



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
2016-2017

Westford Academy  
30 Patten Road  
Westford, MA 01886  
978-692-5570

James P. Antonelli  
Principal

Betsy Murphy  
Dean

Michael J. Parent  
Dean

Robert P. Ware  
Dean

## FOREWORD

From the Principal:

Dear Members of the Westford Academy Family,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to Westford Academy for the 2016-2017 school year. As an alumnus of Westford Academy, I am extremely proud of the academic, athletic and co-curricular excellence threaded through the rich tradition of our school.

In order to allow each student to reach their full potential, we must first and foremost provide a safe and nurturing environment based upon mutual respect among all members of our school community. This handbook provides each student with a framework of the policies and regulations within our school. It is the responsibility of all to be knowledgeable of, and in compliance with, these policies.

The administration and faculty invite all students to become actively involved in school activities, which are extensions of the classroom. We are certain that your involvement in these co-curricular activities will be a positive experience and an important part of your high school memories.

It is my personal pleasure to welcome you as a very important part of this community. I wish you the very best for a productive and rewarding school year!

Sincerely,

James P. Antonelli  
Principal

**\*\*ATTENTION VISITORS\*\***  
All visitors must check in at the Main Office  
Visitor badges are required

**WESTFORD ACADEMY DIRECTORY**

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION : 978-692-5570

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Extension</u>
James P. Antonelli	Principal		2104
Robert Ware	Dean	12	2138
		9 (A-F)	
Mike Parent	Dean	11	2103
		9 (G-M)	
Betsy Murphy	Dean	10	2116
		9 (N-Z)	

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE 978-692-5560

Mr. Bill Olsen, Superintendent	Ext. 2102
Ms. Kerry Cleary, Assistant Superintendent	Ext. 2104
Ms. Courtney Moran, Director of Pupil Services	Ext. 2112

Title VI and Title IX Coordinator -	Mr. Bill Olsen, Superintendent
Homeless Coordinator/504	Ms. Courtney Moran
Coordinator	

2016 - 2017 WESTFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mrs. Avery Adam  
Mr. Arthur Benoit  
Mr. Tom Clay  
Mr. David Keele  
Ms. Erika Kohl  
Mr. Terence Ryan  
Mr. Chris Sanders

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**DISCLAIMER**

Westford Academy reserves the right to make necessary changes in the student handbook.

## **WESTFORD ACADEMY SCHOOL CALENDAR 2014-2015**

For a complete listing of Westford Academy events, holidays, MCAS testing schedule, etc, please refer to the WA website and the Principal's Friday email.

\*Please see Westford Public Schools Website for changes/ updates\*

**<http://wa.westfordk12.us/Pages/index>**

### **NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Westford Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, homelessness, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities. The Westford Public Schools complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws ch. 71B; ch. 76, §5; ch. 151B; and ch. 151C.

At the District level, the ADA (employees), Title VI, and Title IX Coordinator is: Bill Olsen

Bill Olsen, Superintendent of Schools  
Westford Public Schools  
25R Depot Street  
Westford, Massachusetts 01886  
978-392-5560 Ext. 2102

At the District level, the Section 504 (disability pertaining to students) and ADA (students) Coordinator is: Courtney Muller

## **Westford Academy Honor Code**

A healthy academic environment depends on honesty, integrity, and mutual respect, and part of Westford Academy's mission is to instill an understanding of and respect for honorable behavior in its students. For their part, students have a responsibility to understand Westford Academy's expectations for honorable behavior and to ensure that they meet those expectations.

The Student Handbook found on the Westford Academy website:

([http://wa.westfordk12.us/pages/WestfordWA\\_guide/WAhandbook.pdf](http://wa.westfordk12.us/pages/WestfordWA_guide/WAhandbook.pdf)) includes a chart containing some examples of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Students should collaborate with their teachers to clarify expectations before engaging in any behavior that could be considered dishonorable.

It is expected that all Westford Academy students will abide by the following Honor Code:

“As a member of the Westford Academy community, I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I condone or enable those who do so.”



### **Westford Academy Mission Statement**

Westford Academy, in collaboration with home and community, provides a safe environment where high expectations advance academic excellence. We are committed to promoting integrity and critical thinking, while fostering tolerance and life-long learning in an ever-changing global society.

### **Expectations for Student Learning**

*Students at Westford Academy will:*

#### **Academic Expectations:**

1. Access information
2. Read effectively for a variety of purposes
3. Think critically and analytically
4. Communicate effectively
  - a. Write
  - b. Speak
  - c. Listen
  - d. Perform/Create

#### **Social Expectations:**

1. Exhibit respect, honesty, and integrity in all aspects of school life, including curricular, co-curricular, and social activities.
2. Take responsibility for personal actions and behaviors related to physical, mental and emotional development.

#### **Civic Expectations:**

Participate actively in a variety of school and community programs, preparing them to exercise their civic rights, duties, and responsibilities within our global society.

### **Guidelines for Parent/School Communication**

#### **If a problem occurs:**

1. Start with the staff member most directly involved. If possible, have your student approach the person to try and resolve the issue on his/her own.
2. Guidance Counselor is a resource for support in resolving concerns at any step of the process.

#### **For effective communication, keep in mind:**

1. Define your concerns clearly.
2. Express your concerns in a respectful manner.
3. Listen to what the other party has to say without interrupting.
4. Remain open-minded about what the other party has to say.
5. Remember what problem you are trying to solve and remember your goal.
6. Remember that both parties may need a chance to voice their feelings.

#### **We suggest the following chain of communication:**

1. Student with teacher.
2. Student and parent with teacher.
3. Student/parent with Department Head.
4. Student/parent with Assistant Principal/ Dean of Students.
5. Student/parent with Principal.

## BELL SCHEDULE

Block 1	_____	7:35	-	8:31
Attendance and announcements in Block 1				
Block 2	_____	8:35	-	9:26
Block 3	_____	9:33	-	10:21
Block 4	_____	10:21	-	12:02
Lunch 1-10:21-10:47 Class Time- 10:51-12:05 Lunch 2-10:47-11:13 Class Time- 10:25-10:47 & 11:17-12:05 Lunch 3-11:13-11:39 Class Time- 10:25-11:13 & 11:43-12:05 Lunch 4-11:39-12:05 Class Time- 10:25-11:39				
Block 5	_____	12:09	-	1:00
Block 6	_____	1:04	-	1:55
Dismissal	_____			1:55
Office Detention		2:05	-	3:00

## SEQUENCE OF PERIODS

	G Day	F Day	E Day	D Day	C Day	B Day	A Day
	G	F	E	D	C	B	A
	A	G	F	E	D	C	B
	B	A	G	F	E	D	C
	C	B	A	G	F	E	D
	D	C	B	A	G	F	E
	E	D	C	B	A	G	F
Period Missing	F	E	D	C	B	A	G

## **ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES**

Attendance at all school sessions is necessary for the academic and social growth of students. Studies indicate a high correlation between the number of days absent and academic achievement. Habitual absenteeism will contribute to low academic achievement.

The Westford School Committee and the Westford Public Schools believe in the importance of regular attendance by all students. Students are expected to attend school on each day that school is in session, since vacation periods are built into the yearlong school calendar. Except in cases of illness and extenuating circumstances, students are expected to be present when school is in session. Parents are strongly urged not to schedule family vacations during school days and not to extend the scheduled vacation periods. Should a parent choose to keep a student out of school for reasons other than illness or extenuating circumstances, teachers will provide the normal range of assistance upon the student's return to school. However, it is the student's responsibility for identifying and making up missed work. Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments to students, and the school and the individual teacher(s) are not required to assume responsibility for providing individual tutoring or extensive individual help for the student when s/he returns.

According to Massachusetts General Law (School Attendance, Chapter 76), all children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) must attend school, and a school district may excuse up to seven (7) day sessions or fourteen (14) half day sessions in any period of six (6) months. The law also states that parents/guardians must be provided each year with the instructions for calling a designated phone number at a designated time to inform the school of the absence of a student and the reason for the absence. In addition, parents/guardians must provide the school with a home, work, or other emergency telephone number so that they may be contacted during the school day so the school may call and inquire about said absence. It is also the responsibility of the school district to designate a supervisor of attendance who has the power to apprehend and take to school any child who is truant and is required to investigate all cases where a child is failing to attend school.

## **A. ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL**

### **Parent/Guardian and School Responsibilities**

Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring that a child under their control attends school daily. If a child fails to attend school for seven (7) day sessions or fourteen (14) half day sessions within any six (6) month period, the school district may address the situation. If a child reaches seven (7) excused absences or fourteen (14) excused half day absences (as allowed by law) or exceeds three (3) unexcused absences within a six (6) month period, the school will notify the parent/guardian of the student's attendance record. Upon any further absences, the school may schedule a parent conference to discuss and/or investigate the issue further.

Prior to any planned travel which will result in a student's absence for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, a parent/guardian must: (a) un-enroll their child from school; and (b) either complete a Homeschool Application, or identify the school in which they will enroll their child during said absence.

In November 2012, a new Massachusetts law entitled an Act Regarding Families and Children Engaged in Services (FACES), Chapter 240 of the Acts and Resolves of 2012, replaced Child in Need of Services (CHINS) cases with Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) cases. The FACES law also mandates a change to service delivery systems, effective in 2015.

#### **THE FIVE TYPES OF CRA CASES,**

as defined in M.G.L. c. 119, § 21, and commonly referred to as

1. "Runaway": A child between the ages of 6 and 18 who "repeatedly runs away from the home of a parent, legal guardian or custodian having custody of the child," each of whom may apply to the court for assistance. M.G.L. c. 119, § 39E.

2. "Stubborn Child": A child between 6 and 18 who repeatedly fails to obey reasonable home rules, thereby interfering with the parent's ability to care for the child. A parent/guardian/custodian may apply to the court for assistance. M.G.L. c. 119, § 39E.

3. "Habitual School Offender": A child between the ages of 6 and 18 who repeatedly fails to obey school rules. A school district may file an application but must state the specific steps that the school district has taken to improve the child's conduct. M.G.L. c.

119, § 39E. A school-filed matter must be dismissed when the student turns 16. M.G.L. c. 119, § 39G.

4. “Habitual Truant”: A child between 6 and 18, who, without excuse, willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 days in a quarter. The school applicant must state whether or not the child and the child's family have participated in a truancy prevention program. M.G.L. c. 119, § 39E. Under M.G. L. c. 119, § 39G, dismissal must occur when the child turns 16. (Note the contradiction regarding age limits in these statutory provisions.)

5. “Sexually Exploited Child”: Any person under 18 who has been subjected to sexual exploitation. This includes anyone who: is the victim of sexual servitude or sex trafficking; engages in sexual conduct for a fee or in exchange for food, shelter, clothing, education or care; is the victim of the crime of inducing a minor into prostitution; or engages in common night walking/street walking. M.G.L. c. 119, § 21. A parent or a police officer may file an application. M.G.L. c. 119, § 39L.

A 51A is a report of suspected child abuse or neglect that is filed with the Department of Child and Family Services (DCF). Under Massachusetts General Laws chapter 119, section 51A, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen (18) for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis.

### **Reporting a Student Absence**

Whenever a child is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian is required to call the school (978-692-5570, then press 1) prior to 8:15 a.m. on the date of absence. The absentee line is available twenty four (24) hours per day. In the event that a child's name is on the school's absentee list and a telephone call has not been received, the office will call the child's home. If verification is not received from home, the office will refer to the list of names supplied by the parent/guardian on the Pupil Information Card to call for verification. If verification is still not received, the school may call the Westford Police Department to investigate the absence.

## **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

Examples of **excused absences** are absences for illness of the student (a doctor's certificate is required for an absence of five (5) days or more), death in the student's family, observance of a religious holiday, court appointments, college visits (limited to three (3) such visits per year, or school sanctioned absences.

All work missed because of an excused absence will be made up following the Make-Up Policy of the Handbook. Most importantly, the student should make contact with each teacher involved because different arrangements may be made at the sole discretion of the teacher.

An **unexcused absence/tardy** occurs when school-age children are absent from school, *with or without parental approval*, for any other reasons, including, but not limited to, family vacation, doing errands, cutting classes, etc.

No credit will be given for tests, quizzes, or major assignments due on a day of an unexcused absence.

## **Observance of a Religious Holiday**

Observance of a religious holiday shall be viewed as valid justification for student absence, late homework/project submission and delayed testing, only when the teacher has been notified of the observance date no later than two weeks in advance. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to notify the teacher of these dates at the beginning of the school year.

## **Specific Rules Regarding Attendance**

1. A student who is absent from school may not participate **or attend** any school or co-curricular activity on that school day or evening without an Administrator's approval. This includes weekend activities if the student is absent on the last day of the school week.
2. Students who do not have absences verified within twenty four (24) hours will be considered TRUANT and will be assigned one (1) day of in-school suspension followed by four (4) office detentions.
3. Junior and senior students are allowed up to three (3) days per year to visit college campuses. In order for these absences to be excused, students should request a

note from the college admissions office verifying their visit and give that note to their guidance counselor upon their return to Westford Academy.

4. Absences of five (5) or more consecutive days will require a letter from a physician. Note- Any medical excuses for prolonged illnesses must be provided to the student's guidance counselor prior to the close of a specific quarter.
5. Two (2) unexcused absences in a term will result in loss of credit.
6. More than **six (6) absences** of any kind (excluding field trips) in a quarter will result in the loss of credit in all classes, except in cases of prolonged illnesses or extraordinary circumstances as determined by the administration and guidance counselor.

**Family vacations are not extraordinary circumstances. Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments to students in light of family vacations, and the school and the individual teacher(s) are not required to assume responsibility for providing individual tutoring or extensive individual help for the student when s/he returns.**

7. Absences due to suspension will count toward the accrual of more than six (6) absences of any kind in a quarter. The student is responsible for making up all work missed.
8. Seniors may have no more than three **(3) absences** in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
9. Any student that has not met the academic requirements (failing two or more classes) may be prohibited from participating or attending any school related functions including athletic events, performances, and dances unless given administrative approval.

### **ABSENCE FROM CLASS**

It is expected that students be present in class. Students who miss class without a note from a school official are deemed to have "cut" class. Students who miss over half the class period with a note are considered to be "Absent Excused." Students who miss over half the class period without a note are considered to be "Absent unexcused" and to have "cut" the class.

Discipline for unexcused class absences. (Class Cuts)



- |    |                     |  |
|----|---------------------|--|
| a. | First Offense       | Teacher detention, parent/guardian and administration notified.  |
| b. | Second Offense      | Two (2) office detentions, <b>loss of credit</b> , parent/guardian notified by administration.                         |
| c. | Third Offense       | In-school suspension, parent/guardian conference with student.   |
| d. | Additional Offenses | Three (3) days in-school suspension, recommendation for outside counseling, parent/guardian notified by administration |

### **Loss of Class Credit**

If a student loses credit for one (1) quarter in a one (1) semester course or loses credit for two (2) quarters in a full year course he/she may receive no credit for the year. A student who loses credit for two (2) quarters in a semester course or three (3) quarters in a full year course will not receive credit for the course.

If a student makes a consistent and conscientious effort, after he/she loses credit in quarter one (1) of a semester course, and in quarter two (2) is without any infractions of school policies, then credit may be reinstated after an evaluation process. If in a full year course a student loses credit in quarters one (1) and two (2), the only way credit could be reinstated is if the student is without any infractions of school policies during quarters three (3) and four (4) and completes six (6) hours of quality community service as determined by the Administration. **(Evaluation process required)**

Evaluation Process: A Review Committee comprised of the student's Assistant Principal/Dean and Guidance Counselor meets to review information provided by teachers and staff which includes credit, attendance status, and disciplinary records. This review takes place prior to the close of each quarter.

Students may not make up a course grade in which they lost credit during the school year by attending summer school except in circumstances determined in advance through the evaluation process. **Students may not take the same course twice.**

## **B. TARDY**

### TARDY TO SCHOOL

School begins at 7:35am. Students are considered “tardy to school” if they arrive to class after 7:35am. Attendance for the day is taken by first block teachers. Students who arrive after 7:35 should report to Mrs. Mahoney in the Guidance Office for a pass to class. Students cannot be excused tardy after-the-fact; parents must notify the school in advance of the student arriving late or must provide the student with a note to give to Mrs. Mahoney excusing the tardy. Mrs. Mahoney can be reached at (978) 692-5570, then press 1. The following consequences apply to being tardy to school each quarter (OD=Office Detention):

Three (3) tardies to school = one (1) O.D., parent(s) notified

Six (6) tardies to school = two (2) O.D., parent(s) notified

Nine (9) tardies to school = three (3) O.D, parent(s) notified

Twelve (12) tardies to school = 1 day of in-school suspension, office detention assigned, parent meeting requested

Fifteen (15) tardies to school = 2 additional days of in-school suspension, office detention assigned, parent meeting requested

**Projects previously assigned and due on the day a student is tardy (even if the student misses the class due to being tardy), the project must be turned in to the appropriate teacher prior to leaving the building. Teacher mailboxes are available in the Main Office.**

### TARDY TO CLASS

Students who arrive to class after the bell without a note from a school official (i.e. administrator, teacher, nurse, etc) are considered unexcused tardy.

The following consequences apply to being “Unexcused tardy” to class each quarter:

Three (3) unexcused tardies = one class cut resulting = one teacher-detention

Six (6) unexcused tardies = second class cut = one office detention plus loss of credit

## **C. DISMISSALS**

If a parent/guardian wishes to have a student dismissed early from school for any reason, a note must be brought from home and given to the main office prior to morning attendance, or the parent/guardian may contact the school prior to 8:15 a.m. on the

date of dismissal (978-692-5570, then press 1). Parents are strongly encouraged to make medical and dental appointments at times that do not conflict with school attendance.

In all cases, students who have an unanticipated reason to leave the building during the school day must have permission from a parent/guardian, who will be responsible for transportation arrangements.

In all cases, if a student must leave the building for any reason, they must check with the administrative office secretary and have a pass in their possession before leaving. Students leaving school assuming permission has been granted, when in fact it has not, will be considered truant.

Dismissal after the fact is **unacceptable** unless it is an emergency verified by a parent/guardian. In other words, a parent/guardian must notify the school of the need for their son/daughter to be dismissed before the student leaves school. Notification by parent after the student has left school is unacceptable.

Students who become ill during the school day should report to the school nurse (or Administration Office if school nurse is not available) who will arrange for a dismissal, if necessary. Students who are dismissed from school due to illness or other personal reasons should make every effort to turn in daily assignments due on the day of dismissal. **Projects previously assigned and due on the day of dismissal must be turned in to the appropriate teacher prior to leaving the building. Teacher mailboxes are available in the Main Office.**

The guidelines for acceptable reasons for dismissals are the same as those that apply to excused absences. Parents/guardians are advised that appointments with doctors and dentists should be scheduled so as not to interfere with classes.

Excessive dismissals will be reviewed in the same manner as tardies to class. Three (3) excused dismissals within a specific course in a quarter are equal to one (1) absence.

#### **RIGHTS OF THE EIGHTEEN-YEAR OLD STUDENT**

Eighteen (18) year olds enjoy certain rights in school that other students do not have. When you turn eighteen (18), you have the legal rights of an adult. However, the school can continue to keep

your parents informed about your progress and whereabouts. The school cannot require that your parents sign your report cards / progress reports or permission slips for field trips. You, as an adult, can give yourself permission to go on a trip.

Your school **cannot** require that you have absence notes signed by your parent. Your school **can** notify your parents that you were absent. Additionally, parents/guardians have access to the student's school record even if the student is eighteen (18) years of age.

If a student who is eighteen (18) years or older wishes not to have his/her records sent to the parent or guardian then a request must be made in writing and submitted to the Principal / Assistant Principal of the High School.

#### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES- (18 year olds)**

Dismissals will be granted for medical and dental appointments. If you are dismissed for a medical appointment, you need to see the Attendance Secretary with a note signed by you dismissing yourself for the specific appointment. The note should contain: Name of the Doctor/Dentist, phone number, and time of the appointment. The school may verify this information before dismissing the student. The student will be permitted back into school if the student provides a note from the physician confirming the appointment.

If an 18 year old student becomes ill during the day, and wishes to dismiss him/herself to go home (without a previously scheduled doctor's appointment), s/he must first see the nurse. If the nurse has on file a note from a legal guardian/parent indicating permission to allow the student to dismiss themselves for medical reasons, the nurse may grant permission for such dismissal. It is the responsibility of the parent to monitor the frequency of dismissals, and not up to the school to notify the parent/guardian each time this occurs. Students dismissing themselves for health reasons will not be permitted back into school.

Students dismissed for reasons other than listed in the excused absence section of the attendance policy will be considered to have accrued an unexcused dismissal.

#### **ABSENCES- (18 year olds)**

Please see the Attendance Secretary to excuse yourself for an absence from school. S/he will provide you with an excused pass

for your teachers. The school may still call your parent/guardian regarding any absence from school.

## **ACADEMICS**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #6112:  
Homework

### **HOMEWORK**

#### **Rationale**

Homework should be a useful adjunct to in-school learning. It should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience. Homework should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes. Discretion should be used by teachers in the assigning of homework prior to weekends, vacations and holidays. Homework and projects should not be assigned so that the due dates will conflict with the celebration of religious holidays.

#### **Considerations for Homework**

Homework traditionally provides for some very basic purposes:

- To supplement and reinforce skills and work done in class
- To provide opportunities to use skills and knowledge learned in school in creative ways outside of school
- To promote independent study and research skills
- To help develop individual responsibility by teaching students how to budget time and organize materials

Beyond these provisions, the Westford Schools believe that truly effective homework includes the following considerations:

- It should be done at home. It differs in intent and structure from classroom instruction
- It should be meaningful for students by having real world connections when appropriate
- It should contain problem solving focused activities and assignments to challenge the critical thinking abilities of students
- It should include project oriented, long term assignments to enable students to integrate their learning
- It should be differentiated in accordance with needs, skill deficits, strengths, and interests of students
- It should provide challenge and extensions to further expand opportunities for learning

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Homework is the student's responsibility.
2. Students are encouraged to use a homework assignment book or some other organized method to record assignments.
3. Students should make every effort to clarify homework assignments before leaving school.
4. Students should complete homework assignments independently. Cooperative initiatives, however, can be beneficial when appropriate for instruction. If difficulties develop, a student should seek guidance from a teacher or parent.
5. Students should complete homework assignments on time and according to teacher guidelines.
6. Students are responsible for obtaining from their teachers any missed assignments.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

1. Homework is a responsibility that rightfully belongs to the child, not the parents.
2. Direct parental participation should be minimal; the younger the student, the more likely the need for parental involvement.
3. Parents should provide a place to study, free from distractions, and provide appropriate materials, such as pencils, pens, erasers, rulers, etc.
4. Parents should monitor the time spent on homework and confer with the teacher if the amount of time appears to be consistently excessive or too little.
5. Parents should confer with the teacher if assignments seem consistently unclear or too difficult.
6. Parents should notify the teacher if an unforeseen occurrence prevents the student from completing an assignment.
7. Parents should make every attempt to schedule vacation time during those blocks provided within the school calendar. Missing classroom instruction cannot be replaced with homework assignments. Homework is designed to reinforce instruction.  
**Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments to students in light of family vacations, and the school and the individual teacher(s) are not required to assume**

**responsibility for providing individual tutoring or extensive individual help for the student when s/he returns.**

**Teacher Responsibilities**

1. Assignments will be at the students' level of understanding.
2. Assignments will be purposeful and related to the curriculum.
3. Assignments will not be given until expectations have been explained.
4. Consideration will be given to space long-term assignments as well as tests.
5. The teacher will make homework an integral part of the assessment process.
6. Teacher will communicate with parents about homework expectations as well as any problems that arise.
7. Timely feedback to students should be provided by the teacher.

Homework is an important and integral part of the student's learning process. The amount and type of homework provided is determined by teacher judgment of student ability to profit from the experience. Honors and Advanced Placement courses may require additional homework time. Students are expected to complete all assignments.

**GRADING**

The school year is comprised of eight (8) marking periods; four (4) teacher-made mid-term progress reports and four (4) computerized report cards which include mid-year and final exam grades.

Achievement grades are given to students at the end of each quarter. These grades reflect the overall evaluation of class contribution based on attendance, participation in class, tests, and related assignments.

Achievements are measured numerically with a minimum passing grade of sixty-five (65).

No **“Incomplete”** grades will be given without administrative approval.

## MARKING SYSTEM

A+ = 97 - 100	B+ = 87 - 89	C+ = 77 - 79	D = 65 - 69
A = 93 - 96	B = 83 - 86	C = 73 - 76	F = 0 - 64
A- = 90 - 92	B- = 80 - 82	C- = 70 - 72	

Letters contained on achievement records are:

P = Pass	NC = No Credit
F = Fail	INC = Incomplete
WD = Withdrawn	EX = Excused
WF = Withdrawn Failing	MED = Medically Excused
NG = No Grade Received	

If a student receives a grade of "incomplete", it is his/her responsibility to arrange for and make-up all work within the appropriate timeframe as determined by the teacher and/or administration at the close of the marking period or a grade of "failing" will be recorded for that period.

A grade of "incomplete" cannot be credited toward interscholastic eligibility.

In addition to achievement grades, conduct and effort will be reflected through comments printed on the report card.

## CONFERENCES AND EXTRA HELP SESSIONS

Teachers welcome the opportunity to have individual conferences with students and/or parents. Appointments should be made so that teachers will not have to leave their regular classes. Appointments by parents should be made through the Voice Mail. It is far better that the student meet with the teacher after school or during the day when the teacher is free from the regular classroom to discuss any differences.

It is expected that students will initiate the scheduling of extra help sessions with teachers. Staff is available by appointment after school for extra help.

## SCHEDULE CHANGE/DROP-ADD PROCEDURE

Students are encouraged to work closely with their guidance counselor during the course selection process. After the start of each school year, changes to a student's program may not be



possible due to a variety of reasons: class size, single class offerings, conflicts, or disapproval by parent, counselor, or teacher.  
Full Year Courses

1. Within two (2) weeks after the issuance of 1<sup>st</sup> Progress Reports, students can withdraw from a course if:
  - a. another course is selected and scheduled
  - b. the student is still carrying a minimum of 32.5 credits
  - c. parent/teacher permission is secured

*\*course will not be identified on transcript*

2. From two (2) weeks after the issuance of 1<sup>st</sup> progress reports to the issuance of mid-year reports, a student can withdraw from a course if:
  - a. another course is selected and scheduled
  - b. the student is still carrying a minimum of 32.5 credits
  - c. parent/teacher permission is secured

*\*\*a grade will be noted on 1<sup>st</sup> term and/or 2<sup>nd</sup> term report card (depending on date of withdrawal). A withdrawal (WD) will be noted on final transcript.*

Semester Courses:

3.
  - a. before issuance of 1st progress report= no notation
  - b. within two weeks of 1<sup>st</sup> progress report = WD
  - c. after 2nd week from issuance of 1st progress report=WF (withdrawn failing).

After Mid-Year, students should no longer request to drop a course. In such cases, in the event that the withdrawal is approved, a (WF) withdrawn failing notation will be noted on the final transcript and a "0" will be calculated into the student's cumulative average.

### **MAKE-UP POLICY**

Scheduled tests, quizzes, and projects missed due to an **EXCUSED ABSENCE** must be made up on the day of a student's return to school, **as long as that course meets on that day**. All other work must be made up within three (3) days of the student's return to school.

Work missed due to an absence of two (2) or more consecutive days must be made up within five (5) days after the student returns to school. Due dates for long term projects will not be affected.

### **ASSESSMENTS AND MID-YEAR / FINAL EXAMS**

If a student has four or more assessments on a single day, the student should immediately see their teacher to re-schedule the most recently assigned assessment. This conversation must take place no later than one full school day after the assessment is assigned

Students are not required to take more than two mid-year or final exams on a calendar day. No exams/quizzes will be administered, or homework will be due, to students taking MCAS during MCAS testing.

Students who have an unexcused absence on the day of the Mid Term and Final Exam are not allowed to take a make-up exam unless Administrative approval is given.

Students who miss a mid-year or final exam due to an unexcused absence shall receive a "0" for the assessment.

**\*\*\*Students being dismissed following completion of a mid-year / final exam must receive administrative permission prior to leaving school in accordance with the dismissal policy.\*\*\***

### **HONOR ROLL**

The Honor Roll is calculated for Honors and High Honors. In order to receive High Honors, a student must have an academic average of 90% or above (to include not more than one (1) grade between 80-89). To receive Honors, a student must have an academic average of 80% or above, with no grade lower than 80%.

A grade of "C" or below in any class including electives and Physical Education, or an "F" in a pass/fail course, or a "W" or "W/F" automatically disqualifies a student from Honor Roll.

If a student receives a grade of "incomplete," he/she is not eligible for Honor Roll. It is his/her responsibility to arrange for, and make up all work within the appropriate timeframe as determined by the teacher and/or administration at the close of the applicable marking

period. A grade of “incomplete” cannot be credited towards interscholastic eligibility.

### **STUDENTS WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

If a student who has turned sixteen (16) years of age seeks to voluntarily withdraw from school, an exit interview will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, student, and student’s guidance counselor. At that time, the school will provide information regarding available transitional programs, educational services, and student rights. Students must complete a leaving school form in order to officially voluntarily withdraw.

If a student who has turned sixteen (16) years of age is absent without medical excuse for fifteen (15) consecutive school days, the parent/guardian and student shall be sent written notice and shall be provided with the opportunity to meet with a designated staff person within ten (10) school days to discuss the student’s status and the educational opportunities that are available within the District. At the request of the parent/guardian, the time for said meeting may be extended for an additional fourteen (14) days. If the parent/guardian and student refuse or fail to participate in such a meeting, the student will be considered to have withdrawn from the Westford Public Schools. M.G.L. ch. 76, §18.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS P6110**

The Principal has the authority to waive or delay the completion of graduation course requirements when scheduling difficulties arise. Additionally, the Principal has the authority to grant a student request to modify his or her curriculum. Regardless of any action approved by the Principal, students must satisfy the credit requirements and student testing required by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### **Requirements for Graduation**

1. A student must pass five 5-credit courses or the equivalent in semester offerings each year in order to be promoted to the subsequent year of secondary schooling. One of the five 5-credit courses must be English at the appropriate level. A student may go to summer school or be tutored to make up subjects(s) needed for promotion or graduation where the adequacy of demonstrated

competence in the subject is judged by the administration.

2. A student must pass a minimum of 117.5 credits to graduate as well as satisfy the requirements specified in item 1 above.
3. Students are required to take 32.5 credits each year. Exceptions require administrator approval.
4. Passing the following subjects is required:

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Comment</b>
English Language Arts	20.0	
Mathematics	20.0	
Science	15.0	
History & Social Science	15.0	World History 10 credits, U.S. History 10 credits <sup>1</sup>
Foreign Language	10.0*	
Electives	20.0	
Physical Education <sup>2</sup>	10.0	One semester per year
Health	2.5	
Computer Technology <sup>3</sup>	2.5	
Fine Arts / Performing Arts <sup>4</sup>	2.5*	
	117.5	
<sup>1</sup> One of the US or world history courses may be taken as early as 8 <sup>th</sup> grade		
<sup>2</sup> Four semesters of P.E. are required unless excused in writing by a physician.		
<sup>3</sup> Acceptable courses may address computer hardware, computer programming, and/or use of prevalent industry software.		
<sup>4</sup> May be met by a course from the Music, Art, or Theater departments		
*The Foreign Language requirement and the Fine Arts requirement may be waived upon request until June of 2020. Students seeking such an exemption should be aware they will not meet minimum entry requirements for the MA University System.		

The Principal will make provisions for interpretation of transfer credits so as not to penalize students who transfer into Westford Academy from schools which do not have corresponding graduation requirements. The Principal will also make provision for

determining and interpreting graduation requirements in unusual circumstances.

**Credit for Foreign Study:**

Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it where the work indicates adequate learning appropriate for the student's grade level.

**Credit for College Courses**

Students who achieve passing grades at accredited colleges or universities prior to graduating from Westford Academy may be provided credit for these courses by Westford Public Schools for purposes of meeting the promotion and graduation requirements provided herein. Eligible courses may be either on-campus or online courses and must be worth three or more credits. Prior authorization from the administration at Westford Academy must be attained before any college or university credit will be accepted towards graduation requirements.

**Westford Public Schools Policy References:**

P6109 — Promotion and Retention of Students

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Admissions Standards for the Massachusetts State University System and the University of Massachusetts, August 2013

Policy Adopted: April 9, 2001

WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Revised: May 20, 2002

Policy Revised: March 28, 2016

**STUDENT RECORDS**

The Westford Public Schools complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to student records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's/guardian's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

The Massachusetts Student Record Regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) apply to all information kept by a school on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record in the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty (60) years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extra-curricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of major parent and student rights regarding their student records:

*Inspection of Record* – A parent/guardian, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent/guardian or eligible student within ten (10) days of the request, unless the parent/guardian or eligible student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/guardian or eligible student requests copies of a student record, the District may charge the parent/guardian/eligible student for said copies at the District rate.

*Confidentiality of Record* – With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent/guardian, eligible student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student.

*Amendment of Record* – The parent/guardian and eligible student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent/guardian and eligible student have the right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent/guardian and eligible student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent/guardian or eligible student is not satisfied with the decision, the student record regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

*Directory Information* – Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes, without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances listed above, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying the school in writing by the end of September of each school year.

*Destruction of Records* – The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent/guardian and eligible student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

*Transfer of Records* - It is the practice of the Westford Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who transfers to another public school district upon request of the receiving district.

*Non-Custodial Parents* – Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the child) of any public school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student’s achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child’s school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent’s ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and any other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

*Third Party Access* – Authorized school personnel, to include (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student shall not be necessary.

*Complaints* – A parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901, telephone number (202) 260-3887 or with the



Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148, telephone number (781) 338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice, or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS**

Special Education records will be destroyed seven (7) years after date of graduation. These records are kept in, and may be picked up from, the Special Education Office in the Central Office Administration Building.

### **MCAS TESTING**

In addition to meeting state and local requirements for high school graduation, all students must earn a scaled score of at least 220 on one of the high school MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) tests: Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering. Students with disabilities who are unable to participate in standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations, can earn a CD through the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) — a portfolio of work samples that demonstrate a student’s academic knowledge, skills, and achievements. Through the MCAS-Alt portfolio, a student may show that he or she has attained the equivalent of a scaled score of 220 or higher on the high school MCAS tests. In addition, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education established the MCAS Performance Appeals process in 2002. This process provides students with an alternative opportunity to demonstrate that they possess the knowledge and skills to meet the academic standard required for graduation, even though they have not yet passed the grade 10 MCAS tests or retests in ELA, mathematics, and STE.

No exams/quizzes will be administered , or homework will be due, to students taking MCAS during MCAS testing.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The Westford Academy community believes in building/developing good citizens. Good citizenship begins with recognition of the fact that as members of the same community, the

community is strengthened by the support that we provide to one another. Our goal is to encourage each student to develop good citizenship through community service.

Each student is encouraged to complete a minimum of forty (40) hours of community service before graduating. A standard community service form should be used to verify time engaged in community service activities. These forms are available through Advisors, Administration, and Counselors, and online at the Westford Academy website.

### **TEACHER DETENTION**

A teacher may detain a student after school. A student must receive one (1) day's notice prior to staying for a teacher detention. During this time, there should be a positive exchange between teacher and student to explain what the expected behavior is and how the student can work to attain the expected level.

### **CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

Whenever a student is guilty of cheating or plagiarism, the teacher shall confiscate the student's paper, mark a zero for the work, and notify the parent, the Administrative office, and the National Honor Society Advisor, if appropriate, as to the action taken. Examples of cheating or plagiarism may include, but are not limited to, the following: providing materials (tests, quizzes, projects or papers) to another student from a current or previously taken course; copying another student's work or working with other students to complete an assignment when not instructed to do so by the teacher; purposeful communication of information or use of unauthorized resources during a testing environment; and purposeful distribution of work/answers via printed, electronic, or verbal format to other students when such work will be considered for grading purposes.

For information and guidelines with respect to appropriate use of online resources (including translators) in World Language classes, please refer to the individual class' syllabus and course expectations sheet.

Such activities will also be subject to additional disciplinary action by Administration . The parent/guardian shall be notified that a second offense will bring automatic suspension from school.

**Furthermore, students found responsible for this action will**

**NOT receive honor/high honor distinction for that specific quarter.**

The burden of proof that the student has written an original work lies with the student. The student may be requested to provide their teacher/administrator with a rough draft, a Works Cited page, a bibliography, parenthetical citations, copies of their sources, and will have to demonstrate through discussions their knowledge of content.

**STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

The atmosphere of a school is a reflection of the attitude of its students and staff toward the school and toward each other. It is of equal concern that we achieve an atmosphere of order, self-discipline, safety, and mutual respect. We believe our students have the maturity and good judgment to regulate their own behavior. When these qualities need further development, we are ready to provide the necessary guidelines. The school belongs to all of us, and it can only be what we want to make it.

Each teacher, within the policies set by the Westford School Committee for their Westford Public Schools, will establish behavior expectations within their own classes. A teacher may detain a student whenever the student is not performing at that expectancy level. If there is a continuance of poor conduct displayed by the student, the teacher will request a parent conference. Teachers may schedule time after school to discuss problems in scholastic areas as well as discipline.

**OFFICE DETENTION**

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 2:05 - 3:00**

Office Detention (O.D.) will be held on scheduled days after school. Students must attend office detention unless excused by an Administrator. O.D. will be used at the Administrator's discretion to deal with student misconduct deserving of in-school discipline. (See Student Misconduct) The procedure will be:

- (A) Missing an Office Detention may result in one (1) day of in-school suspension
- (B) Students will be expected to work on school assignments and bring appropriate materials to O.D. Students not having work to be done may be assigned other work by the

**Note:** Students who arrive late to Office Detention shall serve the time remaining and a full office detention on the next date it is held.

### **STUDENT MISCONDUCT**

Students are expected to give the maximum in courtesy and respect to all school personnel, all other students and to the policies of the school. While it is not possible to list everything which might be considered misconduct, the following may result in a detention or suspension.

1. Any act which disrupts a class or interferes with the proper activities of the teacher and other members of the class.
2. Insubordination. It is expected that the directions and orders of teachers and administrators will be obeyed immediately.
3. Profanity or obscenity cannot be tolerated in a safe and peaceable school environment and will be punishable.
4. Continuous (two or more) violations of Dress Code guidelines
5. Discourtesy or disrespect to teachers, secretaries, custodial staff, cafeteria personnel, administrators or other students.
6. Card-playing, gambling, or other activities which are not appropriate in school or on the school grounds. Repeated instances of this problem will result in suspension. This includes computer games.
7. Littering.
8. Damage to school property or the property of any other person, i.e., vandalism.
9. Loitering in the halls or lavatories.
10. Harassment (refer to specific Harassment Policy)
11. **Any occasion of a serious breach of school policy and / or school rules by a senior during the last quarter of his/her senior year may result in non-participation in the graduation ceremonies.**
12. Excessive tardies. (See Attendance Policy)

**13. Any violation of school rules, policies, regulations or other provisions of the student handbook.**

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

For information on what electronic devices are (and aren't) allowed, as well as descriptions of their acceptable use, please refer to Page 82 "Computer/Electronics Use at Westford Academy."

First Violation – device impounded and administrator will notify parent to pick device up before or after school.

Second (and subsequent violations) – device impounded, office detention assigned, and administrator will notify parent to pick device up before or after school.

**Cell Phone Search**

School officials do not have to obtain a warrant in order to conduct a search of student property.

Westford Academy administration is authorized to seize the cell phone of a student based on reasonable suspicion that the possession or use of the cell phone was in violation of the law and/or school rules. Additionally, Westford Academy has the right to conduct a search of the contents of the cell phone when there is reasonable and individualized suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school.

Examples of when a search is justified at its inception include, but are not limited to, when the school receives reliable information that a student has used his or her cell phone to: (1) text during a test (suspected of cheating); (2) take a picture which is suspected to harass or bully a classmate; (3) send a picture to others or post a picture online with the intention of harassing or bullying a

classmate or staff member; (4) text a threat regarding a classmate or staff member; (5) and/or where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student's cell phone will contain evidence related to an immediate health or safety emergency.

Even if the search of the contents of the cell phone is justified at its inception, Westford Academy will limit the scope of the search to only the contents of the cell phone that are reasonably related to the objectives of the search. This means that the search will be limited to those areas of the cell phone that could contain the evidence sought. Additionally, the search of the contents of the cell phone will not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the alleged infraction.

#### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

Communication between staff and students must be appropriate. Both parties need to keep communication related to academic, athletic or co-curricular content. Students and staff must refrain from anything related to sexual behavior, drugs or alcohol, hazing or harassment. Do not speak about any other students or staff in a manner that is inappropriate. Make sure all communications are transparent and observable. Be sure to report anything that is inappropriate or suspicious.

#### **ALCOHOL DETECTION TEST**

When there is reasonable suspicion that a student has consumed alcohol in school, on school property, or during or prior to a school-sponsored activity, an Alcohol Detection Test may be administered by school administrators. Reasonable suspicion includes, but is not limited to: erratic behavior, slurred speech, strong foreign odor on clothing or breath, glazed and glassy eyes,

unsteady gait, angry agitated state, information offered by students, faculty, staff, or anyone wishing to remain anonymous, leaving school grounds or returning to school grounds during scheduled hours. Although the alcohol breathalyzer testing device measures blood alcohol levels, our purpose is to use it as a deterrent and to determine if a student has used alcohol. The refusal to take the test raises the inference that the student had or has been using alcohol and may result in discipline as described in this Student Handbook.

## **STUDENT SUSPENSIONS**

Suspension from school involves the denial of a student's privilege to attend school and its activities. All students should understand that an out of school suspension means that the suspended student may not be in school or on school grounds for any reason, attend any classes, take part in any athletic or other activity until after midnight of the last school day of the suspension without the express permission of the Principal. This action is taken when it is the determination of the Principal (or his designee) that no other action is suitable or likely to result in the correction of a student's unacceptable behavior. If the suspension is the result of a student's behavior at a school-sponsored activity, continued participation and/or attendance in that activity may be suspended for 30 days. A parent-student-counselor-administrator conference is necessary before a suspended student will be allowed to return to school. Suspensions vary in length from one (1) day in-school suspension up to and including long term suspension or exclusion for the balance of the school year and beyond.

### **Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions:**

A student will be given oral notice of the offense with which s/he is charged and an opportunity to respond prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. In the event that the Principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent/guardian will be notified by telephone and in writing.

Alternatives to short term disciplinary sanctions and office detentions, such as community service to the school, may be suggested to the student when suspension or office detention may be unreasonable due to special circumstances. The student and administrator must agree upon these arrangements.

### Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions:

Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent/guardian will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (Principal/School Committee) will issue a written decision. The parent/guardian will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. ch. 71, §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed under M.G.L. ch. 71, §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. ch. 76, §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the School Committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect.

Offenses for which you will be suspended or excluded include, but are not limited to:

1. **Truancy and leaving the school building/grounds without permission.** Truancy will result in an in-school suspension and four (4) Office Detentions on the first offense. Subsequent offenses will result in at least a three (3)-day suspension from school for each subsequent offense. The make-up policy for work missed is the same as that for unexcused absences. **Work missed on date or period of truancy may not be made up.**
2. **Use, possession or distribution to other student of drugs or alcohol, or possession of drug paraphernalia.** Use, possession, or distribution to other students of drugs or alcohol, or possession of drug paraphernalia is strictly prohibited, and may be suspended up to 5 days out of school. In addition, those students suspended for drug and/or alcohol use may be required to get a doctor's physical examination report before returning to school. Possession of items that are considered to be drug paraphernalia is a suspendable offense. A student



suspended for drug/alcohol use may be required to enter an approved substance abuse program that may also include parental involvement.

3. Offenses involving assault of a student/teacher, or possession of drugs or weapons may result in expulsion by the Principal. Refer to this manual for Mass General Law (MGL) Ch. 71 Sect. 37H & 37H 1/2 regarding potential expulsion for assault, drugs, or weapons.
4. Disrespectful speech or actions toward teachers, secretaries, custodial staff, cafeteria personnel, administrators or other students.
5. Possession of dangerous weapons.
6. Hazing (M.G. L. Chapter 269)
7. Use/possession of tobacco products on school grounds

Offenses for which you may be suspended with the length of suspension at the discretion of administration, include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Repeated or multiple cutting of classes.
- (b) Stealing; including but not limited to school store, cafeteria & locker rooms.
- (c) Defacing or willfully damaging school property.
- (d) Fighting/harassment/other forms of violence directed at another person. Such actions may include police involvement. A counseling session/conflict mediation session should precede reinstatement to class of the suspended student.
- (e) Forgery.
- (f) Snowballing - snowballs are not to be thrown on school property. Making snowballs is interpreted as throwing them.
- (g) Setting off false alarms (such students will also be referred to the police and fire chief).
- (h) Serious acts of insubordination.
- (i) Cutting Office Detention
- (j) Other extreme acts which infringe on the rights of others or detract from the learning atmosphere.
- (k) Violation of the Computer Environment Policy.
- (l) Present in an "unauthorized area"- Students are expected to follow their schedule and be in their appropriate classes during scheduled times.  
(Stairwells, unsupervised locker rooms /

classrooms or offices are examples of unauthorized areas.)

- (m) Violation of the Honor Code
- (n) Continuous violation of school rules
- (o) Inappropriate behavior
- (p) Electronic cigarettes /Vaporizes
- (q) Possession of prescription medicine without authorization from school nurse

The process of suspensions shall include due process:

1. Following parent/guardian contact, a written notice that a violation has occurred will be mailed home (these violations are printed in this manual, read them carefully)
2. Students will have the opportunity to discuss their side of the events leading up to suspension with a school administrator and seek clarification from the individual at which level the offense occurred
3. Students will have the opportunity to further question the suspension with the Principal, Superintendent and/or School Committee
4. School Committee may be alerted when a student has received a third suspension that may mean School Committee review.
5. Work or assignments missed during a suspension can be made up on the student's return to school within a time frame established between teacher and student.

#### **71. §37H3/4**

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

(b) Alternatives to Suspension under Section 37H3/4. Any principal, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as

mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

(c) Notice of Suspension and Hearing under Section 37H3/4.

(1) Except in the case of emergency removal as set forth below, or in school suspensions, the principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

(2) The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

(a) the disciplinary offense;

(b) the basis for the charge;

(c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;

(d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;

(e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;

(f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

(g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:

1. the rights set forth below concerning a long-term suspension hearing; and

2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

(3) The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

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

(d) Emergency Removal under Section 37H3/4

(1) The principal can remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

(a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in Section (c)(2), above;

(b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in Section (c)(2), above;

(c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with Sections (e)(2) and (e)(3) below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

(d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of Sections (e)(2)(c) and (e)(3)(d) below, as applicable.

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

(3) Removal from privileges such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct, is not subject to these procedures.

(e) Principal's Hearing under Section 37H3/4

1) The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth below in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.

2) Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension

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

(b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

(c) The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of

suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

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

### 3) Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension

(a) The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.

(b) At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;

2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;

3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;

4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;

5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating

circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in Section (b) above, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
  - a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for

filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that

b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

(e) If the student is in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent, explaining the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

(f) Superintendent's Hearing under Section 37H3/4

1. A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

2. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth Section (e) (3) (c) 5.a). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

3. The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.

4. The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

5. The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent



shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

6. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under Section (e)(3)(b).

7. The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of Section (e)(3)(c)1 through 5, above. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

8. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

(g) In-School Suspension under Section 37H3/4

1. The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

2. The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the principal follows the process set forth below and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress.

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

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

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

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

**Education Services and Academic Progress under Sections 37H, 37H1/2, and 37H3/4**

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

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

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum

frameworks established for all students under G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

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

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

### **Discipline and Students with Disabilities**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) for every student eligible for special education or related services shall

indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.

2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change in placement", building administrators, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). In most instances, during disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive the services identified as necessary by the Team to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.

3. If building administrators, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP TEAM will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.

4. If building administrators, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to the disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardian consent to a new placement, or until the District obtains an order from court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The student's Team shall also review, and

modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.

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

### **CONDUCT IN THE SUSPENSION ROOM**

Supervised by a faculty member.

Rules:

1. Students are responsible for work that needs to be made up in classes.
2. If a student leaves I.S.S. without permission, it will result in three (3) days of out-of-school suspension
3. Disorderly conduct in the Suspension Room by a student may lead to out-of-school suspension at an Administrator's discretion

### **CRISIS INTERVENTION**

In the event of imminent moral harm or extreme emergencies, school personnel will take any and all steps to ensure the safety of the student and the school community. If, in the opinion of Administration, guidance personnel, or the Student Assistance Team, a student is judged to be at-risk of harming himself/herself or others, the following will occur:

1. The student's parents/guardians will be notified of the concern.
2. The parents/guardians will be asked to pick up their son/daughter from school.
3. The student will not be re-admitted to school until the Principal has received a written statement from an outside licensed mental health professional indicating that he/she has evaluated the student and find that the student is safe to return to school.

4. Upon his/her return, school personnel will continue to monitor and work with the student.

**NOTE:** During the period that the student is being evaluated, the student's daily absences will be excused.

### **TOBACCO USE/POSSESSION POLICY**

State law has created a Smoke-Free Environment for all schools. The use of tobacco products and /or electronic cigarettes is prohibited at all times by student, staff, and visitors in all school buildings and grounds and at all school-sponsored activities. Penalties for student violation of this policy are spelled out below in accordance with the Tobacco Regulations as noted below.

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #5306

According to Federal Regulation, Massachusetts General Laws, and Town of Westford By-Laws, the **use/ possession of any** tobacco and / or electronic cigarette products within the school buildings, the school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or on school-sponsored field trips, by any individual, including school personnel, is strictly prohibited. Violations are cumulative and enforced by the Westford Board of Health. **Tobacco products will be confiscated.**

#### **Discipline Procedures for Violation of Tobacco Policy:**

- First Violation = Fined \$100, In-school suspension, parent / guardian notification.
- Second Violation = Fined \$200, Two (2) Days-In-school suspension, parent / guardian notification.
- Third Violation = Fined \$300, and for any subsequent violation. Two (2) days out-of-school suspension, parent /guardian notification. Re-entry meeting required with parent / guardian and administrator.

### **Chapter 71, Sec. 37H, Massachusetts General Laws**

The Superintendents of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of the teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use/possession of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, on the school grounds, or on school busses, by an individual, including school personnel.

## **POLICE QUESTIONING AND APPREHENSION**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #1401:

### **CUSTODY**

A duly authorized police officer may require that a student be released to his/her custody provided a written notice from the local police department is presented to the school official in charge. The notice for custody should be made only when one (1) or more of the following conditions exist:

- There are clear indications that the student to be questioned is directly involved in a violation of a local ordinance, state or federal statute.
- The individual involved is a known fugitive from either his/her parents/legal guardians or justice.
- It appears in the best interest of the student that he/she is taken into protective custody.

The notice must be signed by the local police chief or official representative. Both the police and school officials have a responsibility to notify the parent/legal guardian of the student regarding the action taken.

When circumstances dictate the immediate questioning of a student, the officer will take the student into custody in accordance with the provisions of the above statement. It is clear that a police officer has the right to take a student into custody; however, it is important for law enforcement agencies and school authorities to recognize the parent/legal guardian-student-school relationship.

### **QUESTIONING**

If the police department needs to question a student, school officials have the responsibility of notifying the student's parent/legal guardian regarding the questioning. The presence of the student's parent/legal guardian at the time of questioning is desirable to safeguard the self-incrimination rights of the student. Whenever possible, the questioning should be conducted away from school to avoid any display of law enforcement activities which can lead to unfortunate misunderstandings on the part of other students and members of the faculty.

It is recognized that the above conditions can easily be arranged. It is therefore expected that in such instances the police department notify the school and request a message be passed on to a student, which message instructs the student to present himself/herself at the

police station or some other location preferably after close of classes. Both agencies are expected to contact the student's parent/legal guardian and apprise them of the situation.

**Note: Students at the age of 17 are considered adults in Massachusetts, and may be questioned without a parent or legal guardian present.**

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Students have a legitimate right to privacy; however, this right must be balanced against the State's right to maintain a school environment that is conducive to learning. School officials are not required to obtain a warrant before searching a student under their authority. Provided there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating the rules of the school, the administration of Westford Academy reserves the right to search students, students' lockers and possessions, and/or students' automobiles on school property for articles of contraband. Any illegal articles found will be confiscated and law enforcement officials notified. In addition, parents will be contacted and students will be suspended in accordance with the school discipline code. At various times throughout the school year the Westford Academy Administration reserves the right to conduct unannounced dog searches in cooperation with the Westford Police Department or other state or federal agencies.

### **WESTFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

A relationship of communication exists between Westford Academy and the Westford Police Department in conjunction with the Middlesex District Attorney's Community-Based Justice Program to the extent of informing the administration at Westford Academy when one of its students is involved in any incident or potential incident that would jeopardize the well-being of students, faculty, or individuals within the greater Westford community. Should such an incident or potential incident occur, the Administration will receive notice from one of the above mentioned agencies which may result in communication between the student, parent, and his/her Dean/Assistant Principal. The outcome of this meeting may result in disciplinary action which could affect participation in school-related events, activities, athletics and field trips.



## **OTHER INFORMATION & REGULATIONS**

### **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Students who remain in the building after school must be under the supervision of a faculty/staff member. Students in any other area of the building and not supervised may be considered to be in an unassigned area and sent to office detention.

### **ASSEMBLIES**

Throughout the year, students will be gathered together for any number of reasons, usually for athletic/club recognition days, spirit week, guest speakers, or to observe holidays. Students who do not wish to take part in an assembly will be assigned to an alternative site. School clubs, classes and department areas are encouraged to sponsor assemblies throughout the year.

### **SCHOOL HEALTH**

The Clinic is open during the school day. Students should report to the nurse for health emergencies, illness assessment, first aid/injuries, emotional support, medication administration, health screenings and physicals, health record updates, and any health-related concerns. A student must receive a pass from the supervising teacher before going to the Clinic. If the nurse is not in the Clinic, the student should report to the Main Office. Approval from a parent or adult designated on the emergency card is necessary before a student will be dismissed.

### **MEDICATION INFORMATION**

- According to WPS Policy 5503, the school nurse is the only person allowed to administer medication to students in the Westford Public Schools
- If a prescription medication is to be given at school, it must be in the original pharmacy bottle with the prescription label attached and the Medication Administration Plan must be completed. The pharmacy will provide you with a 'school bottle'
- Medications are kept in the Nurses' Clinic with the exception of emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, EpiPens and glucagon) that students carry.
- If your child takes a regular medication outside of school, it is suggested you contact the school nurse.

- If your child has an allergy requiring an EpiPen, please contact the nurse to develop an Emergency Health Care Plan (these can be found on the WPS website).
- Parent/legal guardians should retrieve medications at the end of the school year because all medications will be destroyed on the last day of school.
- Students are not allowed to carry any prescription medicine unless granted permission by the school nurse.

### **PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATIONS**

**Physicals** - Westford Public School regulations require that students have up to date physical examinations in the 11th grade. According to MIAA rules, any student participating in school sports must provide documentation of an up to date physical examination before tryouts- a physical examination done no more than thirteen (13) months prior to the completion of the designated sports season by a licensed health care provider. Documentation of the physical (Including height, weight and blood pressure) should be given/mailed to the school nurses at Westford Academy.

**Immunizations** - Students must meet current Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization requirements. School health records are reviewed periodically to determine the immunization status of each student. Verification of immunizations should be submitted to the school nurse to update the student's health record.

### **MANDATED SCREENINGS**

School Health Services Staff conduct Postural screening for students in grade 9 as well as vision & hearing and height & weight screenings for 10th grade students. Parents/legal guardians will be notified of screening results by letter or telephone only if the student has failed a screening exam or requires further care from their health care provider. Findings of these referrals for follow-up should be returned to school to update a student's health record.

### **MEDICAL EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL**

A student may be dismissed or excluded from school for any of the following:

- Temperature over 100.4° (oral temperature)
- Disruptive cough
- Suspected infection of eye, ears, nose, throat, skin, scalp
- Severe abdominal pain or headache
- Suspected communicable disease

- Suspected pediculosis (head lice)
- Suspected fractures or any severe or disabling injury
- Questionable need for sutures
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Head injury
- Antibiotic therapy started less than twenty four (24) hours before returning to school
- Immunizations which are not up to date

#### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

Emergency cards are distributed to all students on the first day of school. These cards should be completed by the parent/legal guardian. Complete information is necessary to ensure your child's health and safety while at school. All information is confidential and must be updated if there are any changes.

#### **SCHOOL HEALTH RECORDS**

All 12th grade students will receive their entire Massachusetts School Health Record at graduation practice. Please safely store these important documents, as they will be needed for college, military service and/or employment.

Westford Academy School Nurses:

Joan Mitchell, RN BS M.Ed

Kathy Bourdeau, BSN, RN, CWOCN

#### **WEBSITE**

Please visit the website <http://wa.westfordk12.us/Pages/index> for further health information.

#### **INJURIES**

Any injury to a student should be reported IMMEDIATELY to the school nurse and the Administrative Office. If the injury occurs in Physical Education, it should be reported immediately to the Physical Education instructor. An incident report must be completed for every student injury by the supervising faculty member and given to the nurse.

## **CHANGE PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL RULES**

- 1) Write a proposal and have it endorsed by 10% of the student body.
- 2) Submit proposal in writing to:
  - a) Administration
  - b) Student Council
  - c) Student Advisors to the School Committee
- 3) Delegates to be at the meeting:
  - a) One Administrator
  - b) Two Faculty Members
  - c) Student Council Officers
  - d) One Student Advisory Member
  - e) A Student Council Member Representing Each Class
  - f) No More than Five Sponsors of the Proposal
- 4) Set a Meeting Date - Agree on a date within five (5) days of delegate selection. The meeting should be held within ten (10) days of proposal date.
- 5) Meeting is held.
- 6) Reports:
  - a) Minutes of the meeting written by Vice-President of Student Council.
  - b) Administrators - written opinions.
  - c) Student Council and Student Advisory - written opinions.
- 7) Reports (a.b.c.) are to be presented to the initiators of the proposal within five (5) days after the meeting.
- 8) Right of initiators to reply no more than five (5) days after the meeting.
- 9) Final decision by the Principal.
- 10) Appealing the Final Decision - An appeal is presented to the Student Advisory Committee, which will present the appeal to the School Committee.

## **MAKING THE PROPOSAL**

- 1) State the problem as is:
  - a) If a rule, state the exact wording of the rule as stated in the Student Manual.
  - b) If a problem, state the problem.
- 2) Why a change is needed - state how it is affecting others, not just yourself.
- 3) What do you feel the change should be:
  - a) Other rationale - changes you feel are workable.
  - b) Include where possible, any form of problem that one could anticipate from the proposed change.

- 4) Before a proposal can be submitted, the proposal has to be accepted by ten (10) percent of the student body.

### **DANCE REGULATIONS**

All regular school dances may be held between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. in the Academy cafeteria (dances may be held in the gymnasium with permission). A guest book will be used for registering individuals who are not members of Westford Academy. The guest book for a dance will be closed on Friday at noon. Students should check on Friday before leaving school to determine if their guest has been approved. You are responsible for the correct conduct of your guest - make sure he/she is aware of all the rules.

Students who work and, as a result, will arrive late to a dance should receive a note from the administration for admittance. Students will not be admitted after 9:00 p.m. without special written permission. Once a student leaves the dance, he/she will not be allowed re-admittance.

Student drinking of alcoholic beverages or the use of a controlled substance is not allowed at school functions. If it is determined that students have been drinking or suspected of using drugs prior to the dance, admission will be denied and students will be detained while parents are contacted. Disciplinary consequences will be imposed in accordance with the Student Handbook.

Grind dancing is not permitted. Information will be presented to all students at the beginning of the year outlining what is, and isn't, acceptable dancing at school-sponsored dances. If observed to be dancing inappropriately, an administrator/chaperone will approach the student(s) and take your names(s) and provide a warning. A second offense in the same dance will result in a parent being notified, and the student(s) being asked to leave the dance.

Five (5) chaperones shall be present. Two (2) police personnel shall be hired. A building Use Contract shall be submitted and approved by an Administrator. The contract shall be submitted at least one (1) month in advance.

Items which will not be allowed into Westford Academy school dances include, but are not limited to: backpacks, bookbags,

water bottles, commercial drinks, light sticks, or pacifiers (candy or real), and candy necklaces.

## **DRESS CODE**

While there is not a formal dress code at Westford Academy, there are certain expectations regarding groom and dress. All students are expected to attend school dressed in a manner, which is clean, within reasonable bounds of modesty, not hazardous to their health and safety, and not disruptive to the educational process. The state laws of Massachusetts require that footwear be worn in all public buildings. In addition, students will be informed by their teachers of any safety measures to be taken regarding dress (such as loose clothing) or securing hair. The administration and staff at WA seek to provide a school environment that is safe and respectable while fostering student pride. Continuous (two or more) violations of these dress code guidelines may result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the administrator.

1. **Health and Personal Hygiene-** Students should observe the basic rules of good personal hygiene and health. Appearance of body and clothes should be neat and clean.
2. **Decency -** Students should be dressed so as not to be offensive or to abridge the rules of good taste. Clothing that may be disruptive to the educational process includes (but is not limited to) clothing upon which any of the following is displayed: obscenities, language that promotes alcohol and/or drugs, words or symbols that will predictably upset others, or words or symbols which defame the beliefs or heritage of others. Students should refrain from wearing the following: midriff shirts, low-cut shirts, tube tops, or off the shoulder shirts. Under garments should not be visible under any articles of clothing such as tank tops, shorts, and pants. Skirts and shorts should be of an appropriate length; it is recommended that the length not rise above the end of the fingertips when the student's arms are placed by his or her side. Students not adhering to the dress code may be sent to administration and asked to change, or cover their clothing. While this is not intended to be an issue of discipline, it is viewed that these rules relate to the common good of all students.

3. **Safety** - Students must dress so that they will not endanger themselves or other students. The following is listed as a partial guideline:
  - a) Excessively loose clothing or braids near flames, chemicals , in cafeteria, home economics, art, science, laboratories, shop and physical education or other areas where it may lead to personal or group danger.
  - b) Footwear which can be dangerous should not be worn.
4. **No hats or hoods of any style are to be worn in the school** during school hours or they will be held in an administrator's office until the close of school. Exceptions are to made at the discretion of the Administration.
5. **Damage to Furniture or Floors** - Clothes that can mar or damage furniture should not be worn. Examples: boots or shoes, which scratch or mar the floors should not be worn.

### **DRIVER EDUCATION**

Students who schedule driving lessons during the school day must do so during DLT (Directed Learning Time). Students who do leave for driving lessons must all follow the regular dismissal procedure.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Subject matter field trips should be considered as an extension of the classroom and, as such, all students should attend. Students may be denied participation due to extenuating circumstances agreed upon prior to the trip. Students not attending a trip must be left an alternative assignment in the class that is involved in the trip and are expected to attend all other classes that day. Students are still responsible for all work missed while on a field trip. They should get their assignments before going on the trip.

Additionally, students should inform their teachers that they are missing a particular class due to a field trip. Students are expected to turn in to teachers any long-term (defined as assigned two weeks before departure of field trip) assignment, project, and/or essay BEFORE they leave Westford Academy on their trip. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with his/her other teachers as to their pending absence due to a field trip and coordinate the plan both for turning in work that is due, as well as

for gathering assignments that are made in his/her absence.  
Exemptions to be made at the discretion of the teacher.

Field trips require permission slips for all students, signed and approved by a parent/guardian. Additionally, all medical information and/or life threatening allergy/medication pertaining to the student must be current in the Nurses' Clinic

If a student is absent two (2) to three (3) days prior to a field trip, that student may be denied permission to participate in the field trip. In a case of denial, final decisions will be made by the Principal. Normal school rules apply during any field trip. Students may be denied permission to attend any field trip due to excessive absences, behavioral issues or failing grades.

If a student misses three (3) classes in a quarter due to documented field trip, the teacher can speak with the appropriate administrator regarding a meeting to determine whether or not the student (because of grades, overall attendance, general concerns) can miss an additional class for a field trip.

All school rules apply during field trips. Students are ambassadors of Westford Academy and their community and thereby should demonstrate exemplary deportment. All activities during a field trip should be approved by the chaperone in charge.

### **FIRE ALARMS**

A fire alarm is a serious matter of student safety. All must follow the directions which are posted in each room. Students must leave the building immediately in an orderly fashion. Students will return to class once cleared to enter the building. All students will walk beyond the driveways and wait.

All fire drills are timed to assess the evacuation of the building.

### **LOCKERS**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy # 5310

Each student is assigned his/her own locker and is responsible for its maintenance and condition. Students must use school assigned locks unless otherwise approved by administration. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen articles in view of the fact



that each student has an individually assigned locker. School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health and safety. Lockers, though assigned to students, are school property and may reasonably be inspected. Efforts will be made to protect the rights of privacy of the student. The parent/legal guardians of any student involved in a locker search will be notified of the locker search.

**Writing is not permitted on or inside lockers!!!**

**LUNCH AREA**

The cafeteria and the area adjacent to the cafeteria may be used by students during lunch time. This area and the cafeteria are the only places students should be at lunch time. Students going to any other part of the building during lunch must have a pass. All students are responsible for cleaning their table area as soon as they are finished eating.

**NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following radio stations carry our no school announcements:

WBZ-Boston 1030	WBZ-TV (Channel 4) Boston
WCAP-Lowell 980	WCVB-TV (Channel 5) Boston
WRKO 680	WHDH (Channel 7) Boston
	Cable TV (Channel 8) Westford

**Please do not call the Police or Fire Departments.**

It is the policy of the School Committee to keep schools in session on all days during which it is safe for buses to be operated. Parents are urged to use their judgment as to the advisability of sending their children during inclement weather.

**PARKING**

SENIORS: Parking at Westford Academy is a privilege not a right. Senior students who purchase a parking pass must adhere to the rules and regulations as outlined on the forms provided prior to the commission of a parking pass. **Any student violating the parking rules and regulations WILL BE subject to disciplinary action including having their vehicle towed at their expense.** Student parking passes are \$50 and must be paid in full before an official Westford Academy Parking Tag will be issued. Handicapped parking is free.

**Attention:** All operators and passengers of motor vehicles are encouraged to wear safety belts when driving in a motor vehicle. Wearing a safety belt is a state law in Massachusetts. All operators of motor vehicles should follow all Massachusetts State Motor Vehicle Laws when operating a car.

**Underclassmen:** Unless given administrative approval at least a day in advance, underclassmen are not permitted to park at Westford Academy. Failure to comply may result in loss of senior parking privileges. Additionally, copying and/or forging a parking pass may result in immediate disciplinary sanctions in addition the loss of parking privileges as a senior.

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

The Westford Public Schools recognizes that physical restraint may be required to protect the safety of school community members from serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint is defined as the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall only be used in emergency situations, in the judgment of the school staff member, when other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. The Westford Public Schools complies with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations governing the use and reporting of physical restraint in schools. 603 CMR 46.00.

### **SCHOOL POSTINGS**

**Any advertisement or sign must be pre-approved and initialed by the Westford Academy Administration prior to it being posted. Items not pre-approved or initialed will be discarded.**

### **TEXTBOOKS & EQUIPMENT**

Students will be responsible for all textbooks and equipment issued by Westford Academy. Students will be charged with a replacement fee for all lost or damaged books or equipment. A replacement for a lost and/or stolen textbook or piece of equipment will be issued upon full payment for the original.

## **THEFT**

If a student believes that a personal item may have been stolen they should immediately report to the administration. Administration will complete the following checklist:

- speak to the student and obtain a statement
- complete a theft report
- issue copies of theft report to department(s) and custodial staff
- notify student of lost and found areas
- notify student if item is recovered
- notify police if appropriate

## **VISITORS**

Westford Academy welcomes student visits, but the guest's visit must serve a purpose relating to the school. The student is the responsibility of the Westford students and he/she must remain with him/her for the duration of their visit.

All visitors who are guest of students must be approved by Administration at least twenty four (24) hours prior to the guest's arrival. A form must be filled out by the Westford Academy student, which grants permission from the visitor's school and the parent of the Westford Academy student. This form must be returned and approved by the Administration before the visit can occur.

## **WORKING PAPERS**

In order for a student, age fourteen (14) to seventeen (17), to be employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, he/she must have an employment permit. This form is available at the Principal's Office. A student between fourteen (14) and sixteen (16) must be accompanied by a parent to sign the form along with the Principal. Those students age sixteen (16) to seventeen (17) need only to sign their own names along with the Principal.

## **BUS STOP POLICY**

The Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration is responsible for establishing proper standards of safety in the operation of busses and shall ensure their enforcement by the bus contractor.

The Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration is responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, and stops in cooperation with the bus contractor.

Authorized bus stops shall be located in places where students may be loaded and unloaded, cross streets and roads, and safely await arrival of the busses.

#### **CRITERIA USED TO EVALUATE BUS STOP SAFETY**

Evaluation of bus stop safety is done by the Assistant Superintendent, safety officers from the police and fire departments, and the bus company.

When a parent requests a change in the assigned bus stop, the following safety review criteria is used to evaluate the safety of a bus stop:

1. Site lines of the traffic from both directions in approaching the stop.
2. Speed limit and traffic conditions at the location of the bus stop.
3. Hills and turns that impeded traffic visibility of the stop and proximity to the bus stop.
4. Ability of a school bus to navigate in an area.
5. Width of a road
6. Grade level (age) of students.
7. Ability of the school bus to safely pull out of a side street onto a main road.
8. Time constraints.
9. Number of students involved at a bus stop.
10. Any other unique conditions.

All requests to change a bus stop must be in writing and must include the reason for making the request. Send this written request to the Assistant Superintendent who will make the final decision after consultation with safety officers and the bus company.

#### **BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Referral for misbehavior on the school bus will result in a student conference with the building administrator. At that time, appropriate disciplinary action will be administered and

parents will be notified regarding each written report from the diver.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** May result in a bus suspension of up to three (3) days

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** May result in a bus suspension of up to five (5) days

**4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Chronic or severe behavior may result in permanent bus suspension or loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year. The Superintendent of Schools will be notified.

## **ATHLETICS AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students are encouraged to participate in school clubs and activities, a list of which is included below. Clubs operate on a voluntary basis after school. A new club may be formed at any time by interested students by submitting a list of names of the proposed membership to the administration. **A leader of an activity would forfeit their leadership role for an academic year for a Drug/Alcohol Violation, in addition to any other consequences imposed in accordance with the Discipline provisions of the Student Handbook**

**For all students, first violation of a drug/alcohol offense (in addition to other disciplinary consequences) will result in the student being ineligible to participate in the club/activity for a period of two weeks. Second violation of a drug/alcohol offense (in addition to other disciplinary consequences) will result in the student being ineligible to participate in the club/activity for a period of six weeks. As well, these students are not allowed to attend any other school activity for a period of two weeks (first offense) or six weeks (second offense).**

**A student serving a suspension (out-of-school or in-school) is ineligible to participate in any co-curricular activities of the school on the day or days of the suspension.**

**Attendance at a weekend activity is a privilege and may be revoked by Administration.**

### **CO-CURRICULAR/ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

**ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION:** We believe that all students should strive for excellence in all courses. In order to meet eligibility guidelines for athletic and/or co-curricular involvement/participation, students will be eligible if they fail no more than one (1) class, have no Incompletes, and receive credit for their classes. This does not mean that we encourage students to fail a class, but students are eligible for participation in our athletic and co-curricular programs if they fail one course. If a student fails two (2) or more classes, the student is ineligible for such participation.

**MEANING OF PARTICIPATION IF NON-ELIGIBLE:**

**Athletics:** If determined to be non-eligible because the student, through any combination of two courses, has failed, received Incompletes, or not received credit due to attendance-related issues, the student is not permitted to practice or participate with their team in any way. Upon the issuance of the next progress report, should it be demonstrated that the student is passing all classes, s/he may practice and participate in the sport (at the discretion of the coach) but are not permitted to “suit up” or participate in any competition, including scrimmages, against another school’s team until the issuance of the next report card when eligibility will be re-determined. If the student has received more than two (2) failing grades, the student is ineligible for the duration of the quarter (until the issuance of the next Report Card) and may not try out, practice or participate with the team in any way.

**Co-curricular Activities:** If determined to be non-eligible because the student, through any combination of two courses, has failed, received Incompletes, or not received credit due to attendance-related issues, the student is not permitted to practice or participate with their team in any way. Upon the issuance of the next progress report, should it be demonstrated that the student is passing all classes, s/he may attend and participate in club/activity meetings (at the discretion of the advisor) but is not permitted to compete or perform in any event associated with that club/activity. If the student has received more than two (2) failing grades, the student is ineligible for the duration of the quarter (until the issuance of the next Report Card) and may not participate with the club/activity in any way.

1. To help illustrate this policy, please reference this table below:

Grade	Eligibility	Progress Report
1 Failing Grade	Student is eligible to try out, practice and compete in athletics and co-curricular events	Not needed
2 Failing Grades	Student may not participate in any way with team/club/activity. Student is not eligible for any competition for duration of quarter, until issuance of next report card.	If passing all classes at next progress report, student is permitted to practice with team or attend club activities but is still ineligible to compete or perform with that team/club/activity until issuance of next

		report card
3 Failing Grades	Student may not participate in any way with team/club/activity. Student is not eligible and may not try out, participate or compete with any team/club for duration of quarter, until issuance of next report card.	Cannot be used to reinstate permission to try out, practice and/or compete with any club or team.

2. A student must be on time and attend school until the end of Period 4 or be in school by the start of the 3rd Period and stay for the remainder of the day, on the day of an activity of a sport, club, or organization to be eligible to participate on that day. Exceptions must be cleared through an Administrative Team decision. Suspension / detention will be a reason for not being able to participate in a practice, game, or after-school activities.
3. A student must be in school on the Friday before a weekend activity or contest. Exceptions must be cleared through the appropriate Administrative Team.

**CONCUSSIONS** – (Taken From p5400 )

- **Managing Student Head Injuries:** In the event of a student head injury during any school-related activity or event, WPS personnel will:
  1. Remove the student from the activity immediately. When a head injury occurs, or is suspected, the student cannot be returned to the activity on day of injury.
  2. Notify appropriate emergency medical personnel.
  3. Complete a student accident form and report the head injury to the school nurse or athletic trainer.



4. Notify the parent/guardian of the real or suspected injury and recommend a medical evaluation of the injury.
5. Enter the actual or suspected head injury information into the WPS Student Information System database.
6. Require written medical clearance and authorization before the student can return to activity.
7. Create a written re-entry plan for each student removed from the activity and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion, to be shared with appropriate school staff for a graduated return to full academic and extracurricular activities.

**THIS ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT  
APPLIES TO ALL SPORTS, CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS  
INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THOSE LISTED BELOW:**

<u>Co- Curricular (Subject to Eligibility)</u>			
AFS	D.E.C.A.	Marching Band	School Newspaper
Amnesty Int'l.	Drama Club	Math Team	
Art Club	French Club	Mock Trial	Ski Club
Athletics	German Club	NHS	Spanish Club
Cheerleading	Gay / Straight		
Choir	Alliance		Student Council
Cirrus	Latin Club	Orchestra	Yearbook
Class Officers	Intramural	Outing Club	
Computer Society	Jazz Band	Peer Counselor	WABC
Community Service		Peer Mediation	(Broadcast Club)
Community Service Team	Beyond Words	Photography	Air Soft
	Literary Magazine	S.A.D.D.	
		School Store	
Debate Team	WA Best Friend	ACSL- Computer	Science Olympiad
Future Educators of America	Book Club	Science	Philosophy Club
	Chess Club	Animal Rights	Political Forum

## **STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Student Advisory is a committee of not more than six (6) students elected annually, who act as representatives to the School Committee. The members are expected to attend the meetings. It is a very important position as these members are to respond to matters pertaining to the students of the school directly to the School Committee. Any grievances or comments about change are brought to the School Committee by way of the Student Advisory members after having been properly channeled through and discussed with the Principal. Two (2) members of the SAC will be elected to attend the Regional Advisory Council meetings.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

The object of the Tadmuck Hill Chapter of the National Honor Society is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to give service, to promote able leadership, and to encourage the development of character in Westford Academy students. Candidates shall have spent at least one (1) semester in Westford Academy and shall be members of the sophomore, junior, or senior class.

To be scholastically eligible, students must have a GPA of 3.6 or higher (without rounding up). Those sophomores and juniors who meet this standard will receive notice of their eligibility in March. Seniors who meet this criterion will be notified in mid-October. In addition to the minimum scholarship average, a student must have demonstrated the following:

1. Leadership: All elected or appointed leadership positions held in school, community, or work activities in which the candidate is directly responsible for directing or motivating his/her peers will be considered. (Peer = students in teenage years)
2. Service: Any service done for school, community, or religious organizations will be considered.
3. Character: The candidate should have displayed outstanding character traits such as honesty, integrity, respect for others, etc. Any previous suspendible disciplinary offense, infraction of school rules and/or improper conduct may be cause for rejection of a candidate. **Please communicate with advisor if you have questions regarding what is leadership, service, or character - DO NOT ASSUME.**

These students must then fill out a fact sheet which clarifies qualities of leadership, service and character. Students who submit

these fact sheets by an established deadline should understand that review of this information by the Faculty Advisory Committee does not guarantee election. Any active member who falls below the academic standard or violates any of the four (4) standards of membership (character, leadership, scholarship, service) or is suspended from school or is found guilty of cheating or plagiarizing may be dismissed from the NHS by a majority vote of the faculty council of the National Honor Society. The National Honor Student Review Board will review the status of members when appropriate and recommend to the faculty council decisions regarding continued membership in the Westford Academy National Honor Society. (See Article IV of the NHS Constitution).  
**Be sure to pay attention to deadlines for application.**

**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

The purpose of the Westford Academy athletic programs is to provide an opportunity for student-athletes to participate and share in a positive environment of spirited competition. Our goal is to instill basic values that build character, self-discipline, and self-esteem as an individual and member of a team through involvement in an interscholastic athletic program.

Information regarding the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and Program can be found on the Westford Academy website:

[http://wa.westfordk12.us/pages/WestfordWA\\_Athletics/index](http://wa.westfordk12.us/pages/WestfordWA_Athletics/index)

It is the responsibility of students and parents to become familiar with the information contained therein.

Please contact the school officials below if you have questions.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Daniel Twomey	Dir. Of Athletics	978-692-5570 x2108
Jim Antonelli	Principal	978-692-5570 x2104
Bill Bombaci	Athletic Trainer	978-692-5570
Betsy Parke	Secretary	978-692-5570 x2121

## **FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL POLICIES**

### **CH. 622/TITLE IX (EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY)**

In accordance with the regulation of Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all courses of study, extracurricular activities, services, and facilities offered by the school are available without regard to race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

Furthermore in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, United States of America, no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity.

Under both Chapter 622 and Title IX provision for grievance procedures is made. Any student, parent, guardian or other person or group who believes that these regulations have been or are being violated, may so notify the Principal, Superintendent of Schools, and Chapter 622/Title IX Coordinator. The School Department will respond promptly, but no later than 30 days, in writing to the party filing the grievance. Should a non-compliance be found, procedures for making changes will be immediately initiated both to correct the non-compliance and to provide particular remedies to the person or group affected.

At any stage in the complaint process, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491 (617) 289-0111, or with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 727-3990. For complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability the complainant may also file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, (617) 338-3300. Complaints of discrimination in employment practices may also be filed with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 475 JFK Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203-0506. (617) 565-3200

**MGL CHAPTER 269 (HAZING)**

In accordance with Westford Public Schools Policy # 5305.

Hazing is strictly prohibited in the Westford Public Schools. Pursuant to school committee policy and MGL Chapter 269 sections 17, 18 and 19, hazing shall include any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Anyone associated with the Westford Public Schools who knows that another person is the victim of hazing as described above and is at the scene of such conduct shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such conduct to an appropriate law enforcement official and the office of the Superintendent of Schools, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Every Westford School which has been designated or approved as a secondary school 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 M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19 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 principal of the school an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19, and that such group, team or organization understands

and agrees to comply with the provisions M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19.

Each Westford secondary school 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. M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19.

The principal or headmaster of each institution of each Westford Secondary School shall file, at least annually, on or before October 1 of each year, a report with the Bureau of Student Services of 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 M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19 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 and containing such further information as may be required.

The text of M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19 is as follows:

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

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

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

18. Failure to report hazing

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

19. Copy of secs 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report

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

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

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

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

**MGL CHAPTER 269, SEC. 10 (WEAPONS POLICY)**

**It is illegal to have a weapon in school or on school property. Students who are in possession of a weapon or a look alike weapon risk expulsion from school. In all cases authorities will be notified, the student will be immediately suspended from school, and an expulsion hearing will be held. Weapons are defined as guns, knives, bows, arrows, darts, or any other objects, which in the opinion of the administration may cause harm to you or others.**

Whoever not being a law enforcement officer, and notwithstanding any license obtained by him under the provisions of Chapter 140, carries on his person a firearm as hereinafter defined, loaded or unloaded, in any building or on the grounds of any secondary school, college, or university without the written authorization of the Board or Officer in charge of such secondary school, college, or university shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph, "firearm" shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle, or



smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet, or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

**MGL C. 71; Section 37H (Expulsion for Weapons, Personal Assault, Controlled Substances)**

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94-C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and non prescribed medication may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing: provided however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

**MGL CH. 71; SEC. 37H 1/2 (Felony Offenses)**

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

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

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

the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than (5) five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within (3) three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within (5) five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #5303:

The School Committee is committed to maintaining a work and educational environment free from all forms of harassing conduct. Harassment including but not limited to, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sex, creed, marital status, sexual orientation or disability will not be tolerated in the Westford Public Schools. All employees, students, contracted vendors, and other members of the school community will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect, dignity, courtesy, and fair treatment for all individuals while on school grounds, school property, or property within the jurisdiction of the school district, school busses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature which is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble any person when: 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's work or education or of an individual's participation in school programs

or activities. 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the individual. 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning or working environment.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

1. Verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse
2. Unsolicited remarks or remarks of a demeaning nature
3. Gestures or physical contact
4. Displays or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or derogatory to racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation or disability groups.
5. Implied or explicit threats concerning ones grades, achievement, or other school matters.
6. Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at an individual.

Gender Harassment (Sexual Harassment) includes, but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature as listed below:

1. Submission is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation in school programs or activities.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for work or educational decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working/educational environment.

Each administrator shall be responsible within their school or office for promoting an understanding of harassment and assuring compliance with state and federal laws, and with School Committee policy and regulations governing harassment.

Violations will be cause for disciplinary action up to termination or expulsion.

Retaliation in any form against any person who has filed a complaint relating to harassment will not be tolerated. No individual will be subject to any form of coercion, intimidation,

retaliation or discrimination for filing a report of harassment. The consequences for retaliation will be the same as for harassment. False accusations made in bad faith will be subject to the same disciplinary action as the harassment itself.

Following disclosure by a student of an incident involving student-to-student harassment, **one or more** of the following may occur after investigation by an appropriate responder.

- A letter identifying the offending behavior may be written and given to the offender. This is not a disciplinary action. The letter is not kept on file in the Principal's Office. However, it is retained by the Guidance Director. If harassment described by the student involves extreme physical assault, a letter response would not be appropriate, and the matter would be turned over to an administrator for more direct attention and disciplinary action.
- Notification of parents when disciplinary action is not required may vary depending on the school level.
- Student may be disciplined.

At any stage in the complaint process, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491 (617) 289-0111, or with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 727-3990. For complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability the complainant may also file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, (617) 338-3300 or may file a Request for Hearing with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Bureau of Special Education Appeals, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA, 02148, 781-338-6400. Complaints of discrimination in employment practices may also be filed with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 475 JFK Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203-0506, (617) 565-3200.

If students feel that they are being harassed by adult personnel, they are encouraged to report the incident to a counselor and/or administrator. Appropriate action will be taken in all instances.

**Discipline:** The following disciplinary actions for a substantiated charge against students that requires action beyond the "letter writing level" may result in the following:

- Student(s) may be suspended.
- Student(s) may be referred to the Superintendent or School Committee
- Police or court action may be initiated.

## **BULLYING**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #5304:

*Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.*

*Examples of bullying include physical aggression, verbal aggression, malicious rumors/gossip; social exclusions and/or threats of harm or exclusion.*

*Bullying that happens outside of school can lead to disciplinary action at school if a target feels unsafe at school or if school is disrupted as a result of the bullying behaviors.*

### ***Westford Public Schools*** **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Westford Public Schools (WPS) created the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (the Plan) required under M.G.L. c.71, §37O in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The Plan is posted on the district website [www.westfordk12.us](http://www.westfordk12.us).

The Westford Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying. The district is committed

to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The principal or his/her designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

The district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

#### DEFINITIONS

*Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c.71, §370, as noted below.*

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, §370, is the repeated use by one or more students **or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional** of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or

a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c.71, §370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, §370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Perpetrator is a student or member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional

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

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent



- to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school--related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

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

Reporting bullying or retaliation. The district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of suspected bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or associate/assistant principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports may be made orally or in writing. The “WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form” has been developed for student, parent or other non-school or district staff use to report incidents of suspected bullying. This form can be obtained in every school office or it can be printed from the district’s website [www.westfordk12.us](http://www.westfordk12.us). Use of the “WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form” is not required as a condition of making a report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or associate/assistant principal.

Determinations. With the principal's receipt of the complaint of bullying or retaliation, the principal or his/her designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or his/her designee will determine what remedial action may be required, if any, and determine what responsive and/or disciplinary actions will be taken. The principal's finding and determinations shall be documented in writing.

All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or his/her designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

#### Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or his/her designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or his/her designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct. Disciplinary sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion from school.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

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

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

will monitor the effectiveness of any such interventions employed and, where appropriate, recommend alternative or supplemental interventions.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #6201:

#### **Program Definition**

The homebound instruction program is designed for students who cannot attend school for a variety of medical or emotional factors substantiated by a qualified health care provider. The program may be short or long term duration.

The program designed for each student is determined by his/her educational plan and consists primarily of academic tasks which are coordinated by the regular / special education teacher(s) and the home instruction teacher.

#### **Program Goals**

The goals of the program are to:

1. Provide instructional support for students assigned to the Homebound Instruction Program.
2. Provide the schools and the classroom teacher(s) with periodic reports of student progress.

3. Implement the designed educational plan with the intent of returning to the regular school program at the earliest possible time.

## Student Publications

### STUDENT RELEASE FOR PRINT AND ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION

During the course of the school year, members of the school staff may photograph or videotape students participating in school activities as a way of assessing learning or documenting learning activities. News photographers and cameramen may also visit our schools to take photos or videos of students engaged in school-related activities. These photos and videos may be selected to appear in school publications such as parent newsletters or student literary journals, in local newspapers, or on cable or commercial TV. In addition, written work or art work produced by students may be selected to appear in school publications or released to the media

Occasionally student work or photographs of students participating in school activities, or highlights of their school achievements may be displayed on the Westford Public Schools web site at: <http://wa.westford12.us/pages/index>. Only the student's first name and last initial will be published on school department pages. Westford Public Schools will not publish student work or photographs in print or on the Internet without the parent/guardian written permission. The School Committee recognizes three levels of publishing audiences as defined in The Westford Public Schools Policy #6302 and 6115.

Classroom/School Publishing: All student work and images may be used, displayed, or published in the classroom/school setting unless parental notification to the contrary is received by the school.

Community Publishing – upon parental approval student work may be used in community publications (e.g., *Eagle, Sun*). The student work may be credited with the student's first name and last initial.

World Publishing – upon written parental approval, student work may be displayed on the school district website

### District Acceptable Internet Use

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #6302:

The Westford Public School District supports student and staff access to a variety of rich information resources. In a free and

democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship. Electronic information literacy skills are now fundamental to the preparation of citizens and future employees. Telecommunications and other new technologies are shifting the ways that information is accessed, communicated, and transferred. Access to telecommunications enables students and staff to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards. It also allows the exchanging of messages with people throughout the world. The use of these new tools and systems brings new responsibilities as well as opportunities.

The Westford Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) shall be published in the school's Student Handbooks (#6302) that have been approved by the School Committee and filed with the Department of Education in compliance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H and issued to students. Parents shall submit to the school the appropriate acknowledgment form, verifying that they have reviewed the contents of the handbook with their child. Additionally, the AUP shall be published in staff handbooks.

**Personal Safety (Restrictions are for students only)**

1. Users of the District's Computing Environment (Users) shall not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Students and teachers shall not post personal contact information concerning other people which includes the person's last name, address, telephone, work address.
2. Users shall not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parental approval and participation.
3. Users shall promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
4. The image and/or work of any student shall not be displayed on the District's Web site without written permission of the student and his/her parent.

**Respect for Privacy**

1. Users shall respect the privacy of others in the District Computing Environment.
2. Users shall not attempt to learn the password, access the files or mail of other users.
3. Users shall not post private information about another person.

### **Illegal Activities**

1. Users shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access to or through the District Computing Environment to any other computer system or go beyond their authorized access.
2. Users shall not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the District Computing Environment's performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
3. Users shall not use the District Computing Environment to engage in any other illegal act, for example, arranging a drug or alcohol purchase or sale, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of any person.

### **Publishing**

Westford Public Schools recognizes the need to differentiate target audiences to whom information is published. The Internet is a worldwide target audience and because of that audience, certain restrictions exist on personal information that may be published. At the elementary level the primary concern is to ensure the security and safety of our children by not publishing full names of students. Student work, student first name and last initial, photos, and audio may be used with parental permission. At the high school level, there is no restriction on the publishing of student and staff full names subject to parental/legal guardian and eligible student permission.

World Publishing (Grades 9-12) - upon parental approval, student work may be displayed on the school district website. The student work may be credited with the full name of the student. World Publishing requires parental, legal guardian or eligible student permission.

More narrowly scoped target audiences limited to the community are addressed by the comprehensive publishing policy.

In accordance with The Westford Public Schools Policy #6115

### **Environment Security**

1. Users are responsible for their individual accounts and shall take precautions to prevent others from using their accounts. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person.
2. Users shall immediately notify the designated administrator if they identify a possible security problem.
3. Users shall follow the local site's virus protection procedures.

### **Inappropriate Language, Conduct and Harassment**

All restrictions against inappropriate language, conduct and harassment apply to public messages, private messages and material posted on Web pages.

### **Truthfulness and Accuracy**

Users shall not knowingly or recklessly post false or inaccurate information.

### **Respecting Resource Limits**

1. Users shall limit their use of the environment to educational and professional or career development activities.
2. Users shall not post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
3. The Superintendent, Principals and/or their designees have the right to reclaim allocated resources with reasonable notice to user.

### **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

1. Users shall not plagiarize works that they find on the internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user. Any sources used in research must be cited and credit given to the author.
2. Users shall respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces software or another work that is protected by a copyright. If software or another work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user shall follow the expressed requirements when using the work. If the user is unsure whether or not he/she can use a work, he/she should request permission from the copyright owner.

### **Inappropriate Access of Material**

1. Users shall not use the District Computing Environment to access material that is inappropriate to the intended educational use.
2. If a student user inadvertently accesses such information, he/she should immediately disclose the inadvertent access to the supervising staff member. This will protect a user against an allegation that he/she intentionally violated the Acceptable Use Policy.



3. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate suspension or dismissal.

### **Responsible Use of Technology at Westford Academy**

The use of technology resources at Westford Academy, Westford Public Schools owned devices, and the freedom and responsibility to utilize personally owned electronic devices at Westford Academy is a privilege, not a right.

#### **Personal Devices and WPS Owned Devices**

- Students should not under any circumstances photograph, film, or audio record other students or faculty on campus during the school day with a personal or school-owned device unless it is for a school sanctioned, class assignment and with consent.
- Mobile electronic devices are prohibited from use in bathrooms and locker rooms for the safety of all students.
- Students are responsible for the use of a device assigned to them even if they let someone else use it.
- Students may use personal cell phones, tablets, and laptops in class at teacher discretion.

**Network Security** - Any user of a network provided by Westford Public Schools is expected to abide by the rules of conduct set forth by the District.

- Students must use the network in a way that would not disrupt the use of the network by others, including downloading, storing, distributing, or sharing any software or digital file (such as movies, music, or text) in violation of copyright laws.
- Students must respect bandwidth limits. Streaming audio or video (pandora, itunes radio, netflix, etc.) impacts network speeds and should be limited.
- Students must not attempt to connect unauthorized wifi networks or gain access to unauthorized accounts or files.
- Student must not attempt to learn or use network passwords on personal devices and must notify IT of any misuse of network.

- Students must not attempt to bypass the district's web-filtering

**Personal Safety** - All students agree to utilize technology including **social media** tools, being mindful of their own personal safety and of that of all members of the Westford Academy community.

- Students must keep all personal information private, including passwords, user ID's, home address, and phone numbers.
- Students may access only appropriate academic documents and media.
- Students should not photograph or make audio or video recordings without the consent of all those being recorded.
- Students may not harass, bully, cyber-bully, or threaten others in any way.
  
- Students must use appropriate language in all communications.

**Email** - Students at Westford Academy are assigned an email account for academic purposes.

- Students are encouraged to check email at least once per day.
- Teachers may send email to Westford Academy students to communicate reminders, course content, pose questions related to class work, and such.
- Students may send email to their teachers with questions or comments regarding class.
- Students may send email to other students within the WPS GAFE Domain, to collaborate on group projects and assist with school classes.

Any action by a user specifically outlined in this document or determined by a system administrator to constitute inappropriate use of a computer system, network system, or of their own personal electronic device, is subject to, but limited to, the following consequences:

- Suspension of computer privileges
- Suspension from school
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities.

I understand and will abide by the above terms and conditions of District Harassment Policy #5303 and District Bullying Policy #5304, as well as this Responsible Use Policy, and will use computer and electronic resources for curricular purposes only. I further understand that any violation of this agreement is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense and may result in civil liability to me and my parents or guardians, if I am under age 18. Should I commit any violation, I am subject to consequences of the school and district disciplinary code and of state and federal law.

USER NAME (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_ USER  
SIGNATURE (SIGN): \_\_\_\_\_



## SENIOR PRIVILEGE 2017



Senior Privilege is earned; it is not a right. Senior Privilege is permission to leave the building **during DLT**, to come in **after first block DLT**, or leave at the **start of last block DLT**. This is a policy that is set up to create a little more flexibility and leeway for seniors who meet the criteria described below.

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*I am eligible for Senior Privileges if I meet ALL of the following criteria:*

- Officially classified as a senior, as of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester
- In good standing academically, no mid-year grade below a 70%
- In good standing with Attendance Policy
- NO credit lost in any course, in any quarter, this school year
- NO more than 6 tardies-to-school in any quarter this year
- NO suspensions or excessive office detentions this year
- My parents will agree to my earning senior privileges and will sign this application (if I am under the age of 18)

*I understand that I may lose this privilege, even on the first time, if:*

- I receive a failing grade in any course third quarter
- I do not adhere to the attendance policy
- I do not maintain a clean discipline record, including suspensions
- I take “non-senior privilege students” with me when leaving school grounds
- I do not return to school for scheduled classes ***on time***

**Seniors who are approved:**

- Must carry a Senior Privilege Pass, and sign out and/or in - in the Senior Privilege Book outside of Dean’s office
- If coming into school ***after 1<sup>st</sup> block DLT***, you **MUST** sign in with Mrs. Mahoney– not the Senior Privilege book

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

**(Specific information will come from Mr. Parent at the beginning of the year)**

- **Early February** : Senior Privilege Application will be available in the Guidance Office by Mrs. Ablondi’s desk
- **Mid-February** : Applications Due (NOTE: signatures below must be completed)
- **Late February** : Senior Privileges begin for those approved (passes distributed)

## **SENIOR DISNEY TRIP - 2017**

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR THE TRIP**

- Only members of the Class of 2017
- Students who have served an in-school suspension during senior year will be required to complete community service hours.
- Students who serve an out-of-school suspension during senior year may forfeit their participation in the trip.
- Continuous violations of school rules will prohibit participation from this trip.
- In instances when suspension precludes a student from attending the class trip, refunds **will not** be given.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL BEHAVIOR**

When the administration confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a member of the class has been involved in delinquent behavior, which was reported to the administration by a police report, that student may be excluded from the trip. Administration will make the final decision on all incidents.

### **BEHAVIOR DURING THE TRIP**

- No alcohol or drugs will be tolerated. If you are found in possession of or under the influence of either alcohol or drugs, parents will be notified and you will be sent home on the next available flight at your own expense.
- There is NO SMOKING or CHEWING TOBACCO allowed at any time during this trip.
- Improper behavior or failure to check in with your chaperone during the trip will result in the following: You will be required to stay with the chaperones and you may be sent home on the next available flight at your own expense.
- Following your return to Westford, you will not be allowed to participate in senior activities which may include the prom and graduation

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Buses will leave precisely on schedule. A final itinerary will be provided at a date close to our departure.
- In case of emergency, parents will be notified and transportation to the nearest medical facility will be provided.

- If you are taking any medication at the time of our trip, you will be required to notify the advisors of this. Any other medical concerns that you are already aware of should be disclosed to the advisors and noted on the medical/contact form.
- Anyone who violates Disney trip rules will be excluded from senior week activities.

#### ALMA MATER

To Thee, our Alma Mater dear,  
We raise our voices high in cheer,  
Our gratitude we would express  
And pledge to thee our faithfulness.

Built high on Tadmuck Hill so fair,  
By those whose mem'ry we revere,  
She stands a beacon light for youth  
To Guide them in the way of truth.

On field of battle and in peace,  
We strive thy glory to increase,  
That ever shall dear Westford be  
An emblem of fraternity.

*Written by Pauline Ferguson Cartford '45*

SCHOOL COLORS: Maroon and Gray SCHOOL MASCOT: Grey Ghost