



STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Country School
Weston, Massachusetts

Principal Erin Maguire

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RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

In our school we place a high value on civility—on courteous, respectful participation by all members of our school community. It is the mutual responsibility of parents and school faculty to maintain ongoing communication about children and their education. Informative discussion and reports about programs and curriculum along with honest, respectful dialogue about individual children are essential. The tone and substance of that communication are, therefore, critically important and reveal a great deal about the character of the school community.

We seek a school environment, which invites inquiries and the expression of opinions. We also seek an environment in which the exchange of ideas is distinguished by polite and considerate discourse. We place a high value on civility not only because we want effective adult communication, but also because we want children to experience honorable models of behavior. As parents and teachers, we are aware that our behavior has a profound impact on the children in our schools. A commitment to courteous, respectful participation in all facets of school life is an expectation of all members of our community.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A general school calendar will be available in August on the school district website at <http://www.westonschools.org>. More specific listings of events and scheduled activities appear in the Principal Newsletter, PTO Calendar, Westword, and other school notices and publications.

SCHOOL HOURS

Kindergarten: 8:00 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.; Wednesdays and partial days only, 8:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Grades One, Two and Three: 8:00 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

In the beginning of the school year, Kindergarten students will attend school for a partial (4-hour) day. The times are noted above. Starting in the second week of the school year, Kindergarten students will transition to four full days per week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Please consult the school calendar for the date.

Wednesdays will remain partial days (8:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.) for Kindergarten students. However, when there is an early dismissal for all Elementary students (Preschool-5), then all students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m., including Preschool and Kindergarten.

VISITS TO OUR SCHOOL

We want our school to be welcoming to parents and visitors. We also have a responsibility 1) to carefully monitor who enters and leaves our school; 2) to oversee who interacts with children and how they do so; and 3) to ensure that learning and teaching occur free of disruption. The following statements explain our practices with regard to visits to our schools.

Guests: We receive many inquiries from families who are considering a move to Weston and want to spend some time in the schools. We also have visits by educators from other school systems who are interested in our programs. On these occasions we do not allow our visitors to tour the school unescorted.

Caregivers: We regard parents as members of our school community and encourage them to remain close to their children's school experiences. We welcome them in the school and urge them to become involved directly through the opportunities that the teachers and the PTO offer. We do not allow visits to classrooms that are not arranged in advance through the teacher or principal. When it is necessary to bring items to school during the school day that children have forgotten (e.g. articles of clothing, lunches, instruments), please leave the items in the main office. Do not bring the items directly to the classroom or the child's cubby. **All adults participating in class/student activities must have a CORI check on file. This can be completed in the main office.**

We consider the playground an extension of the school and do not allow unauthorized individuals to interact with children in the outdoor play areas. Aides and teachers supervising recess are instructed to approach unfamiliar individuals, including parents, who enter the playground area. Parents who arrive during recess to pick their children up for dismissal should not go directly to the playground to get their children.

The Principal or their designee has the sole discretion to admit or deny visitors.

PLEASE HONOR THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENT:
We require all visitors---parents and guests---to sign in and out at the main office upon arriving and leaving the school

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are a vital part of every child's education. In Kindergarten, parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for the fall and spring. In first, second and third grades, parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall. Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time at the request of a parent or teacher.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are available to parents in February and June. Parents can also access Progress Report information in Infinite Campus.

GENERAL PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Individual teachers will inform parents about how best to reach them or leave messages for them. Email for all school staff consist of last name first initial @weston.org. Example: maguiree@weston.org. Please remember that teachers' priority during the school day is working with children, thus they check email periodically throughout the day. Parent teacher conferences for students in Grades 1–3 are scheduled in the fall. Kindergarten conferences happen twice a year, fall/spring. If you would like additional conference time with your child's teacher, please arrange the meeting directly with their homeroom teacher.

REGISTRATION

Children who are five (5) years old on or before September 1 may be admitted to Kindergarten in September of that year. As evidence of the date of birth, the birth certificate or other comparable legal document must be presented before entrance to school. Typically, registration occurs in April; children receive their school placement and classroom assignment in August.

KINDERGARTEN SCREENING

Kindergarten Screening will take place in early spring, prior to your child starting Kindergarten. You will be invited to bring your child to either Country or Woodland School so that they can participate in a short individual screening procedure with a teacher. Results of the screening are shared with Kindergarten parents at the fall conference.

ORIENTATION FOR STUDENTS BEFORE THE START OF SCHOOL

Classes in the Weston Public Schools may begin the week before Labor Day. Information pertinent to the opening of school will be posted on the district website; letters from the principal and the classroom teachers will be mailed home in mid-August. Prior to the start of school children and parents will be invited to a visiting day. On visiting day, children will meet and start to become familiar with fellow students, teachers and the classroom. Parents will have an opportunity to learn about procedures and ask questions.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

There is no doubt that one of the keys to academic achievement is good attendance. Consistent participation in school and school-based activities is important for making a successful transition from youth to adulthood. Student tardiness and truancy are challenges that confront many communities in Middlesex County and across the state. Often, these behaviors are the first indicators that a student may be experiencing stress or other difficulties in their life.

The following is a summary of some of the Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to attendance. Please also refer to [Policy JH](#) of the District Policy Manual.

School Attendance:

As a matter of state law, all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any period of six months. In addition to this law, each school may have its own attendance policy with which parents/guardians should be familiar.

Student Absence Notification Program

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1B requires that each school has a Student Absence Notification Program. Consistent with this state law, the school will notify parents/guardians when their child has at least five (5) days in which the child has missed two (2) or more classes/periods (unexcused) or has five (5) or more unexcused absences in the school year. The principal (or designee) must make a reasonable effort to meet with the child's parent/guardian to develop action steps to improve the child's attendance. The action steps must be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal (or designee), the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

Notification and Contact Information:

Chapter 76, section 1A, of the Massachusetts General Laws 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.

Who is a Supervisor of Attendance?

Chapter 76, section 19, of the Massachusetts General Laws states that each school committee must employ a supervisor of attendance. A supervisor of attendance has the power to apprehend and take to school any child who is truant and is required to investigate all cases where a child in the district fails to attend school.

What is a 51A?

A 51A is a report of suspected child abuse or neglect that is filed with the Department of Children and Families. Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of sixteen for suspected educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis.

Parental Responsibility:

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Section 2 provides that parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring that a child under their control attends school daily. It is a crime for a responsible parent or guardian not to cause such a child to attend school. If a child fails to attend school for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any six month period, the supervisor of attendance may file a criminal complaint in court against the responsible parent/guardian.

Inducing Absences:

It is a crime to induce or attempt to induce a minor to miss school, or unlawfully to employ or to harbor a minor who should be in school.

FAMILY VACATIONS

Vacations outside traditional school vacation periods are discouraged. Classroom instruction, activities, and experiences cannot be replicated and it is not incumbent on teachers to do so for such absence. Families should notify the main office regarding any extended absences/unique circumstances and students need to inform teachers as soon as possible prior to an anticipated absence. The school is not obligated to provide work to be completed during the vacation. A copy of the current school calendar can be found on the district website. Please try to plan your vacations accordingly. As a district, Weston Public Schools will not provide homework assignments prior to a family vacation.

Confinement to Home or Hospital for Medical Reasons

Massachusetts law provides for educational services being provided in the home or hospital when a physician provides a valid written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year. The principal shall arrange for the provision of services with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal shall coordinate such services with the Director of Student Services for students on IEPs. Please contact the building principal and/or the Director of Student Services for further information.

Please refer to [Section J](#) of the District Policy Manual.

CURRICULUM

Our Handbook for Students and Parents focuses on procedures and policies; therefore, it does not include curriculum descriptions. Grade level teams develop curriculum plans based each year on Curriculum Frameworks. The Weston Curriculum Frameworks are also available on our school district website at <http://www.westonschools.org>. The classroom teacher provides an overview of the curriculum for that grade at the annual fall Back-To-School-Night. A handout showing topics of study for regular classes and specialists' classes is also provided.

Weston Public Schools Curriculum Content

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Weston Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or immigration status. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

HOMEWORK

Occasional tasks to be completed at home begin in Grade 1. Routine homework assignments begin in Grade 2. Homework becomes a nightly requirement in Grade 3. At the early elementary level, homework is intended to develop positive academic work habits and the ability to follow through on responsibilities.

Please refer to [Policy IKB](#) of the District Policy Manual.

THIRD GRADE ORCHESTRA

Instruction on violin, viola, cello, and bass is offered to all third grade students. Instrumental classes are held once a week during the school day for a half hour. In addition to these classes, the students meet with their respective performing groups for one hour after school each week. Participation in both the instrumental class and the after school rehearsal is required for all students in the program.

After seeing an in-school presentation about the various orchestra instruments offered in Weston, students will receive a letter with information on enrolling in the program here at school. Please read the letter carefully. An application form will be included which must be filled out and returned to school by the date noted in the letter. Instrument Rental Night will be held at Field School for students who need to rent an instrument. Please refer to the PTO Calendar for the exact date and time.

APPROPRIATE USE POLICY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Services Provided to Students:

- The Weston Public Schools provides all students with a network account and password for the purpose of facilitating education.
- Students may access printers and print when given permission by the administration.
- Students have file storage space on WPS and/or a Weston Public School Google domain server.
- Students have access to online collaboration tools and online file storage via my.weston.org (Google G-Suite).
- Students have access to applications remotely (as required for academic use).
- Students have access to online course resources (if currently deployed by his/her teachers).
- Students will use their WPS devices in a responsible and ethical manner both at school and at home.

Note these services and resources are not the same as a private iPad, home Internet or e-mail account and therefore all actions including information stored, accessed, viewed, written, or actions performed are logged, and accessible by the Administration. The Weston Public Schools has the right to monitor, quarantine, backup, move, archive and/or delete, and access all electronic files, local or remote, on systems managed by the Weston Public Schools. Students should have no expectation of privacy with respect to any of their actions performed on, or information stored on, the Weston Public Schools resources.

The Weston Public Schools filter Internet content to prevent access to material that is inappropriate for access by minors and/or not congruent to the educational mission of the Weston Public Schools. However, it is recognized that this and any filter alone is no guarantee that users will not be able to access Internet resources which are profane, offensive, obscene, or otherwise objectionable. Students should report accidental or inappropriate sites to a teacher or administrator for blocking. Internet and network usage is logged.

Anti-Bullying and Intervention: All use of the WPS school IT resources must be in full compliance with the Weston Public schools' Anti-Bullying and Intervention Policy which amongst other things, prohibits bullying through the use of WPS's IT resources, or through any non-WPS IT resource where such bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at his/her school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a WPS school.

Furthermore, each member of the Weston Public School community is expected to adhere to policies for appropriate use. Students of the Weston Public Schools shall:

Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.

- Our network systems provide important access to educational resources. The destruction, vandalism, hacking, or damaging of data, networks, hardware, software, backend systems, or disruption of this or other resources used by the Weston Public Schools is prohibited and may result in disciplinary and/or legal actions.
- Network and account security is the responsibility of all members of the Weston School community. Any security risks should be reported to a teacher or network

administrator.

- Devices that disrupt the educational process or operation of the WPS are prohibited, will be removed, may be held and searched, and may result in disciplinary and/or legal actions.
- Students or guests may use the “Open” wireless network unless otherwise instructed. Please note, any device deemed as directly or indirectly disrupting the educational processes of the school or students may be held and searched until such time that the disruption is discovered, understood, and resolved.

Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.

- Do not infringe copyrights. You may not make illegal copies of music, games, movies, software, or other materials under copyright.
- Do not plagiarize other people’s work. Do not audio or video record lectures or school activities without permission from the faculty and/or students involved.
- Do not post pictures, audio, or video of lectures or school activities to the Internet without the permission of faculty and the parents of all students involved.
- Do not use AI or ChatGPT or other services without the prior permission of the teacher.

Respect and protect the privacy of yourself and others.

- Only use the network account assigned to you and do not give your WPS network credentials to anyone other than your parents.
- Do not view, use, copy passwords, data, or access networks to which you are not authorized.
- Protect your privacy when using the Internet, do not distribute private information about yourself, or others, without your teachers or parents knowledge and approval.
- Be authentic; do not pretend to be someone else online

Respect and practice the principles of community.

- Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful. Remember that anything you write online may be discoverable forever.
- Report threatening or discomfoting communication or materials to a teacher and/or parent.
- Do not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's respectful climate.
- Do not intentionally transmit or implant computer viruses, macros, or any type of malicious code within the WPS network or hardware. Do not use any type of hardware device, network device, or software application designed to covertly capture data.
- Do not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal such as obscenity, pornography, stolen materials, illegal copies of copyrighted works, or use School resources to further other acts that are criminal, as these may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.
- Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business, unless approved as a school project.

Consequences for Violation: Violation of any portion of this policy may result in disciplinary measures up to and including suspension/expulsion and/or legal actions.

School Security Cameras:

The Weston School Committee supports the limited use of video cameras on Weston Public

Schools property for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. Our goals are to promote and foster a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to ensure public safety for community members who visit or use our school property, and diminish the potential for personal and district loss or destruction of property.

Camera Placement:

Security cameras shall be installed in public areas only. These areas include grounds, parking areas, athletic areas, and exterior entrances or exits to school buildings. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, classrooms, nurse's offices and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use. Security camera usage is prohibited in any space where there is a reasonable expectation for privacy. No sound is to be monitored or recorded in connection with the video surveillance system.

Signage and Notification:

Appropriate signage will be posted to notify students, staff and the general public of the Weston Public Schools' use of security cameras. Students and staff will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year regarding the use of security cameras on school grounds. Such notification will include, but not be limited to, employee handbooks and student handbooks.

Access to Video Recordings:

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her expressly authorized designee shall oversee video surveillance. Any video recordings made for security purposes pursuant to this policy are the sole property of the Weston Public Schools. The Weston Public Schools security cameras will be in operation throughout the year. Recorded information will be available subject to applicable law and only with the approval of the Superintendent or his/her expressly authorized designee for use as necessary by appropriate school officials or law enforcement personnel. There will be no monitoring of live recordings, except in the case of routine maintenance, investigation of an alarm condition, or a suspected health, safety, or security emergency. Recordings will be reviewed only when a suspected incident has occurred. Information obtained through video surveillance may only be used for identifying persons attempting to enter the school buildings, or investigating violations of student/staff conduct, suspected vandalism or other illegal activity, or any activity that may threaten the safety or security of students or staff.

Data Storage:

All video recordings are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Recordings will be saved for a period of time consistent with state law and the Weston Public Schools' record retention policies, after which all recordings will be appropriately deleted.

STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

The Weston Public Schools are committed to fostering a school environment that prioritizes engaged learning, supports the development of social skills, and promotes the overall well-being of our students. As part of this effort, the district is moving toward becoming a community free of personal electronic devices. This means that, subject to the exceptions outlined below, personal electronic devices are not used by students during school hours.

Pre-Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade. Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices at school during school hours. Students are encouraged to leave these devices at home. At the start of each school day, students must turn off their personal electronic devices and place them in a designated storage area. Students will re-gain access to their devices at the end of each

school day. Students are not permitted to take photographs or audio or visual record other students or staff in school or on school grounds.

HEALTH SERVICES PERSONNEL

There is a health office located in our school staffed by a registered nurse. She works under the direction of the School Nurse Supervisor whose office is located at the main office for Health Services at Weston High School. All immunization and health records should be sent only to the supervisor's office to the attention of Health Services, 444 Wellesley Street, Weston, MA 02493.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH RECORDS

Immunizations: Under the School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15, of the General Laws of Massachusetts, no child will be admitted to school except upon presentation of a physician's certificate showing the dates (months and years) that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, measles, mumps, and rubella. All children born on or after January 1, 1992, should have three (3) doses of Hepatitis B. A report of a lead screening blood test is also required before entrance to Kindergarten. Exceptions may be granted for medical or religious reasons; also unimmunized or partially immunized homeless children and children in foster care cannot be denied entry to public schools if they do not have immunization records

Please note that, in addition to state mandated vaccines, it is recommended that students are vaccinated for Influenza and COVID as recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, Section 229 also requires all elementary and secondary schools to distribute information to parents and guardians regarding the benefits of annual influenza vaccination for children age 6 months to 18 years of age; MDPH has created a Guide for Parents which fulfills this obligation.

Parents/guardians may access the MDPH guide using this link (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/the-flu-a-guide-for-parents-mdph/download>) or requesting a copy from your child's school nurse.

Physical Examination: Each child entering must have a physical examination by his or her physician dated no earlier than January 1 of the entering year. All new students entering the Weston Public Schools must have a physical examination within six months of entering school. Physical examinations are also required every three years thereafter. A child, however, may be exempt on religious grounds from physical examination, vision, hearing, and BMI screenings upon written request from the parent/ guardian on the condition that the laws and regulations relating to communicable diseases are not be violated. M.G.L. c.71, s.57; 105 CMR 200.610.

HEALTH POLICY IN SCHOOL

Vision and Hearing: Screening tests are given annually to all students in the Weston Public Schools. Parents are notified if their child does not meet the testing standards. A teacher or a parent may also request testing.

Scoliosis Screening: Screening begins in fifth grade. Screening is done in conjunction with the swimming program.

First Aid: The school nurse or a member of the school staff under the nurse's direction,

administers First Aid. First Aid is defined as immediate temporary care given in case of injury or sudden illness. If it is necessary to send a child home, the parents or guardians are notified at once. The form, Information For The Nurse, should be filled out each year by the parents/guardians. This form is kept in the health office of your child's school. Please notify the nurse if there are any changes in information that occur during the school year. Care beyond First Aid is not given by school personnel and is the responsibility of the parents or guardians. An elementary school nurse is on call during the school hours and can be reached immediately by telephone at 781-786-5400 (Country).

Medication: Public schools are required to administer medication in school consistent with the requirements in 105 CMR 210.000. The only medications administered during school hours are those that are used to treat chronic, long-term, or emergency health problems. The medication must be delivered to the school in a prescription bottle along with a signed physician's order stating the student's diagnosis, type of medication, dosage, route of administration, times to be administered, and signed parental permission. Tylenol and Benadryl may be administered by school nurses per the school physician's order. Parental permission is also required.

Concussion Management: Weston Public Schools (WPS), in order to protect the health and safety of students and to comply with 105 CMR 201.000 enacted in June 2011, has developed the following policy to provide standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training, management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries, whether sustained during extracurricular athletic activities, during the school day or outside of school. Details of this policy can be found here: [Concussion Management Policy JJIF](#).

Communicable Diseases: If your child shows signs of illness, PLEASE KEEP THEM AT HOME. Parents know their children and are usually able to tell when a child is exhibiting signs of illness, such as: poor appetite, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, earache, swollen gland, nausea, vomiting, increased temperature, rashes, irritability, fatigue, coughing, sneezing, runny nose, etc. A written note explaining your child's absences is required upon his/her return to school. When students are sick, our teachers and health professionals want them to remain at home until they are well. Therefore, although we stress the importance of regular attendance, we do not issue awards for perfect attendance.

The following diseases are reportable to the Board of Health: chicken pox, hepatitis, tuberculosis and Lyme disease. It is rare that a member of the immunized population would contract a disease that they have been immunized for, such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, polio, pertussis or rubella. If a child is diagnosed as having a disease for which they were immunized, it is also required by law to be reported to the Board of Health. Common communicable conditions often seen in the school population are ringworm (tinea), conjunctivitis, head lice, pinworms, athlete's foot, and plantar warts. Children with these conditions need to be under treatment by their physician in order to attend school. It is required that children be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours if they have communicable conditions such as conjunctivitis before they can return to school.

Dismissal from School: Students will be dismissed for the following health reasons:

- Temperature over 100 degrees (Students may return to school once they have been fever free for 24 hours.)
- Active vomiting, diarrhea
- Undiagnosed skin lesions

- Untreated conjunctivitis (Students may return to school after they have been off their antibiotic treatment for 24 hours.)
- Head lice (Students may return to school after treatment and removal of all nits.)
- Suspected Strep Throat (Students should be seen by a physician for a Strep test and all positive results should be reported to the school nurse. Students may return to school after they have been off their antibiotic treatment for 24 hours.)

HEALTH HABITS

Preventative health care for your child should consist of good nutrition, good personal hygiene, rest, exercise and regular medical check-ups. Your child's emotional health is important, too. This means lots of hugs and attentive listening to what your child is expressing, verbally or physically. Good nutrition means providing a diet with the nutrients needed for growth and for preventing disease. Make sure your child eats a variety of healthy foods every day. Serve healthy snacks. Snacks should provide nutrients, not just calories. Suggested nutritious snacks for home and school are fresh fruit - apples, oranges, and bananas; crackers with peanut butter or cheese; fresh vegetables - carrot and celery sticks; milk, yogurt, and pure fruit juices.

Cleanliness is important for keeping healthy and fighting disease-causing germs. Teach your child to wash his or her hands carefully, especially before meals, before bedtime and after using the toilet. Oral hygiene should also be stressed. Protect your child's teeth by limiting sugar consumption. Arrange routine dental visits twice a year. Adequate rest gives the child's body a chance to recover from the day's activities. A routine bedtime helps promote health and well-being. The amount of sleep required may vary from child to child, but you can usually tell if your child is well rested by the way he or she acts throughout the day. Exercise helps build muscles, improves coordination and provides an outlet for childhood energy.

Children should get some exercise every day through playing, riding on toys, using playground equipment, running, playing ball, etc.

ANIMALS IN THE SCHOOL

We request that parents not bring family pets along when you visit the school or enter the school to pick up children. Occasionally as part of a sharing activity or for educational purposes, there is reason for a family pet to be brought to school. In those instances parents must know that the teacher has given explicit permission (i.e. there must be direct communication between teacher and parent about a specific date and time). In some cases the school nurse's approval may also be required. These precautions are necessary for us to ensure the health needs of all children are met. Service animals are permitted in accordance with federal and state law and district policy.

SOCIAL COMPETENCY PROGRAM

In our classrooms we use the Responsive School approach to help children develop the social competencies that are essential for participation in school and in life. The Responsive School approach consists of a set of research, and evidence-based practices designed to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

The wording of the next section is intended for children. Please read with your child.

Your family has rules for behavior, and our school communities at Country and Woodland Schools do too. We want our schools to be places where children and adults are kind and respectful to each other. All the adults in our school care about you and are here to help you. At Country School, our core values consist of safety, kindness and learning. We take care of ourselves, others and our community.

There are some general rules that you will be expected to follow at school that will help you to take care of yourself, your peers and your school. Your teachers and parents will discuss them with you.

1. Show respect for others and their property
2. Be kind to others
3. Be respectful of others' learning
4. Use respectful and proper language

During your class meeting time you and your classmates will work with your teacher to develop and discuss other rules which will be used in your classroom.

As in your home, there are consequences for unacceptable behavior. In school you and your teacher will work together to agree on consequences. Your teacher and other adults will help you to follow the rules. If you do not, then the consequences will follow. These may include a break in or out of the classroom, loss of classroom privileges and/or a meeting with the principal.

If your unacceptable behavior continues, the principal will be informed, and the following steps will occur:

1. The principal will have a meeting with you.
2. If you misbehave again, your parents will be called.
3. If this behavior still continues, you, your parents and the principal will have a meeting.

If your behavior is of a serious nature and/or presents a danger to yourself or others, the principal will call your parents immediately, explain what you did, and if necessary, ask them to take you home. Unkind, unsafe behavior is not allowed in any part of the school day.

When children are in hallways, the auditorium, the library, the gymnasium, the bus, and other areas besides regular classrooms, they will observe all the rules of conduct that are expected in their regular classroom.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR DUE PROCESS

The wording of the next section is intended for adults.

Teachers, school staff and the principal are responsible for enforcing the rules and regulations of the school. If a parent wishes to appeal the decision of a school staff member or teacher, they may do so to the Principal.

Disciplinary Procedures, Suspension, and Due Process

All discipline in Massachusetts public schools is governed by 3 statutes and related regulations: M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H, 37H 1/2, and 37H 3/4 (and 603 C.M.R. 53.00 et. seq.); additional protections exist under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Massachusetts special education regulations at 603 CMR 28.11, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act for students with disabilities facing student discipline

In-School Suspension under 603 CMR 53.10

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

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

The principal or the principal's designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal or the principal's designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension. If a student is placed in an in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively, during a school year, the suspension then is deemed to be a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

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

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

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

The decision of the principal or the principal's designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively, during a school year.

Emergency Removal of Student under 603 CMR 53.07

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

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or the principal's designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

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

Out of School Suspension Procedures under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H3/4

Any principal or person acting as a decision-maker at a student hearing, when deciding

the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and/or in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

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

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension under MGL Chapter 71, Section 37 H3/4

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

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

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

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

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

Short-Term Suspension Procedures Under MGL C. 71, Section 37H¾

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

Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension

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

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

(c) The principal or the principal's designee shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

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

The decision of the principal or the principal's designee is the final decision for

short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

Long-Term Suspension Procedures Under MGL C. 71, Section 37H¾

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The principal or the principal's designee, may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71 § 37H ½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or their designee with the following process.

Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension

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

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

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal or the principal's designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider when determining consequences for

the student.

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

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
 - i) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
 - ii) if the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H3/4

(a) 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 or the Superintendent's designee.

(b) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent/designee 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/designee an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent/designee may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

(c) The Superintendent/designee 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/designee shall

grant the extension.

(d) The Superintendent/designee shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent/designee 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/designee to participate. The Superintendent/designee shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

(e) The Superintendent/designee 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/designee 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/designee 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.

(f) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's/designee's hearing for long-term suspension.

(g) The Superintendent/designee shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the Superintendent/designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent/designee may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal/designee, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

(h) The decision of the Superintendent/designee shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

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

Suspension/Expulsion Under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H

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

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
2. 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 or designee.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) of Section 37H shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a

- student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
4. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of their 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.
 5. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan.
 6. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal.
 7. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Suspension/Expulsion Under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H½

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37 H ½, the following procedures shall be implemented for students charged with or convicted of a felony:

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, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of this right to appeal and the reasons for such suspension taking effect. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.
2. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.
3. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission

- in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect 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.
4. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.
 5. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal.
 6. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Education Services and Academic Progress Under Sections 37H, 37H1/2 And 37H3/4:
Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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

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

Suspension or Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook.

In addition to the due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations as well as Massachusetts special education regulations (603 CMR 28.11) provide additional protections to students who have been found eligible for special education and related services on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or who the school district had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

Knowledge Imputed to School District

A school district will be deemed to have knowledge that a student is an eligible student if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel, or a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent of the student requested an evaluation of the student pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.300 through 300.311 and 603 CMR 28.04; or
- The teacher of the student, or other district personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the director of special education of the district or to other school or district administrators.

Knowledge Not Imputed to School District

The school is not deemed to have knowledge that the student was an eligible student if the parent of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the student pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.300 through 300.311 and 603 CMR 28.04 or has refused special education services or the student has been evaluated and determined not to be eligible.

If a district does not have knowledge that a student is an eligible student prior to taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student during the time period in which the student is subjected to discipline, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by the school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion; provided however, that for disciplinary action taken pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H, 37H½, 37H¾ or 603 CMR 53.00, the student shall have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal consistent with state law. If the student is determined to be an eligible student, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the district and information provided by the parent, the district must provide special education and related services in accordance with federal and state special education law, including 603 CMR 28.11.

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days

- Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to 10 school days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities and in accordance with the due process procedures in this handbook.
- The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension for more than 10 consecutive or cumulative days in any school year.

Procedures for suspension(s) exceeding 10 school days

If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal is considered a “change of placement”. A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal and state special education law and Section 504.

State regulations provides that school personnel may remove an eligible student who violates a code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to students without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, so long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement under 603 CMR 28.11(7).

1. For purposes of removal of an eligible student from the student's current educational placement, a change of placement occurs if:
 - The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days; or
 - The student has been subjected to a series of removals totaling more than 10 cumulative days over the course of the school year.
5. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change of placement, the school must convene a meeting to determine whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is manifestation of your child's disability. Parents have a right to participate in this meeting. At the meeting, all relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, and evaluations reports.

At a manifestation determination meeting, the team will consider two questions:

- Did the student's disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct in question?
 - Was the conduct a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan?

If the manifestation determination decision is that the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to your child's disability OR a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the “special circumstances” set forth below apply or parents agree). The Team will review the IEP or Section 504 Plan and any behavioral intervention plans and may amend those plans as

appropriate. The Team will complete a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan if it has not already done so.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the conduct in question was NOT caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to your child's disability OR was NOT the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school's code of conduct. The Team may, as appropriate, complete a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan and modification, to address the behavior so that it does not recur. For students with IEPs, during the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension under federal law, however, state law does provide all students with the right to receive educational services during periods of suspensions lasting longer than 10 consecutive days.

Special Circumstances

- School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if the student does one of the following:
 - Carries a dangerous weapon to or possesses a dangerous weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of MA DESE or a school district;
 - Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of MA DESE or a school district;
 - Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of MA DESE or a school district.
- Under federal and state regulations, the following definitions shall apply:
 - Controlled substance means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act ([21 U.S.C. 812\(c\)](#)).
 - Illegal drug means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under state or federal law.
 - Serious bodily injury has the meaning given the term "serious bodily injury" under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.
 - Dangerous weapon has the meaning given the term "dangerous weapon" under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18, United States Code.
- 2. An eligible student who is removed from their current placement under these "special circumstances" must continue to receive educational services as necessary to provide a free appropriate public education, to enable the student to

continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP. The student's Team determines the IAES for services.

Providing Notice of Procedural Safeguards

Not later than the date on which the decision to take disciplinary action is made, the school district will notify the parents of that decision and provide the parents with a copy of either the Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504 (Section 504).

Appeal Rights

The parent of an eligible student who disagrees with any decision regarding a disciplinary placement (e.g., the IAES) or the manifestation determination, or a school district that believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing with the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) that will be scheduled on an expedited basis.

When an appeal has been made by either the parent or the school district, the student must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the district agree otherwise.

Authority of BSEA Hearing Officer

In response to an appeal, a BSEA hearing officer may:

- Return the eligible student to the placement from which the student was removed if the hearing officer determines that the removal was a violation of Massachusetts special education regulations or that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability; or
- Order a change of placement to an appropriate interim educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.
 - If an IAES is ordered, the school district may file another hearing request seeking an ordered IAES if the school district believes that returning the student to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

The BSEA hearing officer's determination may be appealed to court.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR – BULLYING/HARASSMENT

The Weston Public School District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the ***repeated*** use by one or more students or staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a student target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- i. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- i. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- i. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- i. 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, use of apps, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds; on property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions, or programs—whether on or off school grounds; at school bus stops; on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased, or used by the school district; and through the use of technology or electronic devices owned, leased, or used by the school district; and
- (ii) at any non-school-related location, activity, function, or program, or through the use of privately-owned technology or electronic devices, if the behavior creates a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringes on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the 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.

Attached is a link to Weston Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GzmywHqb-l_Fe6EQOaGzLUt9iky4LYT/edit. The District website also has an online reporting form.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR – PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

The Weston Public Schools complies with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's regulations governing the use of physical restraint, emergency seclusion and time-out, which can be found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. (hereinafter "the Regulations"). The Regulations apply at school and also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. Additional information, including a copy of the Regulations, may be obtained from the Student Services Office or at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all>.

Consistent with the Regulations, Weston also has developed a policy entitled "Prevention and Criteria for Use of Physical Restraint, Seclusion, and Time-Out of Students" that is intended to ensure that every student attending the Weston Public Schools is free from the use of physical

restraint, seclusion or time-out that is inconsistent with the Regulations.

LUNCH

For Kindergarten, First, Second and Third Grade:

When school is in session for a full day, every child eats lunch in the cafetorium under the supervision of a lunch aide unless children are having lunch with the School Counselor or METCO liaison. Many children are having lunch at the same time so it is necessary to have a few rules in order to have a pleasant lunchtime. These rules include:

- Children will remain seated while they are eating.
- Children will eat the lunch they bring or purchase and will not trade food with others.
- Children will listen to the adult in charge of their lunchtime just as they do their own classroom teachers.
- A child must have the permission of the lunch aide (the person in charge) in order to leave the cafetorium during lunchtime.
- Children will talk quietly during lunchtime or remain quiet if they are listening to a story.
- When everyone has finished eating and has cleaned his or her area, the class will line up and walk quietly outside to the playground, weather permitting

LUNCH GROUPS

The School Counselor conducts "lunch" groups which are open to all students and which meet at various times throughout the day. During these small-group meetings children have the opportunity to discuss a variety of issues of concern to them. These may include adjustment to school, friends, divorce, school performance, behavior and whatever is important to a child at a given time.

There are three ways for children to join a group: (1) children may refer themselves, (2) teachers may recommend a child or (3) a parent may make the suggestion.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If you wish, your child's birthday may be observed in the classroom. We do not allow food to celebrate birthdays. If your child has a birthday on a non-school day, and you would like to celebrate it in school, please make arrangements with their teacher. At times, children's parties occur right after school. Please do not distribute party invitations at school or plan to have school buses accommodate children who need to be transported to a party. It hurts the feelings of those who are not included.

PLAYGROUND RULES

- Children must stay on the playground and in areas where adults can see them. Children are not allowed in the wooded areas, on the road, or in areas where cars are parked.
- Play equipment which could hurt someone is not allowed. Examples are baseball bats, hard balls, skateboards and rollerblades.
- Playground structures are to be used correctly. Children are not allowed to run through the structures or play tag on them. Children are expected to go feet first down the slide and to wait for the person ahead of them to clear the area.
- Children are expected to follow the requests of the adults in charge. When an adult in charge rings a bell or calls the class to line up, children will immediately line up with their class to enter the building. Classes will not enter the building until they are quiet and orderly.
- Children are not allowed to make or throw snowballs. Rocks, sticks and tree branches stay on the ground.
- Children who have snow pants and boots are allowed to play and slide in the deep snow. Children who forget boots or snow pants will have to stay on the hard top.
- Children are not allowed to sit or stand on the large rocks on the playground at any time.

SAFETY PROGRAMS

Safety programs are presented by the classroom teachers, the Safety Officer of the Weston Police Department and a representative of the Weston Fire Department. Programs include School Bus Safety, Halloween Safety, Winter and Pedestrian Safety, and Fire Safety.

Country, Woodland and Field School all use the Safe and Sounds Schools; a developmentally appropriate approach to teaching stay safe choices regarding school safety. The program includes 3 safety lessons taught throughout the year, empowering students with “Stay Safe” choices at school.

A voluntary fingerprinting program is available at the Weston Police Station. The Weston Fire Department conducts two annual fire drills as required by law.

SCHOOL BUSES

All elementary children are eligible for school bus transportation. They ride to and from school on buses that carry children in grades K-5. Parents are expected to have their child at the assigned bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives.

Bus stops are selected with safety as the main guideline and are spaced so that children do not have to walk more than 1/2 of a mile from bus stop to home. Buses travel on main roads; they do not operate on dead end roads or cul-de-sacs to a home less than 1/2 of a mile from the corner unless a specific hazard exists.

Anyone (parent, teacher, student, bus driver) who notices a situation that may be hazardous should bring it to the attention of the Transportation Coordinator, Darlene Frappier, (781-786-5280) who will evaluate it and, if necessary, find a safe alternative. The following need to be kept in mind as school staff and parents work together to help children travel safely to and from school:

- Please know and make sure your child knows the bus numbers for both arrival and dismissal.
- Review with your child the importance of safe and appropriate behavior while waiting for, boarding and traveling on the bus.
- Be sure that your child knows the safest route to and from the bus stop. We urge you to discuss with your child a contingency plan in the event that an adult is not at home when they arrive. Teach your child not to accept rides from anyone without your permission.
- Please understand that parents are responsible for children before they board the bus in the morning as well as after they arrive at their bus stops in the afternoon. Teach your child to come directly home upon leaving the school bus. For both the 12:15 Kindergarten dismissal and the 2:20 dismissal for Grades 1, 2 and 3, the bus driver yields responsibility back to the parent once a child is delivered to the assigned bus.

SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR

Many children are on buses at the same time. The bus driver must concentrate on driving the bus in order to keep children safe. Children are expected to behave in an orderly manner while riding the bus and while getting on and off. The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and passengers at all times and is expected to ensure the safety and well being of the children who ride the bus. Children are expected to observe the following rules and safety procedures endorsed by the Safety Officer of the Weston Police Department and Darlene Frappier, Transportation Coordinator of the Weston Public Schools:

3. Remain seated. Do not change seats. Do not stand in the aisle.
4. Keep the noise down as much as possible. Loud talking or hollering distracts the driver.
5. When crossing railroad tracks keep quiet. The driver has to listen for trains. This is the law.
6. Keep the aisles clear. Do not put objects in the aisle.
7. Keep your legs in front of you. Do not block the aisle for others. Keep your arms, legs and head inside the bus.
8. Do not eat food or drink beverages on the bus. Never throw anything out the windows.
9. Never touch the emergency door handle unless there is an emergency and you have to get out. An adult will usually tell you if the door has to be opened.
10. Never take large things on the bus. Have a parent bring large, bulky objects to school in the car.
11. Do not take photographs, videos or audio record on the bus.
12. School rules and rules outlined in the [Transportation Handbook](#) apply while on the bus.

Information regarding requests for alternate afternoon bus transportation can be found [here](#).

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival and Dismissal: Because there is limited space near our school for traffic and parking, arrival and dismissal times are much safer when children ride school buses to and from school. We ask parents who may occasionally drive their children to school in the morning or pick them up in the afternoon to proceed with caution near the schools; to follow the required traffic patterns; and to observe traffic laws having to do with school buses.

Children who are dropped off at school should arrive at 7:55 a.m. Parents should use the designated drop off area. Students should exit from the passenger side of the vehicle only. Once students have safely disembarked from the vehicle parents should continue on their way. Please do not stop to have a conversation while dropping off children. If you need to come into the school for any reason, use a regular parking space and do not park in the drop off area. If you wish to get out of your vehicle, please park in a designated parking spot. Local police will ticket vehicles that are parked in the drop off area.

Students who are picked up after school should be picked up between 2:15 and 2:20 p.m. If you are going to be late picking up your child, please try to call ahead to alert school staff. Once again, please do not stop to have conversations with other parents as this holds up the parent pick up line and creates problems with traffic.

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

We ask all parents of Kindergarten, first grade, second grade and third grade students to notify us when their children will be absent or late for school. When your child will be absent or late, please call our district Safe Arrival Line: 781-786-5299, press 4. You may leave a message the night before your child is absent or tardy or early in the morning on the day that your child is absent or tardy. Please call before 8:00 a.m. Shortly after the children have arrived at school we will begin to match the names of children whose parents have left messages. We will telephone the parents of children who are not accounted for. If for any reason the answering machine is not working, please call your child's school office directly. In your message, please include:

- identify yourself;
- give your child's name;
- identify your child's school, grade and classroom teacher;
- give the reason for your child's absence or tardiness.

Messages will be checked by our school nurse, Janet Weinstein. Please include in your message any information we may need about your child's health condition or mention whether you need to speak with our school nurse. The program is critically important. Its effectiveness depends on clear and consistent communication between school and home. Thank you for your cooperation in fulfilling our mutual responsibility for children's safety.

DESTINATIONS OF STUDENTS AT END OF SCHOOL DAY

One of the most important responsibilities we have is to ensure that each child reaches the correct destination at the end of the school day. The many combinations of after school activities and day care arrangements that affect children's routines make this a complex challenge. For this reason, it is very helpful if we know your child's "fixed routine" for the school year. For example, every week throughout the school year some children's fixed routine may be to go home each day. Other children may go to a daycare each day. Or there may be variations such as going to Mom's home on Mondays and Tuesdays and Dad's home on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. All parents are given a form to list their child's fixed routine. Classroom teachers follow the routine throughout the year as they dismiss children at the end of the day. Please refer to the following example:

DAY	DESTINATION	IF SCHOOL BUS, LIST NUMBER	IF PICK-UP, NAME OF PERSON
MONDAY	home	10	
TUESDAY	home	10	
WEDNESDAY	Day Care	3	
THURSDAY	Day Care	3	
FRIDAY	Day Care	3	

IMPORTANT: Anytime there is a variation to your child's routine we will continue to require a note from parents. The note authorizes us to send a child to a destination different from what is listed on the fixed routine list. Each day that a child's usual dismissal routine changes for an after school activity such as soccer, religious education, recreation programs, Third Grade After School Sports, orchestra, etc., we will continue to require a note authorizing us to send the child to that destination.

Notes: Please send a note to school with your child when any of the following situations occur:

2. Change in dismissal information (see "Student Destinations at End of School Day")
3. Change of address or telephone number, both home and workplace
4. Change of emergency contact telephone number
5. Absence
6. Each time your child stays for an after school activity
7. Unusual circumstances, i.e. parents are out of town, illness in the family, new baby or other significant event.

NEW STUDENTS/NEW PARENTS

Teachers make every effort to ensure that children who are new to the Weston Public Schools enter as smoothly as possible. This may include pairing a new student with a "buddy" or talking about a child's previous school, town and friends. The School Counselor meets with all new students in Grades 1, 2 and 3 in groups and meets new Kindergarten students in their classrooms.

Early in the school year, the PTO sponsors a meeting for parents of new children in the three elementary schools to introduce them to the PTO and various school programs and to answer questions.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Our schools offer a complete program of support services to promote a child's educational and emotional growth. Our staff includes a School counselor, a School Psychologist, Special Education Teachers, a Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, a Liaison for the METCO Program and a School Nurse. If you have any concerns about your child, you should first contact the classroom teacher. No services will be provided without a parent's informed consent.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Weston Public Schools comply with federal and state laws and regulations in the identification and education of children who are in homeless situations. The intent of this policy is to provide each child and youth equal access to the same free appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. In accordance with requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Superintendent has designated Ms. Martha Bakken as the Homeless Education Liaison. The responsibility of the Liaison includes assisting homeless students in enrollment, working to obtain records by contacting districts of previous attendance, and ensuring these students receive the educational services for which they are eligible. For any questions, please contact Martha Bakken at bakkenm@weston.org or by calling the Office of Student Services at (781) 786-5240.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

In the Weston Public Schools, special education is considered to be an integral part of the regular education program. Collaboratively, regular and special educators accommodate a student's development by providing a rich and diverse curriculum with instructional practices geared to individual needs.

Following a comprehensive assessment of a student and a determination that a student requires specialized instruction and/or related services, an Individualized Education Program is developed that addresses the unique needs of that student and provides the necessary services within the least restrictive environment. A continuum of services is provided and can include occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language therapy, and other support from special educators inside and outside the regular education classroom setting.

Further information may be obtained by calling the Office of Student Services at 781-786-5240.

WESTON METCO PROGRAM

Since 1967, Weston has participated in METCO, a state-funded, voluntary desegregation program which services urban and suburban children. The program's goals are: 1) to provide a quality, integrated education for urban children of color in suburban schools and: 2) to lessen the racial isolation of suburban children. The Weston - METCO Family Friends Organization helps to expand the program beyond the walls of the classroom by providing opportunities for Boston and Weston families to get together and share their urban and suburban experiences.

For more information about METCO or the Family Friends program, contact the Weston - METCO office at 781-786-5850.

TRANSGENDER AND NONCONFORMING STUDENTS

The Weston Public Schools prohibits discrimination (see [Policy AC](#) of the District Policy Manual) on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or immigration status; and ensures that all students have equal right of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study. This includes students' rights to a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment. Consistent with this policy and applicable laws and guidance, school staff will create and reinforce a culture where transgender and gender nonconforming students feel safe, supported, and fully included. Additional procedural guidelines to address, at minimum, the following areas will be created by the Superintendent of Schools or designee: transitions, privacy, confidentiality and student records, names, pronouns, gender markers on student records, restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities, physical education classes, intramural and interscholastic athletic activities, dress codes, professional development, and other gender-based activities, rules, policies and practices, and trainings.

Please refer to [Policy JBD](#) of the District Policy Manual.

WESTON EDUCATION ENRICHMENT FUND COMMITTEE

WEEFC is a permanent subcommittee of the School Committee, created by Town Meeting. Its purpose is to augment and enrich the Weston Public Schools by receiving tax-deductible donations. It provides a convenient vehicle for supplementing educational opportunities. WEEFC selects projects which are not part of the regular school budget, and which add richness and excitement to the classroom. Mini-grants are cash awards enabling teachers to carry out innovative classroom projects which complement the regular program.

SCHOOL NEWS

We post announcements about school activities and events weekly on our website. Classroom teachers will send out a monthly communication, at minimum. You can also follow along with our school happenings via our social media accounts. In addition, Westword is a weekly bulletin published jointly by the PTO and District. It contains school announcements and schedules of after-school activities for all grade levels. School Notices are printed frequently and supply important information to parents concerning bus dismissal, calendar reminders, field trip notices and parent permission slips. Your child is expected to bring home copies of all school publications and notices. Please watch for them. Much of the information is also available at the Weston Schools website (www.westonschools.org) that includes links to school-based web pages.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The PTO encourages parents to join and support their organization. The PTO, in conjunction with the District, publishes the weekly Westword bulletin. The PTO funds school community events, the Creative Arts Council and Creative Science which brings enrichment programs, i.e. puppet shows, science presentations, music groups, etc. to our school. There are various grade-specific parent meetings sponsored by the PTO throughout the year along with open forums offering speakers and discussions on school-related topics. The PTO coordinates the room parent volunteer programs to assist the classroom teachers throughout the year with field trips, parties, and special projects. The PTO Chairs and Assistant Chairs sit on the larger K-12 PTO board, which meets monthly. Within our school, the PTO also has Grade Chairs for each of the grade's room parents.

TELEPHONE

Country School may be contacted directly between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. If you wish to speak with your child's teacher, please call the main office at Country (781-786-5400) and you will be connected to his or her voicemail.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION AND EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

“No School” Announcements will be posted on district website: www.westonschools.org

Parents will also receive email, text and/or phone notification via the Weston Bulletin (RAVE SYSTEM)

Radio Announcements over: WBZ (AM 1030), WCRB (FM 102.5), WHDH (AM 850)
School Information Line : 781-786-5202.

Emergency Dismissal (during the school day)

In the event that there is an emergency, a telephone calling chain is initiated by the school and room parents. It is important that your phone number, cell phone number, and all emergency phone numbers (and that of a neighbor as well) are listed with the school and are kept up-to-date

should any changes occur.

INFORMATION ON STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

Title IX – Sex Discrimination

“No person shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid.”

Complaint manager for Weston Public Schools: Director of Human Resources (781) 786-5260

Title VI – Discrimination

“No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Complaint manager for Weston Public Schools: Assistant Superintendent (781) 786-5220

Section 504 – Disabilities

No “otherwise qualified handicapped individual” shall be excluded from participation in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Section 504 prohibits disability-based discrimination and provides protection to an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

A student who is evaluated and determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and requires accommodations in order to have equal access to all of the Weston Public Schools’ offerings is eligible for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. Students on a Section 504 Plan are entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE); “appropriate” in the context of Section 504 is access to an education and school offerings that are comparable to that provided to students without disabilities. Parents have the right to due process.

Section 504 Coordinator for Weston Public Schools: Assistant Superintendent (781) 786-5220

Title II – Americans with Disabilities Act

“No qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of that disability be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.”

Complaint manager for Weston Public Schools: Assistant Superintendent (781) 786-5220

MGL Ch. 76 Section 5: The Right to Attend School

“Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in

obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.”

Homeless Liaison for Weston Public Schools: Director of Student Services (781) 786-5240

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

Children enter a new school or grade with excitement, which accompanies growth and a new sense of competence. You do a wonderful job at home in helping your children to anticipate the opening of school with positive attitudes. Some of you ask for suggestions as to how you might continue in this effort.

1. Talk positively about school and teacher.
2. Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.
3. Read to your child daily, and talk about the story and the pictures.
4. State directions clearly and be sure your child understands and follows them.
5. Give age-appropriate responses.
6. Praise your child for his/her efforts.
7. Encourage your child to express his/her feelings verbally.
8. Provide activities that encourage your child to use eyes and hands together e.g. puzzles, pegboards, crayons, paints, scissors, blocks, clay.
9. Encourage independence in dressing.
10. Talk with your child; answer and ask questions.
11. Encourage your child's curiosity and desire to learn.
12. Monitor what your child brings to school. We do not allow electronic games, valuable items such as handheld computer games, and/or violent or potentially harmful items (even if they appear to be a toy).

Non-resident Students

Students who do not reside in Weston may be withdrawn from the Weston Public Schools by the school principal for good cause. A student may appeal a decision by the principal to the superintendent, whose decision shall be final.

Please refer to [Policies JF/JFA/JFAB/JFABB](#) of the District Policy Manual.

Reports to Police

The school department will report suspected criminal activity to the police department and will cooperate with the police in their investigations.

Student Records

Both federal law (FERPA) and state law (MGL c. 71, §§ 34D, 34E, 34H; 603 CMR 23.00) provide Parents/Guardians and “eligible students” with certain rights with respect to a student’s education records. In several instances, state law gives greater rights than exists under federal law, in which case state law prevails. One such instance is with regard to who is an “eligible student.” As a matter of state law, an “eligible student” is a student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered 9th grade. These laws provide the following rights:

(1) As a matter of state law, parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided in 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Parents/Guardians or eligible students should submit to the Weston High School Assistant Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Weston High School Assistant Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

State law provides that, upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or the parent. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged if to do so would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under state and federal laws. Parents/Guardians or eligible students who wish to ask the Weston High School to amend a record should write to the Weston High School Assistant Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the Weston High School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Weston High School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding

the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and/or state law authorizes disclosure without consent. Some of the exceptions to this general rule are described below:

School Officials with Legitimate Educational Interests

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Weston High School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school committee; a person or company with whom Weston High School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

Officials of Another School in Which Student Seeks to Enroll

Another exception recognized by state and federal laws is the right for a public school to disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or already is enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. Weston Public Schools hereby provides notice that this is an exception Weston accesses.

Directory Information Exception & Right to Opt-Out

The Weston Public School District may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District that you are opting out of the disclosure of directory information about your child. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Weston Public School District to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

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

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

include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require public schools to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses and telephone listings—unless Parents/Guardians and/or eligible students have informed the school district that they do not want their student's/their information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Weston High School to disclose directory information from your child's/your education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Weston High School in writing by October 15, 2026. Weston High School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education and/or MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning alleged failures by Weston High School to comply with the requirements of FERPA and/or Massachusetts' student record laws and regulations.

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400
Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC
20202-8520
FERPA.Complaints@ed.gov
(855) 249-3072

MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Problem Resolution System
135 Santilli Highway
Everett, MA 02149
DESECompliance@mass.gov
(781) 338-3700