evaluative records.
- q. Appropriate parties, including the local police department and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapon reports, if knowledge of the information may be necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

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.

~~(DELETE 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 caregiver. This serves as Worcester Public Schools public notice of the types of information it may release.)~~

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~~**(DELETE Eligible students and caregivers who do not want this information disclosed to any third party must submit a written request to the principal of the school.)**~~

- 4. ~~(remove number)~~ **Access of other third parties** requires the written consent of the eligible student or caregiver except for the provisions specified under 23.07(4) of the regulations. When granting consent, the eligible student or caregiver 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 caregiver 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 caregiver.

5. (remove number) Amending Student Records

The student and/or their/caregiver shall have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record. In accordance with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (~~DELETE~~ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/sasid/>), district and school records are to reflect a student's stated name and pronouns. Nothing more formal than usage is required, consistent with the statutory standard.

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 their caregiver 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 caregiver may be represented by an advocate of their choosing to cross-examine witnesses and to present evidence. Written notice of the decision will be furnished to the student and/or caregiver.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

The Worcester Public Schools makes every effort to comply with the regulations and requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a federal law enacted in 2015. This legislation requires school district personnel to notify caregivers of a variety of issues regarding their children's education. Among them is a requirement to notify caregivers 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, caregivers have the right to know the professional qualifications of classroom teachers who instruct their children. ESSA allows caregivers to ask for certain information about a student's classroom teacher and requires that the district provide the caregivers with the requested information in a timely manner. Specifically, caregivers have the right to ask for the following information about each of their children's classroom teachers in a Title I school:

1. Whether the teacher has met the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

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2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which DESE qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
4. Whether any instructional assistants or other paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

If caregivers would like to receive any of this information, they must contact the principal of their child(ren)'s Title I school.

In addition, districts are required to provide to each individual caregiver information on the child's level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the state academic assessments required under Title I (**DELETE** .) (**ADD** ; and (ii) timely notice that the caregiver's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.)

At the beginning of each school year, Title I schools must notify caregivers of each child that the caregivers may request (and the school will provide) in a timely manner information regarding any state or school policy regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA (**ADD** and by the state or school district which must include a policy, procedure, or parental right to opt the child out of such assessment, where applicable.) Information on each mandated assessment is available on the Worcester Public Schools' website.

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

(**ADD** For a child who has not been identified as an English learner prior to the beginning of the school year but is identified as an English learner during such school year, a school must notify the child's caregivers during the first two weeks of school of the child being placed in a language instruction educational program.)

Bullying and Harassment

The Worcester Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying. The school will investigate and respond to claims of bullying or harassment in accordance with the district's Bullying Intervention Plan and other school policies and state and federal law.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target which:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to them self, or of damage to their property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- Wire
- Radio
- Electromagnetic

- Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of caregivers and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying or cyber-bullying. Bullying is prohibited:

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

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

- Create a hostile environment at school for the target
- Infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school

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 their 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 them 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 determine third quarter eligibility) a grade of 65 or above in four traditional yearlong major courses. Yearlong major courses are equivalent to a Carnegie Unit which is a minimum of 1.0 credits. **(DELETE: In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above.)**
2. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses that would be the equivalent of four traditional yearlong major courses.
3. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed four yearlong classes with a 65 or above **(ADD: during the prior academic year.)** **(DELETE: In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above. Students in grades 10, 11 or 12 are eligible for a one-time only waiver during their high school years. The waiver is applicable if the student does not meet the C average (minimum of 70) on all yearlong courses in the previous academic year.)** Incoming 9th graders are exempt from academic requirement for the first quarter only.
4. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determining only on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the caregivers of all students.
5. Incomplete grades may not count towards eligibility.
6. A student who repeats work upon which they once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
7. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Attendance

1. A student who is absent from school will not participate in any school-related activity. This includes in-house suspensions.
2. A student must be in school for at least three (3) hours to be able to participate in any school-related activity.

DELETE:

- ~~3. Any student with five (5) or more unexcused absences will be excluded from the club or team for the remainder of the current sports season. A student with ten (10) or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for any club or team for the remainder of the academic year.~~

REPLACE WITH:

A student with fourteen (14) or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for any club or team for the remainder of the academic year.

Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Activities

Consistent with the requirements of Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletic Programs:

1. At or before the start of each sport or band season, all students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities shall complete and submit to the coach, athletic director, or band director a current WPS Permission Form, signed by both the student and the caregiver, that provides comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history; any head, face or cervical spine injury history; and any history of co-existent concussive injuries.
2. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
3. The student shall not return to play unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization as specified in 105 CMR 201.011.

All head injuries must be reported to the nursing administrative office, including those that occur outside of the school prior to the start of the sports season or physical activity. Caregivers must also complete the history of head injury section on the **Extracurricular Athletic Activities Permission Form**.

Additional information, including the *Post Sports-related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form*, can be found on the Worcester Public Schools website: <https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/HEAD%20INJURY%20MEDICAL%20CLEARANCE%20FORM.pdf>

Chemical Health MIAA Rule 62

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is later), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, Vape pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer", inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one's mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by their doctor.

If a student who violates this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, any penalty imposed will not take effect until that student is able to participate again. See MIAA Handbook for penalties.

Reasonable Conduct

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

Students are also expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions include, but are not limited to, insubordination, fighting, taunting, 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 22. Update page number once the Student Handbook is complete.)**

It is also understood that spectators, including caregivers of all Worcester Public Schools' athletes/students, are to conduct themselves appropriately at all athletic competitions/activities, both home and away. Caregivers 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 Worcester Public Schools Student Handbook, procedures will be implemented to comply with state and federal law and regulations regarding students with disabilities. Additional information can be found at: <https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Discipline%20of%20Students%20Under%20Section%20504%20and%20ADA.pdf>, or you may obtain a copy from your child's school or by contacting the WPS 504 coordinator at 508-799-3175.

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

For special education students, the principal or their designee will notify the Evaluation Team Chair of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability and a record will be kept in the Student Information System. For 504 students, the principal or their designee will notify the 504 Coordinator of the suspendable offense of the student and a record will be kept in the Student Information System.

Procedures for Suspension(s) Not Exceeding 10 School Days

- Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) school days during a school year (**ADD unless there are a pattern of suspensions that constitute a change in placement.**) Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities and in accordance with the due process procedures in this handbook.
- The school provides additional 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(s) Exceeding 10 School Days

- If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, or if there is a pattern of suspension, this removal is considered a "change of placement". A change of placement because of a disciplinary removal occurs if your child with a disability is removed from their current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days, or the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitutes a pattern because: (1) the removals total more than 10 school days in a school year; (2) your child's behavior is substantially similar to previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and (3) additional factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another constitute a pattern.
- A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.
- 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.
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change of placement, the school must inform you that the law requires the school district **ADD to** consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action **DELETE is related to ADD has a direct nexus to** your child's disability. This consideration is called a "manifestation determination", **ADD parents**/caregivers have a right to participate in this **ADD team** process. All relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, evaluation reports and **ADD any** information provided by **ADD parents**/caregivers.
- At a manifestation determination meeting, the team will consider:
 - ◇ Did the student's disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct in question?
 - ◇ Was the conduct a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?

- If the team's manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was related to your child's disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement unless (**ADD the behavior falls**) under the special circumstances (**ADD described below**) or (**ADD the parents/**)caregivers agree (**ADD that a change in placement is appropriate**). 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.
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was not related to your child's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to 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 suspension 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 hearings 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 day of school 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 caregiver's Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Caregiver and Student Rights Under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year or a removal which results in a change in placement. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. The caregiver and/or student may petition the Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing and may have other rights as outlined in the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

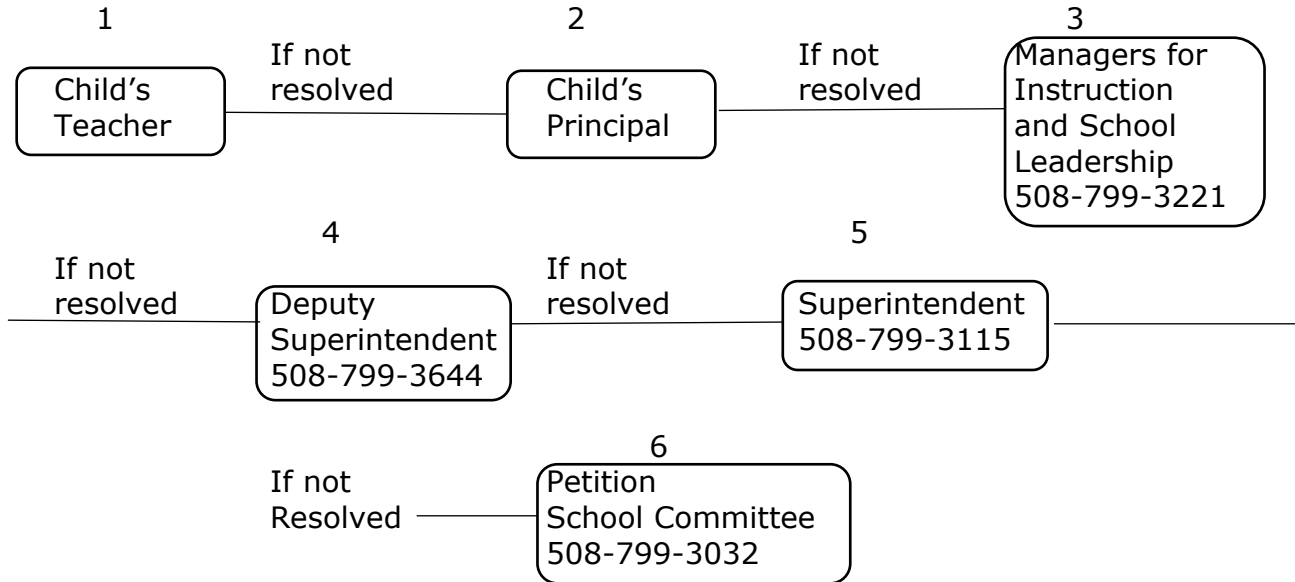
RESOLVING SCHOOL-RELATED PROBLEMS

Procedure

RESOLVING SCHOOL-RELATED PROBLEMS

In order to resolve school-related problems, caregivers will follow this process:
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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 caregivers with verbal and written reports of any potential or actual incidents that may impact on the safety of students.

Criteria for reporting will include the following:

1. Caregivers 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 caregivers.
3. Principals will file a dual report immediately with the appropriate Managers for Instruction and School Leadership and the School Committee.

HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Wellness Policy

Preamble

It is the mission of the Worcester Public Schools (WPS) Wellness Policy to enable students to become independent and self-directed learners, responsible for meeting their own health and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate. It is the goal of the Wellness Policy to promote **all students'** physical, emotional and social well-being through the coordinated efforts of all departments and services offered in the Worcester Public Schools. This model calls for a collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive approach to learning and health, and serves as the model for the WPS Wellness Policy and nursing practice.

Overview of School Health/Nursing Services Offered

A coordinated program of accessible health services will be provided to students through the leadership of the Nursing Department, in collaboration with the school Physician Consultant, various school departments, and community agencies, as applicable. The program includes communicable disease prevention and reporting, immunization compliance, health education and wellness promotion, health assessments and screenings, chronic condition (including but not

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limited to asthma, diabetes, life-threatening allergies, seizures, ADHD) management, counseling, community health referrals, first aid and emergency care. The school nurses collaborate and coordinate with caregivers and other health care providers to create an Individual Health Care Plan.

School nurses provide **mandated screenings** for students at various grade levels in accordance with MA State laws and the Division of Public Health requirements. Screenings include vision and hearing (grades K-5, 8, 10), scoliosis (grades 5-9) height, weight and (**ADD Body-mass index (BMI)**) (grades 1, 4, 7, 10) and Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment [SBIRT] (grades 7 and 9). All students will receive a form from school for caregivers to choose to opt out of one or more of these preventive screenings. All school staff throughout the district are trained by school nurses yearly on life threatening allergy awareness education and Epi-Pen administration and basic first-aid. There are also many school staff members who are trained by the Nursing Department in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use. Every school and outside athletic area has at minimum one AED available and at least one person trained to use it at all times.

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

School Health Advisory Council

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

See the WPS Nursing and Health website (<https://www.worcesterschools.org/about/departments-offices/nursing/>) for the complete Wellness Policy and other health-related policies and forms or call your school nurse with any questions.

**Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use
Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics for choosing
the correct backpack include:**

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

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7. Pack heaviest objects close to the back with the center of gravity near the
(**DELETE** pelvis) (**ADD** hips).

Access for Pregnant Students

Pregnant students are encouraged to continue to attend school. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible, that return to school after delivery is encouraged, and that every reasonable opportunity to complete high school is provided.

In accordance with Federal Law and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance, a student who is pregnant is permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout her pregnancy. After giving birth, a student is permitted to return to the academic program in which they were enrolled and is permitted to participate in extracurricular programs.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Program

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

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

Caregiver s 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 – do they 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 caregiver 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 caregiver 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 caregiver 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 caregiver being present. Students not released from the school bus because no caregiver is present will be taken to the Clark Street Community School, 280 Clark St., (508) 799-8212,) to be picked up by a caregiver.

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.

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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 they attend.

Additionally, transportation shall be provided at district 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 applies 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 themselves 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 caregivers 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 caregivers of the child involved become responsible for seeing that the child gets to and from school safely.

Worcester Public Schools' school buses may be equipped with cameras to create a video and audio record of each trip. This video and/or audio may be used to assist the school principal in determining what discipline, if any, is appropriate in cases of reported violations of safe riding practices. It may also be used as a tool to teach and reinforce safe riding practices for all students.

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

Transfer Students

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

Homeless Students

Refer to transportation services described on page 34 under Education of Homeless Children.

Two Mile Limit

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

School Bus Stops and Routing

Students will walk to a common bus stop. Bus stops will be set up, approved, and verified by the Worcester Public Schools Transportation Department only. Students are not entitled to street-to-street or door-to-door pickup or delivery. All stops will be at corners, whenever possible, to make them fair and consistent for all. All requests for additions or changes of school bus stops must be made through the student's school principal or designee. Caregivers are responsible to ensure that their child is at the correct bus stop. Any child standing at unauthorized

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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 caregiver 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 do they become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the bus stop at the close of the school day.

Riding School Buses

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

1. Only pupils and school personnel assigned to the bus shall be allowed to ride in a school bus unless permission is granted by the Director of Transportation.
2. Students should be at the pick-up point at the time designated and prepared to get on the bus with the least possible delay in order to keep the bus on schedule.
3. While at a bus pick-up point, students must:
 - Conduct themselves in an orderly manner;
 - Stay out of the street;
 - Respect nearby private property rights;
 - Remain at least ten (10) 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 or vape;
 - 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 and,
 - 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 them at all times and show it when requested.

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13. Bus drivers/monitors must report violations of the above rules and regulations to the school official on Bus Conduct Forms. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently when the student's behavior warrants it.

STUDENT SERVICES

Social Emotional Learning

The Office of Social Emotional Learning (OSEL) consists of School Psychologists and School Adjustment Counselors who assist students, referred as a result of academic, social or (~~DELETED behavioral~~) (**ADD emotiona**) difficulties. A referral to the (**ADD Office of** Social Emotional Learning (~~DELETED Department~~) does not constitute a referral for a Special Education Team Evaluation.

(**ADD Office of**) Social Emotional Learning (~~DELETED Department~~) services include:

- (~~DELETED Collaborative~~) (**ADD Collaboration and**) consultation with teachers
- Individual and group counseling
- Individual assessments
- Collaboration with community agencies
- Referral and case management services
- Caregiver Consultation and Support and referral to appropriate community-based resources
- Supervision of attendance
- Mediation
- Participation in (~~DELETED SSP~~) (**ADD: ITSS**) and 504 committees as requested by building principal
- Safety Assessments
- Crisis intervention and stabilization services
- Specialized case management, service coordination and support for students in the care of DCF and for homeless students
- Coordination, training and support of the district's Universal and Tiered SEL supports and interventions
- Delivery of school-wide social emotional learning supports

Section 504 - Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to comply with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA, 2008) in all aspects of its programming, including both academic and extra-curricular activities and programs.

The Rehabilitation Acts of 1973, also known as "Section 504," is a non-discrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination by institutions that receive federal funding and to assure that qualified disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. Section 504 requires that school

districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who:

1. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities
2. has a record of such an impairment
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

Major life activities include but are not limited to caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

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Under the ADA Amendments Act, whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity is to be determined without reference to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. This means that the school cannot consider the ameliorative effect of mitigating measures — with the exception of eyeglasses and contact lenses — in determining whether someone has a qualifying disability.

Eligibility

If you believe that your child may qualify for a 504 accommodation plan in order to access programs or activities in the Worcester Public Schools, please notify the Principal at your child's school. If you have medical or other documentation about the disabling condition, it is helpful to bring this to the Principal, although a medical diagnosis is not required. The Principal or their designated 504 coordinator for the school will review the concerns and gather data from teachers, school nurses, caregivers or others working with your child. This information will assist the 504 committee to determine how and whether your child's impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Specialists at the school may be consulted. If an assessment by a specialist is needed, you will be asked for written consent to complete these at school at no charge to you. When relevant data and information has been collected, the 504 committee will meet with you to determine the student's eligibility under Section 504 and to develop a plan of appropriate accommodations for your child. If it is determined that your child is not eligible, you will be provided this decision in writing and receive information concerning your procedural rights.

Who Might be Eligible Under Section 504?

Students may be eligible for accommodations or related services for a variety of reasons. Following are examples of students who may be eligible under Section 504 depending on the degree to which the disability interferes significantly with a major life activity:

- a student who has a hearing impairment
- a student who has exercise-induced asthma
- a student diagnosed with ADD/ADHD
- a student with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis
- a student with Crohn's disease

School Districts Must

Conduct an evaluation of any student who, because of a disability, needs or is believed to need special education or related services in order to access all learning activities in a manner comparable to that of non-disabled same age peers. The evaluation will consist of the collection and analysis of data relevant to the impact of the disability on the student's functional access to curriculum, learning, social and enrichment opportunities that comprise the educational program.

Additionally, the Worcester Public Schools must "undertake to identify and locate every qualified handicapped person between the ages of 3 and 22 residing in the district who is not receiving a public education" 34 CFR 104.32 (a). In addition, the Worcester Public Schools must take appropriate steps to notify students with disabilities and their caregivers about this child find duty 34 CFR 104.32 (b). Written notice of Caregiver Rights under Section 504 may be requested at your child's school or accessed through the Worcester Public Schools website: <https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Section%20504%20Parents%20Rights%20Notice.pdf>

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The person responsible for Section 504 at your school is the principal. Please contact your child's school or the Office of Social and Emotional Learning at 508-799-3175 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice or Section 504.

Special Education

(REPLACE The mission of the Special Education Department is to provide support, technical assistance and service to schools, staff, students, families, and community stakeholders as we work collaboratively to promote safe schools where all children will accelerate and achieve success. Through our efforts we are committed to partnering with schools to ensure the fidelity of specially designed instruction, inclusion opportunities, professional learning, and rigorous outcomes for students with disabilities.)

The following key areas provides an overview of special education:

Child Find activities (**DELETE** includes the district providing) (**ADD** ensure that the district) screenings and evaluations annually for students to determine eligibility for special education and/or related services. caregiver consent is required for all evaluations and completed within 45 school working days after the caregiver provides the district with written consent.

Through the evaluations process the evaluation must assess the child in all areas related to the child's suspected disability. The evaluation results will be used to determine the child's eligibility for special education and/or related services or a 504 Plan.

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

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

Another critical process for students with severe disabilities is the Chapter 688 process. This is not a continuation of special education services and is not an entitlement to services. Special education services provided while a student is in school are entitlements mandated by federal and state law. A 688 referral is to plan for needed adult services for students with severe disabilities. Filing a Chapter 688 referral is discussed by the team at least two years before the student is expected

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to graduate or turn 22, as part of a transition planning. This process sets in motion a two year planning process for students whose entitlements to special education services will end when they graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This filing results in the creation of an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that describes how the student will connect with needed supports and services beyond school. Additional information about this process can be found at the following link:

www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html. Caregivers can also call the Parent Training Information Center at the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 1-800-331-0688, or the Director of the Bureau of Transitional Planning with The Executive Office of Health and Human Services at 617-573-1600.

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

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

Please visit <https://worcesterschools.org/about/departments-offices/special-education-intervention-services/> for additional information.

Employment Information and Procedures

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

Anyone under 18 years of age must obtain a work permit before starting a new job (M.G.L. c. 149 §86-89). Applications for work permits and complete information on legal limits of work hours and conditions of employment are available on the Massachusetts Department of Labor's Division of Occupational Safety website at: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-get-a-work-permit>

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 Hospital Educational Services 603 (CMR 28.03(3) (c)

State regulations provide educational services to a student who is confined to the home or hospital for medical reasons for a period of not less than fourteen school days in a school year. The intent of the regulation is to provide students receiving a publicly-funded education with the opportunity to make educational progress even when a physician determines that the student is physically unable to attend school. Home/hospital educational services are not intended to replicate

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the total school experience. The number of tutoring hours provided to the student will be based upon Worcester's recommendations of what is required to minimize educational loss and taking into account the medical needs of the student. The Principal and/or their designee determines the credits which will be awarded for work completed during tutoring.

Any student who will be confined to a hospital or a home by an attending physician for fourteen (14) school days or longer due to a medical condition is eligible for this service. Note that for chronically ill students, the fourteen days need not be concurrent, but must result from the stated diagnosis.

If a chronic or acute medical condition that is not temporary in nature appears likely to adversely impact a student's educational progress, the Principal and/or their designee will initiate a referral to determine eligibility for special education or 504 services.

Worcester requires students who seek home/hospital instruction to provide the Principal with a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Physician's Statement form (form 23R/3) that is completed and signed by the student's attending physician. The Principal and/or their designee may seek the caregiver permission to speak with the physician in order to clarify the student's medical availability to receive educational services, to gather additional information and to develop a transition plan to return the student to a school setting. Students who do not provide a fully-completed and signed form will not be provided with tutoring.

The Home Hospital Department will review and approve request once in receipt of the state-mandated Physician's Statement form which must be completed by the attending physician and must include at a minimum the following information:

1. the date the student was admitted to a hospital or confined to home
2. the medical reason for the confinement
3. the expected duration of the confinement
4. the medical needs of the student that should be considered to assist in the planning the home or hospital educational services

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

Homeschooling

Caregivers who choose to educate their children at home, as allowed under Massachusetts law, can fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance statute by having their educational programs reviewed and accepted in advance by the Worcester Public Schools. Students enrolling in homeschool for initial year must attend their assigned school until approval has been received. (**DELETE The notifications**) (**ADD Templates for plans**) to homeschool (elementary and secondary versions) are available upon request from the office of Social Emotional Learning (OSEL) at (508) 799-3175. (**ADD Plan templates are also available on the WPS website and parents can submit a plan that includes required information.**) To avoid miscommunication and to ensure compliance with the homeschooling approval law, caregivers are requested to give this notice in writing. **The Worcester Public Schools shall do whatever is feasible to expedite the approval process.**

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

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

The district reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the homeschooled student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment. With approval of the Superintendent or designee, and in consultation with the principal, a homeschooled student may participate in sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment provided that they do not displace an enrolled student. Homeschooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the athletic eligibility guidelines described on **page 44.**(**update once the Student Handbook is complete.**)

INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

Homework Policy

The School Committee recognizes that a reasonable amount of study and preparation is necessary for the scholastic growth of all students. It is also aware that the amount of preparation should increase as the child progresses through the grades. Teachers will ensure that homework supports the district's curriculum. Meaningful homework is connected to district expectations for accelerating academic performance, college readiness and career readiness.

Caregivers are important partners. They can support student success when they:

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

Elementary Schools

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

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

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

- K-grade 2 Introduction to homework. Students might be asked to finish papers that were started in school or rehearse early reading skills and math skills.
- Grade 3 Formal homework is introduced at this level. Students are assigned between 15 and 30 minutes of homework on a daily basis.
- Grade 4 Students are assigned between 45 and 60 minutes of homework on a daily basis.
- Grades 5-6 Students are assigned between one and one-and one half hours of homework on a daily basis.

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Secondary Schools

Homework assignments will be designed to accelerate student learning, engage students in higher order thinking and facilitate career and college readiness and should be related to the Massachusetts Frameworks in support of success on the MCAS.

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

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

- linking assignments to learning objectives that reflect and support the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Worcester Public Schools curricula, School Improvement Plans and Worcester Public Schools benchmarks
- providing learning experiences that are both rigorous and relevant and that can be completed independently by the student
- ensuring that homework is an extension of learning that takes place in the classroom and applying the same standards of performance as applied to classroom work
- assigning homework that is explicit and of reasonable length
- ensuring that the quality of homework is more important than the quantity
- completing and evaluating assignments as part of the students' progress toward standards
- showing how homework is factored into the student grade and,
- never assigning homework as punitive work
- ensuring all students can complete the work assigned regardless of home or family access to technology or the media

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

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

Process for Assigning Textbooks

Students and caregivers are responsible for books and all other equipment issued to a student of the Worcester Public Schools. All books and equipment shall be returned by the student and in the condition in which they were issued. Reasonable wear on books and materials is anticipated due to students use.

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

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 their present grade designation, may be retained for one year.

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Before retaining a student, all elementary principals will meet with the SSP members to consider and discuss the nineteen (19) items of the Light's Retention Scale (without any numerical rating scores and conference with the student's caregiver(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 their 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

English Language Arts:
(Reading, Language and Writing)

Grades 2-6

English Language Arts:
(Reading, Language and Writing)
Mathematics

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

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

Grades 7-8

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

Core Academic Courses (full year)

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

Pathway/Enrichment Courses may include:

Academic Literacy, Word Study or Intervention Reading Courses
Academic Numeracy - supplemental math course
AVID
Art

Music

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 grades 7 and 8 and pass to grade 9.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, plagiarism and forgery are considered to be academic dishonesty. For any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or completed by means of academic dishonesty or deception, including information obtained from the Internet and not properly cited, students will receive appropriate consequences which may include suspension and require that the student redo the assignment for credit. Violation of this policy may result in discipline ranging from a student receiving a failing grade for the assignment to suspension from school.

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Overview:

In accordance to the Massachusetts General Laws, the Worcester Public Schools recognizes and enforces that every child, between the ages of six and sixteen, must attend school. School personnel and caregivers must work together to ensure that all students, Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12, attend school every day, and on time, during the 180-day pupil calendar.

School attendance is a priority for the Worcester Public Schools. Students' academic, social and emotional growth and development depend upon students' daily attendance, classroom participation and exposure to high quality teaching and learning. The daily interactions among teachers and students are irreplaceable components of the learning experience. In addition, daily attendance and punctuality habits acquired during schooling are essential skills in the adulthood life, and it begins as early as the pre-school years. Students who are chronically absent from school impact their own learning and the school community as a whole. Schools can take the following steps to address absenteeism:

School Attendance

Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions in any period of six months. In addition to this law, Worcester has an attendance policy and should make sure that caregivers are familiar with it.

Excused Absences

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

- 1. Religious holy days:** The student's religion must require that the student does not attend school on the specific holy day or that school attendance would interfere with required religious observances. The caregiver must notify the school in writing within two (2) school days before or after the absence.
- 2. Death in the immediate family:** Up to five (5) consecutive days for bereavement due to the death of a member of the student's immediate family: mother, father, sister, and brother. One (1) day to attend the funeral of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces or nephews. The caregiver

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 caregiver must notify the school in writing and provide documentation from the court.
4. **Hospitalization:** The caregiver must submit to the school release papers from the hospital documenting the student's hospitalization.
5. **Illness:** The caregiver must submit to the school medical documentation of the illness that requires the student's exclusion from school. The principal has the right to require and seek additional medical opinions and diagnosis regarding a student's absence(s) due to illness.

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Students who will be out of school for more than fourteen consecutive days because of illness or hospitalization may receive home or hospital instruction. For more information refer to Home and Hospital Instruction on page 64. **(Update the page number once the Handbook is complete)**

Family vacations taken during school time are absences. Families should plan their vacations during the regularly scheduled vacations. Non-emergency appointments should be scheduled after school hours.

Student Absence Notification Program

The District will notify a student's caregiver daily of a student's absence based on morning attendance via a ConnectEd automated phone call.

Beginning with 5 absences, caregivers will receive an attendance letter via U.S. Mail with each absence. Each Principal, by whatever title they may be known, or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's caregiver, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's caregiver. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's caregiver, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's caregiver. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate that the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the caregiver but no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or their designee may proceed with any interview without a caregiver present.

Tardiness and Dismissal

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

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

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

Each principal will meet with the caregiver and school's faculty to develop and institute an intervention plan for students who reach 10 tardies and/or dismissals.

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Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members will record all absences, tardiness, and dismissals of students from their assigned classes. As students may miss some classes more frequently than others, each faculty member will be responsible for notifying the administration on occasions when notification must be sent to a caregiver.

Attendance Notification to Students and their Caregiver

Caregivers are notified by phone on a daily basis if their child is absent. After five unexcused absences, the principal or their designee will notify the caregiver(s) in writing and, when appropriate, request a meeting to discuss the student's attendance. Caregivers will continue to receive written notification of their child's attendance at every 5th absence from school.

Caregivers and guardians will also receive attendance information through:

1. Interim and attendance progress reports (at five weeks into each marking period)
2. Report cards (every ten weeks). The secondary report cards show students' absences from each class and students' total absences from school

Retention and/or Loss of Credit

Fourteen absences or more per school year may result in retention and/or loss of credit.

Absences accumulated due to out-of-school suspensions do not count towards a loss of academic credit. Students who are absent because of out-of-school suspensions must make up missed assignments, including homework and test(s). The principal can determine that other extenuating circumstances justify absences which do not merit a loss of academic credit.

Truancy

When a student accumulates excessive unexcused absences, the principal (or their designee) may seek assistance from the Juvenile Court and/or the Department of Children and Families to resolve attendance matters.

High School Attendance and Academic Credit Policy

1. Attendance is 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 2022-23 school year, high school students will not receive credit when they exceed the following number of absences:

- a. Fourteen (14) unexcused class absences per one-credit course
 - b. Seven (7) unexcused class absences for courses less than one credit
2. Administrative Procedure for Loss of Credit
- a. In any case where a student fails to receive credit for any course, the final course grade will still be recorded on that student's permanent record card.
 - b. In the case where no credit is received for a course required for graduation (e.g., American History) and in which a passing grade has been received, it is required that the course be repeated.
 - c. A minimum of twenty-four (24) credits is required to graduate.

3. Attendance Buyback Program

During the 2022-23 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 Buy-back Program, students must have passed a

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course and must have between 15 and 22 absences. Eligible students who complete additional hours of instruction beyond the school day or on Saturday mornings can then receive full credit for the course. Students will not be able to change their passing grade for their course. Eligible students who are interested in this program, should contact their high school guidance counselor for additional information.

4. Appeal Procedure

- a. The following areas may be considered in the appeal process:
 - Documented illness
 - Mandated school-sponsored activities School-sponsored field trips
 - Alternative Education Programs
 - Home tutoring assigned by the school
- b. Appeals for waiver of the policy will be heard by the Principal or their designee.
- c. The caregiver may appeal an adverse decision by the Principal or their designee to the Managers for Instruction and School Leadership
- d. The caregiver may appeal an adverse decision by the Managers for Instruction and School Leadership to the Superintendent
- e. The caregiver 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 caregiver's or guardian's appeal on the School Committee agenda for the next regular meeting. The caregiver is to be notified of the date, time and place of the School Committee meeting.

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

FIELD TRIP POLICY*

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

A copy of the policy is available through the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

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

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

HONOR ROLL POLICY

High School

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

Eligibility

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

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

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

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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.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Throughout their education, students will take selected standardized tests. A standardized test is one that is administered under uniform and controlled conditions. This ensures that any difference in scores (pre and post-results, between students, etc.) reflect differences in knowledge and skills, rather than differences in unrelated factors such as test conditions. These tests are one of many ways educators assess what students know and can do. This can include paper-based or computer-based testing, oral and written tasks, classroom observations and portfolios of student work. These measures are used to monitor progress, refine instructional practices and improve our capacity to ensure that all students reach and exceed grade level expectations and graduate from the Worcester Public Schools career and/or college ready. Students whose caregivers opt them out of state or district standardized assessments will not be academically penalized or face disciplinary action except as prohibited by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or by the United States.

For Information on Testing

For questions or concerns related to testing procedures and security or for information on your child's performance or participation in testing, please contact your child's principal or teacher. For general questions about assessment or for questions or concerns related to testing procedures and security or for information on your child's performance or participation in testing in the Worcester Public Schools, please contact the Office of (~~DELETE~~ **School and Student Performance**)

(**ADD Research and Accountability**) (508) 799-3592. You may also visit the Worcester Public Schools website for information on testing. Information from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning state assessments can (**DELETE also**) be found online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/TestingMatters.html> or by contacting the State Office of Student Assessment at (781) 338-3625.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Because of the transition to the next generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests in spring of 2019, requirements for the classes of 2021-2023 reflect an interim passing standard for ELA and Mathematics defining a level of achievement on the new tests that is similar to the standard on the legacy tests. The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted in April 2021 to waive or modify the state competency determination (CD) requirement by allowing students in the class of 2022 to receive their CD by

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earning full credit in an approved course and demonstrating competency in that subject, in lieu of earning a qualifying MCAS score. Students in the graduating class of 2023 will need to satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English Language Arts and Mathematics to earn a competency determination.

- Meet or exceed the scaled score threshold of 472 on the English Language Arts grade 10 MCAS test and 486 on the Mathematics grade 10 MCAS test
- Earn a scaled score between 455 and 471 on the English Language Arts grade 10 MCAS test or earn a score between 469 and 485 on the Mathematics grade 10 MCAS test and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP)

Scaled score requirements for the class of 2024 and following years are yet to be determined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). More information can be found at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

In order to graduate, all students must:

- Meet one of the above criteria for competency determination through a high enough scaled score on the English Language Arts and Mathematics sections of the Grade 10 MCAS and completion of an Education Proficiency Plan (as necessary), in accordance with the guidelines set forth by DESE.
- Receive a passing score of 220 on a science section of the MCAS in one of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Engineering/Technology or Physics.
- Earn twenty-four (24) credits.
- Worcester Technical High School students must also complete the minimum required credits and required graduation subjects established for them by the School Committee.

To receive a diploma with a specific high school name, a student must meet the Worcester Public Schools graduation requirements which must include a minimum of 10 credits earned from the particular high school. If a student has earned less than 10 credits but meets the Worcester Public Schools graduation requirements, the student will be eligible to receive a generic Worcester Public Schools Diploma.

Graduation Course Requirements

Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 beginning in 2022-23 school year

4 credits English

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

3 credits Science and Technology/Engineering

3 credits History/Social Science (including 1 credit World History and 1 credit U.S. History and 1 credit chosen by the student)

2 credits Foreign Language (of the same language)

1 credit Arts

5 credits additional core courses

Additionally, students must complete a physical education course each year

1. The Worcester Public Schools adheres to the Mass Core requirements.
2. Students who successfully complete Algebra in grade 8 have the option of receiving one (1) high school credit that will be recorded on their high school transcript. (Massachusetts college admissions accept Grade 8 College Preparatory Courses, provided that the student successfully completes the
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next level course with a grade of "C" or better). Students electing to take Algebra I in high school will not receive credit for Algebra taken in grade 8. Students who have earned a credit for 8th grade Algebra must complete 4 credits of Mathematics during their high school years.

3. Students in grades 7 & 8 who successfully complete high school courses in World Language will receive one high school credit per course that will be recorded on their high school transcript. Students who take Part 1 of a World Language Course in grade 8, will not receive credit for the course taken in middle school. It is recommended that students take two years or more of the same language at the high school level.
4. The intent of awarding credits for College Preparatory courses taken in grade 8 is so that students can have additional learning opportunities while in high school. These additional opportunities include but are not limited to Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, online, service learning and work-based learning courses. All students must complete 24 credits of coursework while in high school in addition to fulfilling the other graduation requirements as per the policy handbook.
5. Exception Allowances
 - a. English Language Learners (ELL) identified through the Massachusetts' state standardized test (ACCESS) as English Proficiency Level (EPL) 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 may substitute two college preparatory elective courses for the two required foreign language courses. Students who reach EPL level 6 while in grades 9 or 10 are required to take the two foreign language courses to meet graduation requirements.
 - b. Students with disabilities whose psycho-educational evaluation provides a specific diagnosis of a learning disability that precludes the student's successful completion of a foreign language course may substitute two college preparatory elective courses for the two required foreign language courses.
 - c. Students enrolled in Career/Vocational Technical Programs may substitute foreign language courses for an additional academic elective course plus one of the following options:

- i. complete at least one full year of study of foreign language or
- ii. complete a fourth year of study of science and technology/engineering or
- iii. complete one full year of study for computer science

MCAS Appeals Process

The Worcester Public Schools carries out the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s appeal processes for regular and special education high school students who have not passed MCAS. The MCAS Performance Appeals process was established in 2002 to provide eligible high school students who have been unable to pass the required MCAS tests an additional opportunity to demonstrate through their course work that they meet or exceed the state’s Competency Determination (CD) standard in order to earn a high school diploma. There are specific eligibility requirements relative to student achievement in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering, attendance and participation in tutorial and remediation efforts. Further information on these processes is available through your child’s school or the Office of School and Student Performance (508-799-3060). Information from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning MCAS appeals can also be found online at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/>

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Massachusetts State College and University Minimum Required Courses for Admission

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

Advanced Placement Policy

Advanced Placement courses provide students with unique learning experiences that help ensure college success. Students engage in intense discussions, solve problems collaboratively, and learn to write clearly and persuasively, while developing time management skills, discipline and study habits. Students who achieve a score of 3, 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Exam may earn college credit from **many** four-year colleges in the US. Worcester Public Schools offers over 20 Advanced Placement Courses in on-site, community-based or virtual learning settings.

Recommendations for Advanced Placement Enrollment

Students who are interested in enrolling in Advanced Placement Courses should discuss readiness for this challenging learning opportunity with their caregivers, teachers, and guidance counselors.

The indicators below may be considered together when assessing a student's readiness. One indicator is not more valuable than another in determining readiness.

- AP Potential using PSAT results
- Motivation and interest
- Course expectations and course work
- Prior grades in the same-discipline courses
- The number of same-discipline courses taken

Teachers may assign work to students during the summer to help prepare them for the course.

Advanced Placement Exams

The Worcester Public Schools will pay for the AP exams for those students who choose to take them.

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Class Rank Grade Point Average

Class rank is computed at the end of the 6th semester, using major subjects only. Class rank will be recomputed at the end of the second marking period senior year for determining the valedictorian and for processing of college applications. The student grades are weighted as follows:

Average	A.P.	Honors	College
100-99	5.3	4.8	4.3
98-97	5.2	4.7	4.2
96	5.1	4.6	4.1
95-94	5.0	4.5	4.0
93	4.9	4.4	3.9
92	4.8	4.3	3.8
91	4.7	4.2	3.7
90	4.6	4.1	3.6
89	4.4	3.9	3.4
88	4.3	3.8	3.3
87	4.2	3.7	3.2
86	4.1	3.6	3.1
85	4.0	3.5	3.0
84	3.9	3.4	2.9
83	3.8	3.3	2.8
82	3.7	3.2	2.7
81	3.6	3.1	2.6
80	3.4	2.9	2.4
79	3.3	2.8	2.3
78	3.2	2.7	2.2
77	3.1	2.6	2.1
76	3.0	2.5	2.0
75	2.9	2.4	1.9
74	2.8	2.3	1.8
73	2.7	2.2	1.7
72	2.6	2.1	1.6

71	2.4	1.9	1.4
70	2.3	1.8	1.3
69	2.2	1.7	1.2
68	2.1	1.6	1.1
67	1.9	1.4	0.9
66	1.8	1.3	0.8
65	1.7	1.2	0.7
64-0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Marking System

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

~~(DELETE Early College Program:
College Courses for High School Students)~~

Replace with

Dual Enrollment (College Courses for High School Students)

ADD

Early College Worcester (ECW)

The Early College Worcester (ECW) program is a secondary/post-secondary partnership involving Worcester Public Schools (WPS), Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), and Worcester State University (WSU).

This program enables WPS high school students to participate in college and career readiness activities and college credit course offerings. The activities and courses are offered at the high school or on the QCC or WSU campuses. Students earn college and high school credits at the same time and can graduate from high school with a high school diploma and at least 12 college credits.

The goals of the ECW program are to increase the percentage of students who are college ready, receive a high school diploma, enroll in college in the fall, and persist in college.

Other Dual Enrollment Offerings

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

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

~~(DELETE *Worcester Polytechnic Institute offers courses at reduced tuition to high school students.)~~

~~(DELETE With a Guidance Counselor's recommendation and approval by the college/ university, students may take one college course per semester as agreed upon by the Worcester Public Schools and the individual college/university.)~~

Students receive dual enrollment credit for courses taken at (**ADD all**) area colleges. For GPA computation, Worcester Public Schools students will receive the same weight as an A.P. course for each completed college course.

MA Seal of Biliteracy

The Worcester Public Schools will offer the MA Seal of Biliteracy to graduating seniors on their diplomas and transcripts. The MA Seal of Biliteracy recognizes graduates who speak, listen, read and write proficiently in English and a second or even third language.

By offering the MA Seal of Biliteracy to its students the Worcester Public Schools recognizes, honors and encourages the bilingual students and diverse communities in Worcester and encourages all students to pursue proficiency in more than one language. Bilingualism is a critical 21st century skill that recipients of the MA Seal of Biliteracy can highlight in both college and job applications.

In order to earn the MA Seal of Biliteracy, students must meet all their graduation requirements, demonstrate proficiency in English through the ELA MCAS or ACCESS, and show proficiency in a target language by earning 4 or 5 in an AP Language Exam or other state-approved language test provided by the district.

Students interested in participating in the MA Seal of Biliteracy program must complete an application available in the guidance office, on the **Worcester Public Schools** website or scan the QR Code included here by the Fall of their Senior year.

Questions about the MA Seal of Biliteracy program can be directed to Michelle Huaman, World Languages Liaison (huamanm@worcesterschools.net) or Carmen Melendez-Quintero, Manager of English Learner Programs (Melendezquinteroc@worcesterschools.net)



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:

1. Cancellation of school

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2. Delay of one hour in the opening of school
3. Delay of two hours in the opening of school

If a delay is in effect, a.m. preschool will be cancelled; p.m. preschool will be held.

Delayed AM School Opening

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

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

Early Dismissal

***Please note:** When schools are dismissed early, all after-school programs including daycare are canceled. Early dismissal time is two hours earlier than each school's regular dismissal time.

No School/Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal Announcements

Announcements of no school, a delay in the opening of school, or early dismissal from school will be made via a Connect Ed message, on the Worcester Public Schools website (worcesterschools.org), **district social media**, and on the following radio and television stations:

WTAG 580 AM	WXLO 104.5 FM	WORC 1310 AM
WSRS 96.1 FM	WBZ 1030 AM	WCUW 93.1 FM*
WHDH-TV Channel 7	WCVB-TV Channel 5	
WBZ-TV Channel 4	WFXT-TV Channel 25	

*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 caregivers refrain from calling to make inquiries as to the status of school.

Policy Statement and Procedural Guidelines for Recess

Quality education requires a healthy learning environment that provides students (K-6) with minimally a total of 30 minutes of recess over the course of the day.

The 30 minutes can be divided into shorter breaks and shall include a break at lunch. Recess is designed for the purpose of engaging students in developmentally appropriate activity which promotes learning, social development, and physical health. Structured/unstructured recess shall rarely be taken away from students as a form of punishment/consequences. Neither shall severe exercise be used as a form of punishment/consequences for students. This time shall not be a substitute for physical education.

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The School Principal is responsible for communicating, applying, maintaining, and evaluating the Recess Policy. The School Principal shall review the Recess Policy with the members of the School Site Council annually and submit results of that review to the Deputy Superintendent in May of each year.

Procedural Guidelines

Recess shall occur outside, weather permitting, **or unless circumstances dictate otherwise for a limited period.** Students shall be supervised by adult, staff members, caregivers, or school learning community volunteers. The school principal shall insure that adults receive appropriate training to support students and intended outcomes. The school principal shall insure that students are provided with developmentally appropriate equipment. Public spaces in proximity to the school, such as parks and public playgrounds may be appropriate substitutions for play space at the school.

The School Committee shall equitably support budgetary requirements needed for recess equipment for all elementary schools. This allocation will be in addition to the per pupil allocation provided to each school. Each school principal shall have autonomy to expend allocations to support the needs of students for recess.

CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITY

Parent Advisory Councils School Councils

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, Section 59C, requires the establishment of school councils in all schools, comprised of caregivers of students attending the school who shall be selected by the caregivers of students attending the school, teachers, students and community representatives and co-chaired by school principals. The council should be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the school building and community. The council will meet with the principal and assist in identifying the educational needs of students, reviewing the annual school budget and in formulating a school improvement plan. For additional information please contact your child's school principal.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

The parent advisory council duties shall include but not be limited to: advising the school committee in matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities, meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs.

The SEPAC provides ongoing professional development and networking to families of students with disabilities and the opportunity to discuss common areas of interest and specific needs regarding the education and well-being of students with disabilities. Caregivers meet (**DELETE four times**) during the school year to engage in various activities or selected topics of interest. These meetings provide opportunities for caregivers to share and collaborate as they deepen their understanding of the procedural regulations that govern special education, as well as various resources available for students with disabilities and their families. For additional information, please email sealek@worcesterschools.net.

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English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (ELPAC)

The purpose of ELPAC is to support the academic success of English learners (ELs) and former English learners (FELs) by providing a forum in which caregivers of current and former English learners can express their perspectives and provide input to the District.

The duties of the council include: (1) advising the school district and school committee on matters that pertain to English learners; (ii) meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning and development of programs designed to improve educational opportunities for English learners; and (iii) participating in the review of school improvement plans.

The WPS English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) was established in 2018-2019. The ELPAC consists of caregivers and guardians of current and former English learners, community members, and teachers and district staff members. Meetings are a venue for meaningful discussions about Dual Language, Transitional Bilingual Education, Sheltered English Immersion, and English as a Second Language, as well as other topics related to the education of current and former English learners. Caregivers of current and former English learners are encouraged to attend the ELPAC meetings that are held throughout the school year. For additional information, please email melendezquinteroc@worcesterschools.net.

Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council (CPPAC)

Each school is represented by two (2) caregiver members selected by their caregiver group and principals. Meetings are held every other month. The objectives of the CPPAC are:

1. To involve caregivers 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 caregivers and administrators regarding school issues and voted policies.
3. To give its members the responsibility of keeping their respective schools informed.

For additional information email contactcppac@gmail.com.

Caregiver and Family Engagement

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to promote caregiver and family engagement in accord with Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015.

The WPS conducts outreach to caregivers and family members; implements programs, activities and procedures to involve caregivers and family members in the Title I programs, and plans and implements such programs, activities and procedures with meaningful consultation with caregivers and family members. The Office of English Learners and the WPS works with schools, caregivers and community partners in a variety of ways to facilitate verbal and written communication in a language that family members can understand.

Opportunities for Caregiver Support

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

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Volunteer Staff Regulations

Application Process

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

Screening Process

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has mandated that all school volunteers must complete the CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) screening process. This process must be completed before the volunteer begins in any school or program. As the CORI check can take several weeks, all volunteers are encouraged to complete the CORI form as soon as possible. Please be aware that CORI checks expire every three years and need to be resubmitted to the Human Resource Office.

Volunteer Organizations

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

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

These types of initiatives are very specific about requirements for participation.

Caregiver Volunteers who bring Children

Some caregiver 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 their School Council regarding this issue.

If your building does allow younger children to accompany caregiver volunteers, these caregivers must perform tasks that are safe and harmless to young children.

These volunteers must not operate machinery such as:

- paper cutters
- copying machines

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

Worcester Public School District Media Policy

Purpose: During the school year, your child may have opportunities to have their work or activities publicized. Examples include, but not limited to: student work published on the district website and social media channels; feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Charter Channel 191 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website and social media channels, and in local and regional newspapers. Students first names and last initials (example: Paul F.) are used to identify pictures of three or fewer students and student work on the district website and social media channels. When reporters visit the district, they often speak with students and use their full names in covering the story.

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General Media Coverage: Throughout the year there may be in-school programs, events or meetings (such as a school-wide assembly or PTA event) that are open to the public and where large group photographs or videotapes will be taken by caregivers, the media, or school district staff. In these cases, students would not be identified by name. Your consent to these types of group photographs or videotapes is assumed. If you do not want your child photographed or videotaped at these public events, please speak with the principal or event coordinator to insure that your child is excluded from the coverage.

Procedure: Any caregiver who does not want their student's name, photograph, or work published on the district's website and social media channels, or included in newspaper or television coverage must complete and return the form on the inside back cover of this handbook to the homeroom teacher.

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TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

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) 799-1940
Alternative St. Casimir	(508) 799-3245
University Park Campus	(508) 799-3591

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Burncoat	(508) 799-3390
Claremont Academy	(508) 799-3077
Forest Grove	(508) 799-3420
Sullivan Middle	(508) 799-3350
Worcester East Middle	(508) 799-3430
Challenge and Reach Academies	(508) 799-0077

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Belmont	(508) 799-3588	May	(508) 799-3520
Burncoat	(508) 799-3537	McGrath	(508) 799-3584
Canterbury	(508) 799-3484	Midland	(508) 799-3548
Chandler Elementary	(508) 799-3572	Nelson Place	(508) 799-3506
Chandler Magnet	(508) 799-3452	Norrback	(508) 799-3500
City View	(508) 799-3670	Quinsigamond	(508) 799-3502
Clark	(508) 799-3545	Rice Square	(508) 799-3556
Columbus Park	(508) 799-3490	Roosevelt	(508) 799-3482
Elm Park	(508) 799-3568	Tatnuck	(508) 799-3554
Flagg	(508) 799-3522	Thorndyke	(508) 799-3550
Gates Lane	(508) 799-3488	Union Hill	(508) 799-3600
Goddard School of Science University Park and Technology	(508) 799-3594	Campus School	(508) 799-3591
Grafton	(508) 799-3478	Vernon Hill	(508) 799-3630
Heard	(508) 799-3525	Wawecus	(508) 799-3527
Hiatt	(508) 799-3601	West Tatnuck	(508) 799-3596
Lake View	(508) 799-3536	Woodland Academy	(508) 799-3557
Lincoln	(508) 799-3504	Worcester Arts Magnet	(508) 799-3575

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

(508) 799-3069, (508) 799-3450

Dr. James A. Caradonio New Citizen Center (508) 799-3494

MANAGERS' OFFICE

Burncoat/South (508) 799-3264

Doherty/North/Worcester Technical (508) 799-3221

**Massachusetts Parental Notice for One Time Consent to Allow
the School District
To Access MassHealth (Medicaid) Benefits**

**WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL SERVICES**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL-BASED
MEDICAID PROGRAM**

Dear Caregiver,

As of July 1, 2019 school districts may bill MassHealth for health care services that students receive at school. Included services are vision, hearing, dental, postural, growth and SBIRT screenings, behavioral and mental health counseling, speech and direct nursing care of students with complex medical needs. This billing in no way affects your child's MassHealth coverage outside of school or any homecare services your child receives.

The School-Based Medicaid Program offers schools an opportunity to receive federal money to offset the costs for providing the above Medicaid-covered services in the school setting. The reimbursement is to the City of Worcester and therefore will benefit both the City and school finances.

Please take a moment, complete the form below and return it to your child's school nurse. Should you have questions, require additional information or translation of the caregiver consent form please don't hesitate to contact me.

Dr. Debra McGovern, DNP, BCPNP
(~~DELETE Director~~) (**ADD Coordinator**) of School Nursing

School District Name and Code: Worcester Public Schools 0348 School/District
Contact: Dr. Debra McGovern – 508-799-8554
(~~DELETE Director~~) (**ADD Coordinator**) of School Nursing

Dear Caregiver:

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your permission (also known as consent) to share information about your child with MassHealth. Local communities in Massachusetts have been approved to receive partial reimbursement from MassHealth for the costs of certain health-related services provided by the district to your child (or children). In order for your community to get back some of the money spent on services, the school district needs to share with MassHealth the following types of information about your child: name; date of birth; gender; type of services provided, when, and by whom; and MassHealth ID.

With your permission, the school district will be able to seek partial reimbursement for services provided by MassHealth, including, among others, a hearing test or eye exam; a school physical; occupational ~~DELETE~~ or **ADD**, and speech or physical therapy; some school nurse visits; and counseling services with the school social worker or psychologist. Each year, the district will provide you with notification regarding your permission; you do not need to sign a form every year.

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The school district cannot share with MassHealth information about your child without your permission. As you consider giving permission, please be advised of the following:

1. The school district cannot require you to sign up for MassHealth in order for your child to receive the health-related and/or special education services to which your child is entitled.
2. The school district cannot require you to pay anything towards the cost of your child's health-related and/or special education services. This means that the school district cannot require you to pay a co-pay or deductible so that it can charge MassHealth for services provided. The school district can agree to pay the co-pay or deductible if any such cost is expected.
3. If you give the school district permission to share information with and request reimbursement from MassHealth:
 - a. This will not affect your child's available lifetime coverage or other MassHealth benefit; nor will it in any way limit your own family's use of MassHealth benefits outside of school.
 - b. Your permission will not affect your child's special education services or IEP rights in any way, if your child is eligible to receive them.
 - c. Your permission will not lead to any changes in your child's MassHealth rights; and
 - d. Your permission will not lead to any risk of losing eligibility for other Medicaid or MassHealth funded programs.
4. If you give permission, you have the right to change your mind and withdraw your permission at any time.
5. If you withdraw your permission or refuse to allow the school district to share your child's records and information with MassHealth for the purpose of seeking reimbursement for the cost of services, the school district will continue to be responsible for providing your child with the services, at no cost to you.

I have read the notice and understand it. Any questions I had were answered. I give permission to the school district to share with MassHealth records and information concerning my child(ren) and their health-related services, as necessary. I understand that this will help our community seek partial reimbursement of MassHealth covered services.

Caregiver Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name Date of Birth SASID # (for district to add)

Child's Name Date of Birth SASID # (for district to add)

Child's Name Date of Birth SASID # (for district to add)

The FERPA directory information opt-out form that should go at the end of the handbook. it is associated with the FERPA section (i.e., STUDENT RECORDS).

9-23-21 This was approved by the full School Committee.

Worcester Public Schools

NOTIFICATION CONCERNING PRIVACY OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

What is this form?

This form is to notify you of your privacy rights concerning student directory information, and to give you the option to limit or not release your child's directory information if you choose.

Why am I being notified?

Federal law requires school districts to provide "directory information" to organizations that request this information. This information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. As a parent/guardian of students 17 years or younger, or as a student age 18 or older, you have the right to not release directory information or to limit the release of some directory information. Directory information is released beginning October 15 of each year.

What is Student Directory Information?

Directory information, which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can be given to outside organizations without a parent/guardian's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, federal law requires school districts receiving federal funding to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information: names, addresses, and telephone listings for juniors and seniors.

Student directory information includes the following:

Name, address and date of birth of student	Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
Student grade level and class, school, and dates of attendance	Telephone number
Weight and height of members of athletic teams	Degrees, honors and awards (honor roll and graduation lists)
	Post-high school plans

What am I being asked to do?

Please review the information on this notification and consider whether you want to limit or not release directory information.

- If you are comfortable with this information being released, **DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM.**
- If you do not want to release of directory information, please return the completed form below to your child's school.
- If you change your decision at any time, you may contact your child's school to submit an updated form.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

You may contact your child's school or the Office of Research and Accountability with any questions.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION "DO NOT RELEASE" FORM

This form is NOT required to be filled in. Only complete this form if you object to the release of directory information as explained above.

1. If you **agree** to have your child's directory information released, **do not return this form.**
- OR**
2. If you do **not want to release** directory information place a check in any or all of the boxes below.

I do not want my child's directory information (name, address and telephone number) released to the Military/United States Armed Forces Recruiting Agencies (for students in grades 11 and 12 only). Leave unchecked if no objection.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I do not want my child's directory information released for school sponsored purposes.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

If checked, I understand my child will <i>not</i> be included in athletic team rosters, graduation and honor rolls, school publications such as a playbill or yearbook, etc., unless I give written authorization to the school. Leave unchecked if no objection.	
---	--

I do not want my child's directory information released for any other purpose . Leave unchecked if no objection.	
--	--

3. If you checked any boxes above, complete the information below then sign. This information is needed to accurately mark your preferences.

School:	Today's Date:
Student Name (Printed):	Date of Birth:
Parent/Guardian Name (Printed):	

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if student is under 18)

Signature of Student (if student is 18 or older)

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT MEDIA POLICY

Purpose: During the school year, your child may have opportunities to have their work or activities publicized. Examples include, but not limited to: student work published on the district website(s); feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Charter Channel 191 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website(s) and in local and regional newspapers. Students first names and last initials (example: Paul F.) are used to identify pictures of three or fewer students and student work on the district website(s). When reporters visit the district, they often speak with students and use their full names in covering the story.

General Media Coverage: Throughout the year there may be in-school programs, events or meetings (such as a school-wide assembly or PTA event) that are open to the public and where large group photographs or videotapes will be taken by caregivers, the media, or school district staff. In these cases, students would not be identified by name. Your consent to these types of group photographs or videotapes is assumed. If you do not want your child photographed or videotaped at these public events, please speak with the principal or event coordinator to insure that your child is excluded from the coverage.

OPT-OUT PROVISIONS FOR WPS DISTRICT MEDIA POLICY

Please check only those items that you do not grant permission to.

Publication of Student Work on the Internet

I/We **do not grant** permission for this student's work to be published on the School District Website(s).

Publication of Student First Name, Last Initial and/or Photograph on the Internet

I/We **do not grant** permission for photographs that include this student to be published on the School District Website(s), using the student's first name and last initial to identify them.

Interviews and Photographs with Newspapers, Radio, and Television Reporters

I/We **do not grant** permission for this student to be photographed or interviewed by reporters who are covering events in the School District.

***If a box is unchecked and the caregiver signs the student handbook, your consent is granted for the full school year. This decision can be changed at any time by contacting your child's school in writing.**

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To All Caregivers and Guardians:

Please spend some time discussing these policies within this booklet with your children. Your signature below confirms that you have reviewed it.

The policies in this handbook pertain to student actions both on and 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.

The Worcester Public Schools and the School Committee consider the violation of the Weapons Policy found in this booklet to be a serious matter. Please review the Worcester Public Schools Media Policy **on the opposite side of this page.**

The School Committee requires that all caregivers 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 caregiver of a student within the Worcester Public Schools, I acknowledge receipt of the 2022-23 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.

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(Student's Name)

(School)

--	--	--

(Caregiver Signature)

(Date)

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)

(Back Cover)