

WATERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

2022-2023

# Student Handbook



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Watertown High School

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Watertown, CT 06795

<http://whs.watertownps.org>

*Together We Make A Difference*

## **Principal's Message 2022-2023**

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

With great pride and excitement, I welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year at Watertown High School! At WHS, all of our faculty and staff members look forward to providing students with excellent, enriching learning experiences and opportunities in a safe and supportive environment. You will see that the phrase, *Together We Make A Difference*, will appear throughout our school and in our many communications throughout the year. Our mission is just that: the partnerships created between and among our students, our families, our staff members, and our town provide the wonderful foundation that makes such a profound difference in the lives of all of the learners at Watertown High School. I can't wait to work and learn alongside the capable, caring, and dedicated members of our WHS community this year.

As members of the Watertown High School community, students learn a variety of subjects and skills as part of our school's curriculum, and just as importantly, they contribute actively to our school in so many ways, from clubs to classrooms to athletic fields to volunteering or working in our town. Attending high school is a time for students to grow in their own personal responsibility and in their own appropriate social behaviors, especially with the numerous opportunities and many choices that high school brings. This handbook provides important information and guidelines for students and families regarding Watertown High School's and Watertown Public Schools' expectations for student success. Please read these policies and procedures carefully so that you are aware of and fully informed about these expectations and responsibilities.

I am so excited to watch our students continue to grow and to shine throughout this school year! On behalf of our faculty and staff, I can say confidently that we are ready to support students' learning each day, to honor and encourage their thinking and their voices, and to provide resources and assistance to maximize their achievements. Thank you so very much for your continued support of the work of our school and our school district. Your support truly does make a tremendous difference in the success of our learning community, and we are all grateful for those partnerships with our families. Here's to a great and productive year for all.

Sincerely yours,

*Janet P. Parlato*

Janet P. Parlato, Ed.D.  
Principal

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## **Directory**

Watertown Public Schools  
61 Echo Lake Road  
Watertown, CT 06795  
(860) 945-4800  
<http://www.watertownps.org/>

### **Board of Education**

Mr. Robert Makowski, Chairman

Ms. Krista Palomba, Vice Chairman

Ms. Karen Hosking, Secretary

Mr. Jason Malagutti

Ms. Christine Faressa

Me. Elizabeth Lawton

Ms. Cindy Phelan

Mr. John Gavallas

Ms. Cathie Hillian

### **Central Office Administration**

Dr. Alison Villanueva  
Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Lisa Fekete  
Director of Operations

Dr. Perri Murdica  
Director of Student Services

Dr. Jessica Lemos  
Supervisor of Special Education

Ms. Marie Kashuba

Business Manager

Ms. Emily Doering  
Director of Food Services

Mr. Michael Dalton  
Director of Technology

Mr. Luigi Velardi  
Director of Facilities & Security

**Watertown High School Faculty**

\* Denotes Department Chairperson

**Art**

Rima Rahal  
Amber Schlatter  
Gretchen Uryase\*

**Health/Physical Education**

Sokol Mamudi  
Barbara Schulz  
Mark Southard  
Marie Vallee

**Career and Technical Education**

Warren Campbell\*  
Michelle Goldfarb  
Elizabeth Langlais  
Thomas Mathews  
Maura Quatrano  
Joan Zimmerman

**School Counseling**

Kristen Bates  
Megan Chunis\*  
Megan Robinson  
Christine Sales

**ELL**

Andre Burgos

**English**

Paulina Auclair  
Christopher Begnal

Diane Curci  
Jennifer Cybart  
Anthony Deziel  
Kristian Kuegler  
Michael Lewis\*  
Kelly Raimo  
Mark Zaborowski

**Library Media**

Kathryn Kovacs

**Pupil Services**

Kerry Brickel, School Psychologist  
Erin O'Neill, Social Worker  
Catherine Walsh, School Psychologist

**World Language**

Sarah Baker  
Martha Cava  
Christina Moher\*  
Katerina Reyes  
Gamaliel Rosa  
Susana Simoes

**Music**

Joseph Hahn  
Donna Poliquin\*

**Mathematics**

Nicole Edmond  
Chelsie Guerrero  
Lisa Guerrero  
Tara Leonetti  
Eric Lozaw  
Timothy Malootian  
Eric Miller  
Nicole Nass  
Roberto Rinaldi\*  
Ralph Rossi

**Science**

Ashley Alves  
Richard Brown  
Kathy Gaydosh  
Mary Hathaway  
Kelly Hynds

Jacquelyn Lavallee  
Justin Scarzella  
Rhoda Zervos\*

**Social Studies**

Leah Bellemare  
Alissa Carrozza  
Michael Cerrato  
Richard Genua  
Andrew Hennessey  
Marylou Kuegler\*  
Elizabeth Loughlin  
Emmett O'Connor  
Bryan Wosczyzna

**Speech and Language**

Sara Blatherwick

**SRBI Coordinator**

Beth Wolf

**Special Education Services**

Melissa Ciarlo  
Sarah Cieslewski  
Maryellen Perugini  
Paula Puma

\*

Jessica Sharkey

**Support Staff**

Brenda Bartlett, Special Education Secretary  
Cristina Murphy, School Counseling Secretary  
Jeffrey Desena, School Resource Officer  
Susan Galpin, Principal's Secretary/Treasurer  
Ross Guastella, Hall Monitor  
Frank Judson, Hall Monitor  
Brian LaFontaine, ISS Monitor  
Barbara Mordenti, Assistant Principal's Secretary  
Melissa Navarra, Main Office Secretary  
Michelle Spagnoletti, R.N., School Nurse  
Thomas Romano, Head Custodian  
Jerry Valentino, Hall Monitor  
Judith Schmaling, Computer Lab  
Denise Suvoski, Hall Monitor  
\*, R.N., School Nurse

## **2022-2023 Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook**

*Note: For complete descriptions of Watertown Board of Education Policies and Regulations, please visit the district website at [www.watertownps.org](http://www.watertownps.org).*

### **MISSION STATEMENT OF WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Watertown Public Schools are our community's first choice for educational excellence. We provide relevant, rigorous, and engaging instruction that challenges all students to reach their potential. We maintain strong relationships with students, families, and our community. All students graduate high school and are college and career ready.

#### **District Core Beliefs**

- We believe that maintaining high expectations for students and staff leads to higher levels of student achievement.
- We believe that literacy and problem solving are essential components of learning and essential life skills.
- We believe that caring and supporting relationships between and among educators, students, and parents leads to higher levels of student achievement.
- We believe that continuous improvement in the overall quality of our school district is achieved by creating realistic goals, along with corresponding systems to measure the progress of those goals.
- We believe that effective collaboration and communication among families, school personnel, and the community results in more effective schools.

#### **ACCREDITATION**

Watertown High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering postgraduate instruction.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation by the NEASC should be directed to the administrative staff of the school or college. Individuals may also contact the Association.

#### **WATERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL**

##### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The learning community of Watertown High School is committed to creating an environment in which all of our students can DREAM.

We strive to create a nurturing environment in which all students are challenged to be

independent thinkers who are capable of adapting and contributing to an ever-changing society.

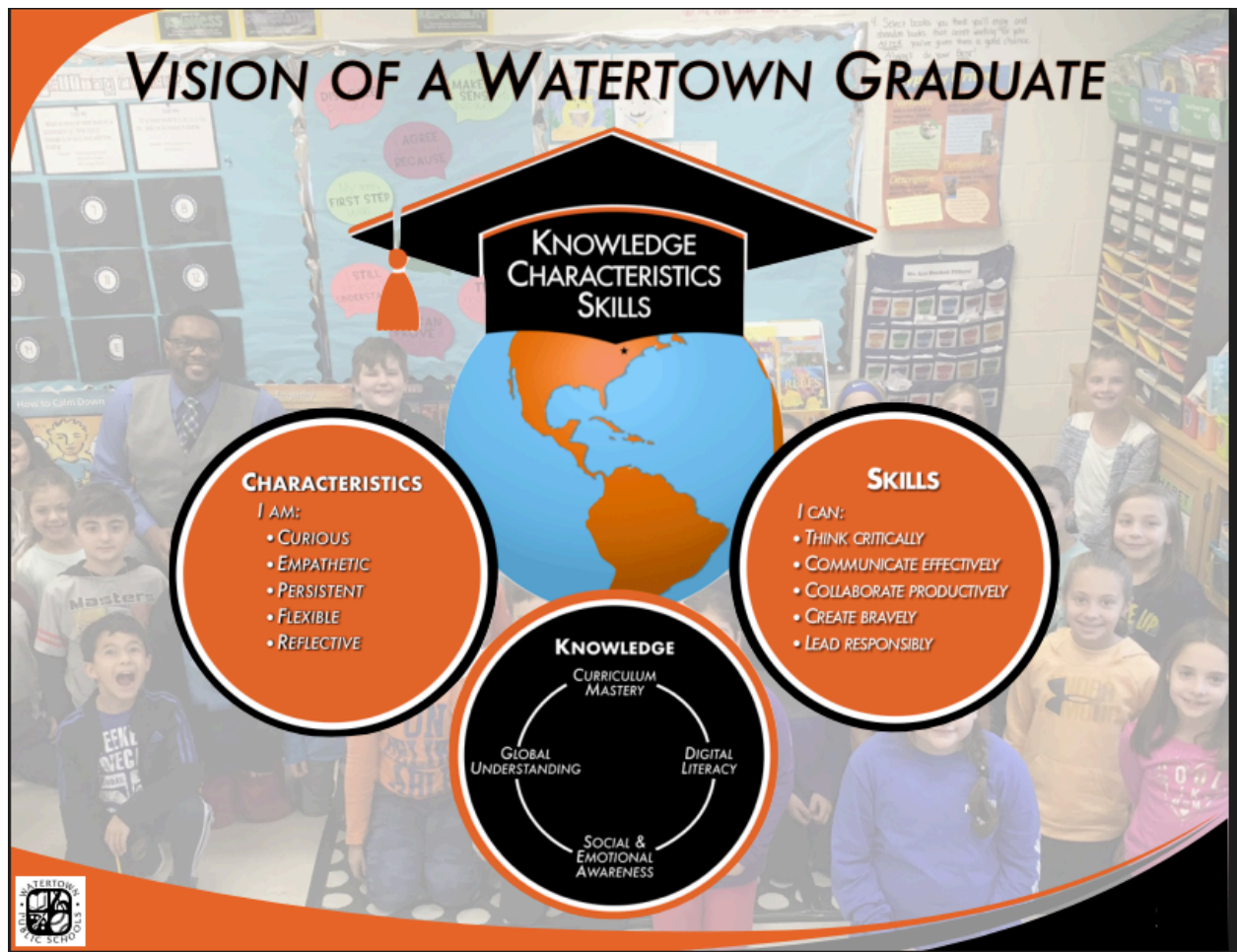
Students will leave Watertown High School with an ambitious belief in themselves  
and with the skills and knowledge to make their dreams a reality.

### **CORE VALUES & BELIEFS**

Watertown High School is creating a rigorous and accepting place of learning for  
all students. We believe that our students will leave us better prepared for any  
success or challenge by:

**Demonstrating Determination**  
**Respecting Themselves & Others**  
**Expecting Excellence**  
**Accepting Responsibility**  
**Making Good Choices**

### **LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**



**Academic:**

*Inquiry - We expect students to be able to critically analyze academic, emotional, social, and physical situations they face and then be able to evaluate the effectiveness of various solutions and choose the one that best fits their goals.*

*Information Literacy - We expect students to recognize when information is required and to have the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the information as needed.*

*Communication - We expect students to clearly communicate through all manners of spoken and written language by taking a position and using words that support the purpose.*

*Depth of Knowledge - We expect students to be knowledgeable of various contents and synthesize new learning with prior understanding.*

**Social:**

*· We expect students to take responsibility for their learning and behavior, as well as ownership of their futures so that they will be prepared for wherever life takes them.*

**Civic:**

*· We expect students to become socially aware citizens who contribute positively to the culture of our school in a manner that actively engages them in the local community.*

**PREFACE**

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents/guardians regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice. Consult the district's website or the individual school's website for any significant changes.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents/guardians. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather as "the student," "students," or "children." Likewise, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents/guardians need to be familiar with the District's Student Code of Conduct and school safety and security plans which are intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY and NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law.

Dr. Perri Murdica is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

Watertown District schools recognize and accept the need to prepare students to live and work productively in an increasingly diverse society. This is an integral part of the school system's commitment to offer an educational program of excellence, which includes teaching students awareness and understanding of the diverse cultures and heritages that form our society.

Watertown High School will not tolerate student behavior which insults, degrades or stereotypes any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical or mental condition or ethnic group.

## New and Highlighted Regulations

The purpose of this page is to emphasize policies and/or regulations that are new for the 2022-23 school year and to highlight parts of the handbook that are especially important:

1. **Delivery Services**: Students cannot order from DoorDash, GrubHub, UberEats or any other food/beverage delivery service during the school day.
2. **Eligibility for Participation**: Students must be passing a minimum of four classes to participate in any co-curricular activities, including athletics, clubs, Homecoming, prom, and any senior activities.
3. **Community Service Recognition**: Students who accumulate and provide documentation of 100 or more hours of community service will receive a community service cord at graduation.
4. **Use of Private Technology Devices by Students: Board of Education Policy 5150: Use of Private Technology Devices by Students:**

On school property, at a school-sponsored activity, while in use for a remote learning activity, or while being used to access or utilize Board technology resources, the use of any such device for an improper purpose is prohibited. Improper purposes include, but are not limited to:

- Sending any form of a harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime);
- Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to Board technology resources;
- Damaging Board technology resources;
- Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, obscene as to minors, or contains pornography;
- Cyberbullying;
- Using such device to violate any school rule, including the unauthorized recording (photographic, video, or audio) of another individual without the permission of the individual or a school staff member; or
- Taking any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.

5. **Signage**: Signage to be placed inside or outside of the school must be approved by the Watertown High School administration before placement.

### 6. **Mental Health Days:**

As used in this section and section 10-198b of the Connecticut general statutes, "mental health wellness day" describes a school day during which a student attends to such student's emotional and psychological well-being in lieu of attending school. For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, a local or regional board of education shall permit any student enrolled in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, to take two mental health wellness days during the school year, during which day such student shall not be required to attend school. No student shall take mental health wellness days during consecutive school days. (page19)

7. **Attendance Information: Information about Attendance, Truancy, and Chronic Absenteeism**

## **ADMISSION/PLACEMENT**

A student seeking enrollment in Watertown High School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student after such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child. Nonresidents may attend school on a tuition basis provided space is available. Nonresident students from other school districts within the state, (districts in the Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport and New London regions) who apply pursuant to Board of Education regulations, may enroll in particular programs or schools within the district on a space available basis, without payment of tuition, as part of the inter-district public school attendance program called Open Choice. The Regional Educational Service Centers will determine which school districts are close enough to make transportation feasible. The parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may consent to such child's withdrawal from school. The parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may exercise the option by personally appearing at the school district office to sign a withdrawal form. This form will include an attestation from the school's guidance counselor or a school administrator that the district has provided the parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community. A student who has attained the age of seventeen and who has voluntarily terminated enrollment in the district's schools and subsequently seeks admission may be denied readmission for up to ninety school days from the date of such termination unless such student seeks readmission to the District not later than ten school days after such termination in which school accommodation will be provided not later than three school days after such student seeks readmission. A student, nineteen years of age or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if he/she cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law and do not have a fixed residence will be admitted pursuant to federal law.

Completion of immunization and health assessments are required prior to a child's attendance in school, but are not prerequisites for enrolling a child who resides in the District and is of appropriate age to attend school.

In order to determine a child's eligibility for ESL or bilingual programs, parents/guardians of all new students enrolling for the first term and all re-enrolling students who have not previously

attended public school in Connecticut must complete a Home Language Survey. The student, after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

Parents of students attending District schools have the option to enroll their child(ren) in a magnet school with which the District is a nonparticipating district, if the magnet school has unused student capacity. The District will pay any tuition charge. (Does not include tuition for a preschool magnet program.)

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES**

Advanced Placement & UCONN ECE (AP/ECE): In Advanced Placement and UCONN Early College Experience classrooms, students will engage in intense discussions, solve problems collaboratively, and learn to write clearly and persuasively. Students recommended for this level will engage in deep analysis and synthesis of a wide range of information. Through these college-level courses and exams, students can earn credit and / or advanced placement as they head to college. All students enrolled in AP courses are encouraged to take the College Board AP Exam.

### **ADVERTISING**

Watertown Public Schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students. District-prescribed standards shall be met.

### **AGE OF MAJORITY**

In all school matters requiring the approval or presence of a parent or guardian, the eighteen-year old student will be allowed to represent him/herself and sign all appropriate forms under his/her responsibility. However, the school reserves the right to contact parents regarding student issues. These include, but are not limited to, school attendance, school withdrawals, permission for psychological or academic testing, early dismissals, changes in courses, representation at PPTs, appeals, hearings, and access to or release of records.

### **AIDS CURRICULUM**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide during the school day, planned, ongoing, systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiencies Syndrome (AIDS). Parents who wish to have their child excused from such instruction shall communicate this request to the principal.

## **AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensures support for individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate education (FAPE), and are accommodated and employed without discrimination related to their disabilities.

It is the intent of the District to provide a free and appropriate public education to each Section 504/ADA qualified and eligible student with a disability within its jurisdiction, as defined in 28 CFR, Parts 35 and 36, of the Amendments to Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II and Title III.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities (both students and staff members) by school districts receiving federal assistance of any kind for any program or activity. Districts may not discriminate against any person with a disability, regardless of whether the program or activity after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

All individuals who are disabled or “handicapped” are protected under Section 504. However, individuals who have been determined to be “handicapped” under Section 504 may not be considered disabled under IDEA. IDEA, which can be viewed as a subcategory of Section 504, provides for special programming or placement, while Section 504 protects the rights of individuals with handicaps. Under IDEA, students are qualified for services under 13 IDEA disabling conditions; specially designed individual education programs are planned for each student by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams. Under Section 504, students with “handicaps” are entitled to special accommodations to ensure that they can participate in and benefit from public education and programs, and a 504 accommodation plan is designed for each student according to individual needs.

Section 504 is not an aspect of special education, but is, rather, a responsibility of the comprehensive general public education system. Unlike an eligibility system based on clinic categories of disabilities, Section 504 works on a more functional premise. Under 504 [29 U.S.C. & § 706(8)] a person is considered to have a disability if that person:

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

While Section 504 provides a means for preventing discrimination against students with disabilities, this does not mean that 504 plans must focus on the disabling condition or on addressing the disability directly. Rather, 504 plans offer a means for focusing on students’

strengths, for capitalizing on what students bring to the instruction process - not on what they lack.

Students with disabilities, pursuant to Section 504 and/or ADA will be provided a free appropriate public education which may include, but is not limited to, providing a structured learning environment; repeating and simplifying instructions about in-class and homework assignments; supplemented verbal instructions with visual instructions; adjusting class schedules, modifying test delivery; computer-assisted instructions; using modified textbooks and tailoring homework assignments.

Should you have any questions regarding Section 504, please call either your child's school principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator, Dr. Perri Murdica for the Watertown School District at 860-945-4821.

Any eligible person, including any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability may submit a written complaint to the district's designated Section 504 Coordinator (name) within 30 days of the alleged occurrence.

#### **ANTI-IDLING POLICY FOR CARS / SERVICE VEHICLES**

The Board of Education has established an anti-idling policy pertaining to cars. Drivers are requested to turn off their engines while waiting in their cars for more than three minutes to pick up students or adults, weather permitting.

#### **ANTI-RACISM**

The Watertown District rejects all forms of racism as destructive to the mission, vision, values and goals of this school system. All forms of racism must be eliminated from the District. Children must find school a safe and welcoming place, where they are able to achieve success, irrespective of their racial or ethnic background. Racism will not be tolerated in any form. The goal is to enable all students to thrive in a socially cohesive community within a positive, multi-cultural society.

#### **ASBESTOS**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

## ASSEMBLIES

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or entertainment to the student community. A student's conduct in assemblies must meet the same standards as in the classroom.

## ATTENDANCE (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5110R](#))

**Watertown High School Philosophy on Student Attendance:** Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. It is in fact one of the two criteria for the granting of credit for courses (the second being a passing grade). When a student is absent, assignments can be made up, but important interactions that occur in the classroom are missed.

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly.\* Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Students are required to attend school on a regular basis both in-person and virtually.

Absence means an excused absence or an unexcused absence.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10 percent of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team

All children attending district schools must obtain the required immunizations unless they have medical contraindications or religious objections. This obligation may be waived for homeless students.

A student must remain in school until age 18, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 17.

## **Absence**

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the school between 7:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. on the day of the absence by telephoning the school.

If it is not possible to telephone the school on the day of absence, the parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the office. Parents should contact the principal in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

## **Excused Absence**

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" only if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials.
- B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absences and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
  - 1. Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence.
  - 2. Student observance of a religious holiday.
  - 3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
  - 4. Court appearances which are mandated. (Documentation required)
  - 5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
  - 6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines.
  - 7. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.
- C. Mental Health Wellness Day (as defined by section 10-198b of the CT general statutes): A school day during which a student attends to such student's emotional and psychological well-being in lieu of attending school. For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, a local or regional board of education shall permit any student enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve, inclusive, to take two mental health wellness days during the school year, during which day such student shall not be

required to attend school. No student shall take mental health wellness days during consecutive school days.

A phone call with no written follow-up will automatically be coded as an unexcused absence. The responsibility for makeup of work lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all makeup privileges must be completed within the required time as stated in the School's late policy and each subsequent department late policy.

### **Unexcused Absence**

Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied makeup privileges. Such absences may also be reflected in the students final grade.\*

Absences which are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards when issued. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, guidance counselors and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

A student whose total number of absences at anytime during a school year is equal to or greater than then percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child," Such a student will be subject to review by the attendance review team and the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department of Education. The District will also collect and analyze data on student attendance, truancy and chronic absenteeism for students with disabilities.

### **Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students From School/Third Party Vehicles**

Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians and school administration. In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian should send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Children of single-parent families will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly

responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. Arrangements should be made with the building administrator on the parent or guardian to pick up the student in the school office. No student may be released in the custody of any individual, not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list maintained by the school's principal as authorized to obtain the release of students.

If someone other than a parent/guardian picks up the student, the person appearing in the school office should bring a note of identification from the parent or guardian. The Board of Education does not condone/approve students leaving a school campus in third-party ride sharing vehicles; especially such service (Uber, Lyft) whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult. Additionally, third-party vehicles that deliver food (UberEats, Door-Dash, GrubHub) are not permitted on school grounds for student use during regular school hours.

### **Tardiness**

Students who are not in their classroom by 7:40 A.M. are considered tardy and must report directly to the office. A student discovered on school grounds who has not signed in at the office will also be considered tardy. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant. Students may be subject to disciplinary action including in-school suspension if the principal determines that tardiness is excessive.

\*Students are late to school if they are not in their seats at the bell signaling the start of the first period class. If students arrive late, they must report to the office and sign in. Students are allowed three tardies per semester. Any student who is late more than three times will receive a detention for each tardiness beyond three. A detention may be waived by an administrator if the cause of the tardiness is unavoidable.

### **Truancy**

Truancy is defined by statute as absence(s) from school without the knowledge or approval of parents/guardians and/or school officials. A student age five to eighteen\*\* inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered a truant. Disciplinary action may include after school detention for each class/study period missed. Tests and academic work missed in class that day will be recorded as a failing grade.

Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. School staff are mandated by the state to report excessive absences or patterns of concern.

Information about truancy will also be posted in the annual district report cards required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

### **AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS**

The Watertown Public School system uses an automated phone messaging system which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student. (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items, such as weather-related closures, issues of student safety and health, and threats of imminent danger. Parental consent will be sought when the messaging system will be used for other informational items.

### **BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS**

Students find it useful to carry book bags, duffel bags and knapsacks. Students are allowed to carry/use these items to and from school only. Students do not need to carry all of their books and notebooks during the entire school day. Lockers should be used. Safety and comfort of both students and adults must be considered.

### **BICYCLES**

Students riding a bicycle to school are responsible to park and secure it properly at a designated area. For the best bicycle security, students should lock and chain the bicycle to one of the provided bicycle racks.

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The members of the Watertown Board of Education are:

Chairperson: Ms. Cathie Rinaldi

Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Robert Makowski

Secretary: Ms. Karen Hosking

Members: Mr. Jason Malagutti, Ms. Christine Faressa, Me. Elizabeth Lawton, Ms. Krista Palomba, Mr. John Gavallas, Ms. Cathie Hillian

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Watertown Board of Education holds regular business meetings two Mondays of each month at

7:00 PM in the Watertown High School Lecture Hall. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement, not more than 5 minutes in length, or to express a viewpoint. In addition, if they give advance notice to the Superintendent, individuals with relevant issues for discussion may have such issues placed on a future Board agenda for a more thorough discussion of the topic.

The Board's main purpose is policy setting designed to improve student learning. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

Board of Education policies are available on the district's website at <https://www.watertownps.org/>. The policies are subject to modifications by the Board at any time.

## **BREATHALYZERS**

The safety of students is a primary concern. Students who consume alcohol and/or are under the influence of alcohol at school or at any school function pose a danger to themselves and others. In order to protect student safety, school administrators may utilize a breathalyzer to determine whether a student is under the influence of alcohol. Breathalyzer testing will be used only after personal observation that establishes reasonable suspicion that a student has been drinking.

## **BULLYING (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5015](#))**

***Watertown High School is committed to a fair, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all students, staff members, and visitors to our campus. Mean, intolerant behavior of any kind, including harassment, hate speech, and/or symbols or messages identified with hate and intolerance, along with bullying as defined by the policy below, are strictly prohibited.***

Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
- B. places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or his or her property,
- C. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”)
7. Targeting of a student based on the student’s actual or perceived “differentiating” characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Student who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victims,
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school, are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

Student and/or their parent may file a written report of conduct they consider bullying. Students may also make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to any school employee, who will promptly reduce the complaint to writing and forward it to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and action.

### **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying**

Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time

and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (Dr. Parlato, Principal), and all reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with this Plan.

Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous reports shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the report, and is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The complaint procedure is also posted on the District's website and the school website. Students and parents are permitted to make anonymous reports of bullying. Parent written reports and student anonymous reports will be investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist (Dr. Parlato, Principal) but no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Safe School Climate Specialist is responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint. Parents/guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying act and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such alleged act was directed will receive prompt notification that such investigation has begun. The results of the investigation will be provided not later than 48 hours after its completion, verbally and by electronic mail. Parents of students involved in a verified act of bullying will be invited to attend at least one meeting at school. Safe School Climate Specialists are required to receive mental health first aid training.

Bullying behavior by any student in the Watertown Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
- B. Places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or
- C. Infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or

expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Teen dating violence means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening that occurs between two students who are currently in or have recently been in a dating relationship.

Students who engage in any act of bullying or teen dating violence, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying or teen dating violence to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation [#5015](#) set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

## **BUS CONDUCT**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation.

## **CAFETERIA**

All students are expected to report to the cafeteria at the appropriate time during their lunch wave. Students may purchase a hot lunch in the school cafeteria or bring lunch from home. All eating is to be done in the cafeteria. Food is not permitted elsewhere in the building. Rules of cleanliness are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for

receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or such other disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

The District participates in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the District/School website.

The District complies with the professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

It is the intent of the Board of Education that schools take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. Food and beverages offered for sale to students, whether in the cafeteria, school store, or vending machines will meet federal and state standards and guidelines. All sodas and sports drinks will not be available for sale.

In conformity with applicable law, necessary accommodations will be provided, where required, for students with food allergies, including emergency procedures to treat allergic reactions which may occur.

Charging is not encouraged by the District but on those occasions that a student does not have money, they will be offered an alternate meal. Board of Education policy establishes the conditions under which students may charge a meal and the means of repayment.

## **CALENDAR**

[The district calendar](#) shows the beginning and ending dates of school, legal and local holidays, meeting days, number of teaching days, vacation periods and other pertinent dates. The board of education will establish a firm graduation date which is no earlier than the 180th day noted in the school calendar originally adopted by the board for the school year.

## **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

If there is a question about a student's classes or work in school, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases this is the teacher. The proper channeling of complaints regarding instruction, discipline or learning materials is (1) teacher, (2) principal, (3) superintendent, (4) board of education.

## **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM (Academic Dishonesty)**

Students are expected to pursue their school work with integrity and honesty. Cheating and plagiarism demonstrates a lack of integrity and character. That is inconsistent with District goals and values. All forms of cheating and plagiarism, including by electronic means, are not acceptable. The misrepresentation by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidences require disciplinary action. Consequences for cheating will take into account the grade level of the student and the severity of the misrepresentation.

## **CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT**

All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receives training in their use, as required by state law.

Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

The Board of Education will post in each school the telephone number of the Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline, Careline, and the Internet web address that provides information about the Careline in a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

## **CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

The District collaborates with state and local child welfare agencies to ensure school stability for children in foster care. A child in foster care must remain in his/her school of origin if it is

determined to be in the child's best interest. Transportation will be arranged as required. The District's Liaison for Homeless Students is Dr. Perri Murdica and is also the point of contact for the education of children in foster care.

## **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Every effort will be made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Parents will have an opportunity to provide information relative to placement. The final decision for placement rests with the principal or his/her designee.

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

The District utilizes computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for a computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that e-mail communications, using district computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff. Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property, or at a District sponsored activity unless the posting is approved by a teacher. The District will not be liable for information posted by students on social media websites, such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, etc., when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment.

The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at anytime and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such material.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Board of Education is committed to aiding students and staff in creating a 21st Century learning environment. Therefore students (plus staff) will be permitted to access the District's wireless network with their personal devices during the school day. With teacher approval, students may use their own devices to access the Internet and collaborate with other students.

Students and parents/guardians participating in the Bring Your Own Device/Technology program must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all applicable Board policies, particularly the Computer Acceptable Use policy.

## **CONDUCT**

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. They must accept responsibility for misbehavior and engage with school staff to identify how a different choice of action could result in a better outcome. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being dressed appropriately.\*
4. Showing respect toward others, engaging in civil discourse.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines.
7. Abiding by the code of conduct.
8. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law. Please refer to the Watertown Public Schools Board of Education [Policy 5120](#) regarding actions leading to disciplinary action.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
2. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property.
3. Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
4. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students or staff.

5. Disobeying directives from school personnel or school policies, rules, and regulations.
6. Being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other school employees.
7. Playing with matches, fire, or committing arson.
8. Committing robbery or theft.
9. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students, or school employees.
10. Disobeying school rules on school buses.
11. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
12. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail; that is, forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
13. Name-calling, making ethnic or racial slurs or derogatory statements that may substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
14. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact disruptive to the school environment or disturbing to other students.
15. Assaulting a teacher, staff member or other individual.
16. Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs such as: marijuana; a controlled substance or drug; or an alcoholic beverage.
17. Possessing a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, martial arts weapon, or weapon facsimile.
18. Possessing prescription drugs which are given to a person other than to whom the drug is prescribed.
19. Smoking or using tobacco products, including electronic nicotine delivery systems (e-cigarettes) and vapor products.
20. Hazing, bullying
21. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.
22. Using electronic devices during the school day in school buildings, without prior approval of the principal.
23. Violating the district's Internet Safety policy and/or Online Social Networking Policy.
24. Cheating, plagiarizing, including by electronic means.
25. Threatening in any manner, including orally, in writing, or via electronic communication, a member of the school including any teacher, a member of the school administration or another employee, or a fellow student.
26. Taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing.
27. Violating any state or federal law which would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school or to school property.
28. Damaging in a willful manner school electronic equipment and/or software.

Students are urged to participate in efforts to build a positive school climate as well as alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as restorative circles or peer monitoring.

During dances that occur at school, students may not leave the building until 9:30 P.M. unless written permission is received from parents indicating that the parents will pick up the student prior to 9:30 P.M. At 11:00 P.M., the school building and school grounds will be secured and adult supervision will end. Students without such written permission will not be allowed to leave and reenter the dance activity. Smoking is not allowed at any school functions. All school rules are in effect during such activity.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of publicized Board of Education policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In determining whether conduct is “seriously disruptive of the education process” for purposes of suspension and expulsion, the administration in cases of suspension, and the Board of Education or impartial hearing board, in matters of expulsion may consider, but consideration is not limited to (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school, (2) whether other students were involved, or whether there was gang involvement, (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon and whether any injuries occurred, and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

#### **Dangerous Weapons and Instruments**

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons and facsimiles of weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as, appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school-activity will be expelled from school.

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission is at the discretion of the Board of Education (unless the Board has delegated authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent.) The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

#### **Dress Code (adopted from [BOE Policy 5125](#))**

Student dress may be regulated and students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive to the educational process or contrary to law. Administrators will use reasonableness and discretion when determining the appropriateness of attire. The school

staff will enforce the dress code in a consistent manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any student.

Any school dress which impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g., uncleanliness, malodorousness, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption of the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or is libelous or inherently contains unreasonable potential to upset and hurt others is prohibited.

Approved coverings worn as part of a student's religious practice or belief, or as required or permitted in conjunction with school district health and safety protocols, shall not be prohibited under this policy.

### **Smoking**

Students shall not possess nor smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes or vapor product devices on all school property both inside and outside, or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law.

### **Substance Abuse**

As stated in the [CONDUCT](#) section of this handbook, the school prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities. Any student in violation of this will be subject to the following disciplinary actions:\*

In addition to the prohibition pertaining to alcohol, drugs, tobacco and inhalants, the Board of Education prohibits the use of performance-enhancing drugs, including anabolic steroids and food supplements, including Creatine, by students involved in school-related athletics or any co-curricular or extracurricular school activity or program, other than use for a valid medical purpose as documented by a physician.

Substance abuse or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia including alcohol may indicate serious, underlying problems. Every effort will be made to offer student assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment to private or community agencies and aftercare support.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under federal laws.

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population and community in mind and with due consideration of the rights of students. However, consideration must be given to the fact that substance abuse is illegal and subject to criminal prosecution. Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale or consumption of dangerous drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Students are encouraged to consult with teachers, administrators and other professional staff on substance abuse problems. A staff member who is contacted by a student regarding a drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person in accordance with state law. However, the student will be encouraged at the earliest appropriate time to seek help from parents or guardians.

In such cases, the decision to involve the parents/guardians will be arrived at jointly by the student and educator unless, in the judgment of the educator, the mental or physical health of the student is immediately and dangerously threatened by drug/alcohol use. If such danger is imminent, the parents/guardians and health officials will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken.

As required by statute, instruction will be provided regarding the “knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand and avoid the affects of alcohol, of nicotine, of tobacco, and of drugs.”

## **CONTACTING TEACHERS**

Teachers may be contacted either through voicemail or email. A staff directory is available on each school’s website. Please allow teachers 24 hours, during the school week, to respond to your email /voicemail. Please be aware that District policy prevents teachers from discussing confidential information in an email correspondence.

## **CORRIDOR BEHAVIOR**

In order to ensure student safety and that of others, students will keep to the right when passing in the corridors, adhere to the HANDS OFF policy, walk, move at a reasonable pace, not obstruct the passage of others, and use the doors on the right hand side. Students in the hallway during class time require a pass.

## **COVID-19/HEALTH EMERGENCY MEASURES**

In order to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of educational services to students on school property and a safe workplace, protocols adopted by the Board of Education, based on coordination with state and local health officials and the Connecticut State Department of Education will be followed during a declared health emergency.

The protocols include physical distancing, group cohorts, face masks, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, temperature screening, hand hygiene measures, identification of students exhibiting symptoms, and attention to ventilation. Transportation and food services will be modified as necessary.

Alternate means of educating students in the event of prolonged closings and/or extended absences will be implemented as necessary. The traditional class schedule and school calendar may be changed, as required, to include distance learning and a mix of in-person learning with distance learning.

The district/school will communicate with all involved via its website, press releases, written notices/fact sheets and the school notification system.

## **CYBERBULLYING**

The District's computer network and the Internet, and the personal electronic devices of students, whether accessed on campus or off campus, during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment. All forms of harassment over the Internet, commonly known as cyberbullying, are unacceptable, a violation of District policy and of the District's acceptable computer use policy and procedures. Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, such misuses of technology as harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text message, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material may be disguised or logged on as someone else.

Students and community members who believe they have been the victims of such misuses of technology as described, should not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the material should be printed and brought to the attention of the Safe School Climate Specialist, the Principal or Director of Technology. All reports of cyberbullying will be investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer, but brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be severely disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of school. Also, such conduct must be violative of

a publicized school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, threats, or making a threat off school grounds, to kill or hurt a teacher or student.

Disciplinary action may include loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension or expulsion. A communicated threat or a hate crime will be reported to the police.

Students will be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior.

### **DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED'S)/SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST**

Each school will have (1) one automatic external defibrillator (AED) and (2) school personnel trained in AED operation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The AED and trained personnel will be available during the school's normal operational hours, at school-sponsored athletic events and practices on school grounds and at school-sponsored events not taking place during normal school operational hours. The school also has an emergency action response plan addressing the use of trained school personnel to respond to individuals experiencing sudden cardiac arrest or similar life threatening emergencies. Coaches, as required by law, review before beginning his/her assignment the State's sudden cardiac awareness education plan. Parents of participating students will be provided with a copy of the State-adopted informed consent form authorizing their child to participate in the intramural or interscholastic athletics.

### **DISCIPLINE (adopted from BOE Policy 5120)**

A student who violates the district's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. The Watertown Public School's disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as a restorative justice model, detention, removal from class, removal to an alternative education program, in school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates publicized board of education policy even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. The school district believes that exclusionary discipline practices (suspension, expulsion) limit students' access to classroom instruction and fail to improve student outcomes and school climate. These practices will be used as a last resort.

#### **Detention**

A student may be detained outside of school hours for not more than one hour on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until the

students' parents have been notified of the reason for the detention (and can make arrangements for the student's transportation on the day(s) of the detention).

### **Expulsion**

A teacher may remove a student from class when the student deliberately causes a serious disruption to the teaching and learning process within the classroom.

Prior to an expulsion hearing, parents will be given notice of at least five (5) business days before such hearing. It will contain information about the legal rights of the student and parent and information concerning legal services that are provided free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services shall be provided to the student and his/her parent or guardian. An attorney or other advocate may represent any student subject to expulsion proceedings. The parent/guardian of the student has the right to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation, except that if an emergency exists, such hearings shall be held as soon as possible.

The Board of Education may expel a student in grades 3 through 12 inclusive, from school privileges if, after a full hearing, the Board finds that the conduct of the student to be both (1) a violation of a Board policy; and (2) either seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangering persons or property. Students who have been expelled for the first time may be eligible for an alternative educational program, as defined in accordance with State Board of Education standards.

Expulsion from school will result in the loss of all extra curricular and social privileges during the period of expulsion.

For any students under 16 years old who are expelled and students between 16 and 18 expelled for the first time and who have never been suspended, the Board of Education may shorten the length of or waive the expulsion period if the student successfully completes a Board specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board. Such a Board-specified program does not require the student or the parent/guardian of the student to pay for participation in the program. Such students must be offered an alternative educational opportunity that complies with the State Board of Education's "Standards for Alternative Educational Opportunities."

Students in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive are subject to mandatory expulsion for the possession and/or use of weapons, including martial arts weapons, or other dangerous instruments in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school sponsored activity for a calendar year. A student in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive, who offers illegal drugs for sale or distribution on or off school grounds is also cause

for expulsion for a calendar year. The Board may modify the expulsion period on a case-by-case basis.

Whenever a student is expelled, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled will be included on the student's cumulative education record. The record will be expunged if the student graduates from high school and the expulsion was not for weapon possession and/or for the sale or distribution of illegal drugs.

If students expulsion is shortened or the expulsion period waived based upon the fact that the student was expelled for the first time, has never been suspended and successfully completed a Board specified program and/or met other conditions required by the Board, the notice of expulsion will be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school or, if the Board so chooses, at the time the student completes the Board specified program and meets other Board required conditions.

Expelled students, under age 16, will be offered an individualized learning plan as part of an alternative education. Students between ages 16 and 18 who are expelled, even for conduct that endangers others, will be offered an alternative educational opportunity if it is the student's first expulsion (PA 16-147). Once a student is admitted to an alternative educational placement, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed to govern the programming for the student during the period of expulsion.

A district student who has committed an expellable offense who seeks to return to a District school after having been in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for one year or more, in lieu expulsion from the District, shall be permitted to return to the appropriate school setting within the District. Further, the District will not expel the student from any additional time for the offense(s).

### **Suspension**

A teacher may remove a student from a class when the student deliberately causes serious disruption of the teaching and learning process within the classroom. School administrators will determine, using state guidelines, whether the suspension will be in-school or out-of-school.

The administration may suspend a student for infraction of school rules. Suspension is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for not more than ten (10) consecutive days, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which suspension was imposed.

However, no student shall be suspended without an informal hearing before the building principal or his/her designee at which time the student shall be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation, unless circumstances surrounding the incident require immediate removal. In such instances the informal hearing will be held during the suspension.

Suspension from school will result in loss of extracurricular and social privileges during the period of suspension.

For any student suspended for the first time and who has never been expelled, the administration may shorten the length of or waive the suspension period if the student successfully completes an administration-specified program and meets any other administration-required conditions, which shall not incur an expense to the student or his/her parents.

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

The District plans to provide distance learning options in the event schools must be closed due to an emergency health situation. Schools will operate remotely while continuing to provide meaningful instruction to students through the use of a variety of instructional resources.

To provide equitable instruction to all students, the District will ensure that all students have access to instructional materials and electronic devices.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communication. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

The principal or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate or position.
4. Does not promote profit making organizations.
5. Does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District has the right to impose neutral time, place and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not endorsed or sponsored by the District.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor or teacher. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbooks.

### **DISTRICT-PROVIDED PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICES**

All students will be provided with a DISTRICT DEVICE, unless they choose to use their own device. Parents and students must sign and agree to the student device sign-out sheet and guidelines provided by their school. Parents are financially responsible for damages, loss or theft of the device. Students leaving the District must return their devices, with accessories, on the day of departure.

### **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

In pursuit of the District's mission, we believe that:

- all students can learn and inquiry, self-direction and creativity are valued in the learning process
- everyone in our school community will be learners
- all learners will be held accountable for their performance
- all learners have individual interests, needs and talents
- all learners will be physically and emotionally safe in the learning environment
- home, school and community will act as partners in the learning process

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES (Radios, CD Players, Cell-Phones adopted from [BOE Policy 5150](#))**

The school strives to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment while providing students with opportunities for reasonable access to cell phones and other electronic devices. This policy also recognizes the use of electronic devices for educational purposes with administrative permission or with teacher approval within the classroom. The possession and use of electronic devices at Watertown High School is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of privileges.

Students are solely responsible for any electronic devices brought to school. Do not leave them unattended. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

Mobile devices such as cell phones, may be used for information access and/or text-based communication during lunch in the cafeteria, study halls, during passing time and before and after school.

The devices are not allowed in classes, unless their use is part of the teacher's lesson plan. Teachers have discretion concerning how the devices may be used for learning.

No recording, video or audio, or photographs may be taken in school unless it is part of a lesson and all appropriate privacy protections, such as contained in FERPA, are honored.

The sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, emails or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form on cellphones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the school setting.

### **EMERGENCY MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

We try to avoid interrupting classroom learning to deliver messages to students. If there is an emergency where a student must be contacted, please contact the main office administrative assistant.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on local television and radio stations. Emergency closings will also be communicated via the District's use of the Thrillshare automated system to notify parents/guardians, especially in situations requiring an early dismissal from school.

### **ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ENGLISH LEARNERS)**

The number of students from non-English speaking backgrounds is increasing, including those with limited English proficiency. Such students will be identified, assessed and provided appropriate services.

### **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

Students deserve a respectful learning environment in which their cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. The school learning and work environment is enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives, and the very presence of diverse participants.

## **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION (adopted from [BOE Policy 6015](#))**

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian. In addition, a student will be excused from participating in, or observing animal dissections as part of classroom instruction upon a written request from the student's parent or guardian. The student must complete an alternate assignment determined by the school.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Athletics**

Athletics are considered an integral part of the school's educational program. Whether participation is on the intramural, interscholastic, or class level, students have an opportunity to acquire qualities of fitness, self-discipline, and cooperation.

Student athletes may not participate in any intramural or interscholastic activity unless the student athlete and his/her parent/guardian completes the concussion education plan and signs the informed consent form.

The concussion education plan may consist of written materials, online training or videos, or in person training. The consent form includes a summary of the school/district's concussion education plan and applicable school board concussion policies.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, parents/guardians and students must also comply with heat illness awareness education requirements, which includes prohibiting a student from participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics unless the student and the parent/guardian reads or views the training material, or attends an in-person training. The parent or guardian must sign an informed consent form that acknowledges compliance with the requirement.

Student interscholastic activities are governed by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) regulations. Eligibility for participation is determined by ability and scholarship and is governed by state law as well as the regulations of the CIAC.

Any student athlete who has not reported to school by noon will not be permitted to practice or play that afternoon or evening. Exceptions to this rule will be considered only if the player's parent explains the unusual circumstances to the principal or designee.\*\*

### **Clubs and Performing Groups**

Student clubs, performing groups, athletic teams and other extracurricular activities may establish rules of conduct for participants that may be stricter than those of students in general.

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups may establish standards of behavior, including consequences for misbehavior, that are stricter than those for students in general.

### **Dances and Social Events**

School dances may be scheduled periodically during the school year. Only legally enrolled students of this school may attend dances unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the administration. Students are expected to dress appropriately for all dances.

Standards of dress, admission costs, and other pertinent instructions for a particular dance will be announced prior to the dance.

### **Student Publications**

The official student newspaper provides an instructional device in the teaching of writing and other journalistic skills. It also provides a forum for the opinion of students, school staff and members of the community, as well as to serve the entire school by reporting school activities.

The newspaper advisor shall have the primary responsibility of reviewing each article prior to its publication. The school principal or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor may also review copy prior to its publication. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 72 hours\* after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for reasons listed in board policy.

### **FACILITIES**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place.

After dismissal and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the campus immediately.

### **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided without charge to students. A student is expected, however, to provide his or her own supplies of pencils, erasers, and notebooks. The student may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

1. Club dues.

2. Security deposits.
3. The materials for a class project that the student will keep.
4. Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
5. Voluntary purchases of pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, etc.
6. Student accident insurance.
7. Insurance on school-owned instruments, instrument rental and uniform maintenance.
8. Parking fees and student identification cards.
9. Fees for damaged library books and school-owned equipment.\*
10. Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra curricular activities.
11. Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
12. The District has instituted a Pay to Participate Fee for Athletics. The costs and related specifics of the program are available on the Watertown High School website.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal. While on a trip, all students are considered to be “in” school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity. The Board of Education strongly encourages all transportation of students to be on buses or other transportation vehicles which conform to the requirements of law and regulations of the State Department of Education. The Board realizes that, on limited occasions, it may be more cost effective and/or responsive for school employees to transport small numbers of students in private automobiles.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact a guidance counselor, advisor or administrator to request confidential help.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Board of Education, on a quarterly basis, posts its current and projected expenditures and revenues on the district’s website. Such a report is also shared with the town’s legislative body or Board of Selectpersons.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill will be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Such a crisis response drill will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency. Such crisis response drills will incorporate the basic protocols of lockdown, evacuation, and shelter-in-place responses.

Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.

The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. When the alarm sounds, students are to proceed along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials will evaluate and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills.

## **FIREARM SAFETY PROGRAM**

A firearm safety program may be offered to students in grades kindergarten through grade 12, utilizing a curriculum guide developed by the State Board of Education and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. Parents/Guardians may exempt their child from the program in its entirety or any portion thereof by written notification to the school.

## **FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS**

The Watertown Public Schools recognize that students have a right to bring into our schools, in a judicious manner governed by regulations, items for posting that are not considered obscene, libelous, disruptive, vulgar, and are deemed by the Administration to be consistent with community standards. Further, no expressed idea will be suppressed because it is not shared by the majority. However, expressions which involve false statements, disruptive or potentially dangerous content, the use of obscenities, and advocacy of violation of law or school regulations are unacceptable.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for students with food allergies and to support parents regarding food allergy management. A plan based upon guidelines promulgated by the State Department of Education will be implemented for each student for the management of students with life-threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease.

Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and an Emergency Care Plan (ECP) shall be developed and implemented for students identified with food allergies. Such students may also be eligible for accommodations and services under Section 504 and special education law.

The District's specific plan for managing students with life-threatening food allergies is found in Board of Education [Policy 5060](#).

A student with glycogen storage disease is permitted to have a parent/guardian or a person they so designate to provide food or dietary supplements on school grounds during the school day.

A student with an allergic condition may retain possession of an EpiPen or similar device while receiving school transportation services.

#### **FUNDRAISING (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5040](#))**

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the building principal or his/her designee at least two months prior to the commencement of the activity. Except as approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, fundraising is not permitted on school property.

Any food items sold as part of any fund-raising activity must meet the nutritional standards published by the Connecticut Department of Education. Beverage or foods not allowed for sale during regular school hours may be sold provided (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) the sale is at the location of such event, and (3) the food or beverage are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

All online fundraising activities are subject to administrative approval prior to the posting of any such fundraising solicitation. (Crowdfunding)

#### **GPS DEVICES**

Some disabled students may need the use of safety-oriented assistance technology, ("Angel Sense") for reasons of safety. A parent/guardian request for use of such a device will be

processed through the IEP/PPT process or Section 504 process. The listening-in capability of the device must be disabled during school hours or at a school-sponsored event.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

### **CLASS RANK**

A student's cumulative GPA is calculated by adding all weighted course GPAs and dividing by the number of credits taken. Class rank is based on a student's cumulative GPA to determine the relationship of their academic achievement to that of the rest of the class. The highest ranking student in a class is placed number 1 and the second highest ranking student is placed number 2. This process continues until the last student in the class is ranked. A rank index list is then developed and a student's position on this list determines the student's class rank.

The primary purpose of class rank is for college admissions; therefore, at the present time, it is computed at the end of each school year and at the end of the first semester of the senior year. Requests for class rank at any other time will not be honored until the fourth quarter of a student's final year in high school, except through scholarship or college applications that require it, in which case the school counseling department will provide the approximate rank on the required form(s) and submit the forms to the appropriate place.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (adopted from [WHS PROGRAM OF STUDIES](#))**

### **Graduation Requirements**

Departments and Credits Required	
English	4
Math	4
Social Studies	3.5
Science	3
World Language	2
Physical Education	1
Health	1
Personal Finance	0.5
Electives	6
Capstone	1
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>26</b>

Students must successfully complete the required number of credits and must demonstrate proficiency in the skills identified by the board of education, as required for graduation. A

multi-facet assessment procedure will be used, including specific target scores on the statewide proficiency/mastery examinations. Credits can also be earned at an institution of higher education, through online course work or through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education. A Community Service Recognition Award will be granted by the State Board of Education to students completing at least 50 hours of community service and meets the statutory criteria to earn on-half credit toward graduation.

### **Report Cards**

The scholastic year is divided into four marking periods of approximately nine weeks each. A marking period average of 65 or above will be considered passing. At the end of each marking period, students and parents will have access to quarter grades on PowerSchool. Students who owe fines or school materials will not receive their report cards until restitution is made.

Examinations are given at the close of the first semester, and at the close of the second semester in June and each count for 10% of the semester grade.

Grades given to students are determined by the teacher of the course, and the determination of the student's grade by the teacher, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistakes, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency, shall be final.

Grades arrived at by a teacher will be considered final and will be changed only (1) by the teacher, with the consent of the principal after a re-evaluation of the student's work or (2) by an appeal made to the school principal and then to the superintendent or designee.

There are two divisions of the honor roll at Watertown High School, high honors, and honors.

To achieve high honors a student must:

1. Have a 90.00 average for the marking period.
2. Have no grade lower than 85.00

To achieve honors a student must:

1. Have an 85.00 average for the marking period.
2. Have no grade lower than 75.00

### **Weighted Grading/Grade Point Average (GPA-Adopted from [BOE Policy 6050](#))**

Per Watertown Board of Education Policy 6050, the current weights are added based on our current course levels. These points are added to the final course grade. For Advanced Placement/UCONN ECE (AP/ECE) classes, twenty points are added; For Honors (H) classes,

fifteen points are added; For College Preparatory (CP) classes, ten points are added; For College & Career Preparatory (CCP) classes, five points are added; For Fundamental Studies (FS) classes, no points are added.

$$GPA = ((Final\ Grade + Added\ Value) / 20) - 1$$

WEIGHTED GPA SCALE SAMPLE					
Final Grade	FS (+0)	CCP (+5)	CP (+10)	H (+15)	AP/ECE (+20)
100	4	4.25	4.5	4.75	5
94	3.7	3.95	4.2	4.45	4.7
87	3.35	3.6	3.85	4.1	4.35
83	3.15	3.4	3.65	3.9	4.15
78	2.9	3.15	3.4	3.65	3.9
72	2.6	2.85	3.1	3.35	3.6
67	2.35	2.6	2.85	3.1	3.35

All courses are included in the GPA except for all pass/fail and Learning Skills courses.

We offer pass/fail subjects to students who want to explore an area or enrich themselves without these subjects having a negative effect on their rank in class. There are certain stipulations, some of which are spelled out below. If you are seriously considering this option, you must indicate it on your initial course selection sheet, and discuss it with your school counselor.

No required subject may be taken pass/fail. A student may take the equivalent of only one pass/fail subject per year. Subjects categorized as pass/fail would be exempted from this stipulation. In an overcrowded class, pass/fail students will have the lowest priority for admission.

## GREEN CLEANING PROGRAMS

A green cleaning program to clean and maintain the school will be implemented by July 1, 2011. The program provides for the procurement and proper use of environmentally preferable cleaning products in the school. The cleaning products used meet standards approved by the Department of Administrative Services and minimize potential harmful effects on human health and the environment. Parents/Guardians may request a written copy of the District's policy pertaining to the green cleaning program and a written statement which includes the names and types of environmentally preferable cleaning products used in the school and where in the building they are applied; the schedule for applying the products; and the names of the school administrator or designee whom the parent/guardian or student may contact for more information.

“No parent, guardian, teacher, or staff member may bring into the school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect” (a required statement by law).

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

Watertown High School’s counseling department is committed to a program of comprehensive developmental services structured to anticipate and nurture the personal, social, career, and educational growth of all students as they pass through specific developmental stages. This complete program incorporates a school counseling curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and program management. Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the school psychologists, social workers and guidance/school counselors include helping the student function more successfully within the school environment.

School counselors will use a variety of methods to assist students in overcoming barriers to learning, to make strong connections with the educational opportunities in the school and to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy and supportive setting.

Counseling is an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, educational or vocational. Counselors will listen and be open and honest with students. Guidance/School Counselors are encouraged to issue appointment request forms to students. Appointments can also be arranged by filling out a Guidance Appointment request form in the office or by stopping by the guidance office before school, between classes or after school.

Educational and career planning guidance is available along with information to develop a plan for the student’s future. This may include a long range plan of studies for grades 9-12 and selecting student’s subjects year by year in keeping with the student's career interests and special skills or talents. Parent/guardian notification and involvement will be solicited.

Referral for psychological and/or psychiatric assistance by other social services agencies within or outside the school may also be recommended. Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parents/guardian’s written consent.

## **HANDS-OFF POLICY**

Students must refrain from all physical contact that is potentially unsafe or distracting to the educational process. Unacceptable behavior includes “horsing around”, just fooling around,

poking, pushing, tripping, and/or jostling one another. The policy is HANDS-OFF. Students must also refrain from overt acts of affection. Violence will result in teacher and/or administrative consequences.

## **HARASSMENT STATEMENT**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any disability they may have. The District prohibits harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

A student who believes he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident to the principal or school counselor. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

## **HATE CRIMES**

The District is implementing a comprehensive hate prevention program based on the premise that prejudice and hate-motivated behavior are not acceptable in our schools. This program strives to promote a school climate in which racial, religious, ethnic, gender and other differences, as well as freedom of thought and expression are respected and appreciated.

## **HATE SPEECH**

The District denounces the use of words or images to harass individuals or groups based on gender, gender expression, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of identity. Hate speech is not tolerated in District schools and such speech, threat speech and harassment is prohibited. All speech that denigrates, disrespects, or misrepresents "types of people" must be challenged.

## **HAZING ACTIVITIES**

Students are prohibited from participating in any hazing activities. Hazing is any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student organization.

Hazing, bullying or abuse of students or staff will not be tolerated . Any student who engages in an act that injures, degrades or disgraces another student or staff member, disrupts the educational process, or interferes with a student's opportunity to obtain an education shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school health office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information. Postural screening will be done in grade 9 for male students. The results are provided to the parents. An annual written notification of when these screenings, at no cost to parents, will be provided. Parents wishing to have these screenings conducted by their private physician are required to report the screening results to the school nurse.

Parents are encouraged to have oral health assessments for their child(ren) prior to school enrollment, in grade 6 or 7, and in grade 9 or 10. Such assessment may be conducted by a dentist, dental hygienist, physician, physician assistant (PA) or an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) trained in conducting such assessments. The results are to be provided to the school district's designated representative (school nurse).

Parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. It is likewise important that parents notify the school nurse in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician. The school nurse is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

### **Administration of Medication**

Parents of students requiring medication during school should contact the school nurse. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the school nurse. All medication must be in the original container with proper labels.

In cases in which a student is able to self-administer medication, the parents or guardians must submit a signed statement that the medication must be taken during the school day and the student is capable of administering the medication. The statement must be accompanied by a physician's, dentist's or advanced practice registered nurse's statement indicating the necessity and naming the medication, the strength, and the prescribed dosage. It must specify the schedule on which it is to be taken and the details of administration. Such statements must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. Students are not permitted to carry any medication other than approved EpiPens, inhalers, and insulin.

A student with asthma or an allergic condition may carry an inhaler or an EpiPen or similar device in school at all times if he/she is under the care of a physician, physician assistant or advanced practical nurse and such practitioner certifies in writing that the child needs to keep an asthmatic inhaler or EpiPen at all times to ensure prompt treatment of the child's asthma or allergic condition and to protect the child against serious harm or death. A written authorization of the parent/guardian is required.

Any COVID-19 specific procedures for bringing and picking up student medication will be outlined in school communications directly from the school nurse.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified school employee" may administer epinephrine in a cartridge injector for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions but were not previously known to have serious allergies and therefore do not have prior written authorization of a parent/guardian or qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. Parents/guardians may submit in writing to the school nurse and school medical advisor that epinephrine shall not be administered to his/her child.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified/school employee" may administer anti-epileptic medication to a specific student with a medically diagnosed epileptic condition that requires prompt treatment in accordance with the student's individual seizure action plan. Written parental permission and written order from a physician is required.

A student with diabetes may test his/her own blood glucose levels if the student has written permission from his/her parents/guardian and a written order from a Connecticut licensed physician. The time or place of such testing shall not be restricted.

A school nurse or the principal will select a qualified school employee to, under certain conditions, give a glycogen injection to a student with diabetes who may require prompt treatment to protect him/her from serious harm or death. Written parental permission and written order from a physician are required.

School bus drivers are trained to administer epinephrine in a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction to a student who is in need of emergency care due to a medically diagnosed allergic reaction.

The District does not allow the ingestion of marijuana for palliative (medical) use in any school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, on or off school grounds.

### **Communicable/Infectious Diseases**

Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such a condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

### **Disabilities**

Watertown Public Schools will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency.

### **Health Records**

School nurses maintain health records using the Connecticut "Health Assessment and Record Form." These records are accessible to certified staff working with the child and to school health aides if permission is granted by the nurse or building administrator. Parents may request to inspect the health records of their child. Copies may be provided if requested. Original copies of the record are sent when a student transfers to another school in the state. If moving out-of-state, a copy will be forwarded. Health records are maintained for at least six years after the student graduates. The District will comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of protected health information.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education.

### **Homebound**

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of two weeks or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist or the Planning and Placement Team. Home instruction may also be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

### **Homeless Students**

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services. The District has reviewed its existing policies and regulations to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth. Homeless children and youths are defined as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence”. Homeless children have the right to attend the school of origin “to the extent feasible,” unless doing so is contrary to the request of such student’s parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.

Any homeless child or youth denied school accommodations shall continue in attendance or will be immediately enrolled in the school selected by the child in the school district. A written explanation of the reasons for denial of school accommodations in a manner and form understandable to such homeless child or youth, or parent/guardian, will be provided. Information will also be provided regarding the right to appeal the decision of the denial of accommodations. The homeless child or youth is entitled to continue in attendance during all available appeals.

A homeless student who is not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian, shall have full access to his/her educational and medical records in the Board’s possession.

### **Illness**

### **Immunizations**

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical reasons, a

statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Meningococcal, Pneumococcal, Rubella, Influenza and Hemophilus Influenza Type B.\* Parents or guardians of any children unable to have the mandated immunizations prior to initial school entry and the boosters as required in the later grades may have the immunizations, on the recommendation of the Board of Education, be paid by the town.

In addition to the required immunizations for initial entry into school for kindergarten, regular and special education preschool programs, additional immunizations are required for entry into seventh grade and for entry into eighth grade and ninth or tenth grade. The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records.

For further information regarding immunizations contact the school nurse's office.

#### **Physical Examinations**

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a) Health assessment shall also be required for grade 10. Postural screening will be conducted for male students in grade 9. If a homeless student, as defined by federal statute, lacks immunization/medical records, the school will enroll the child and refer the parent/guardian to the district's homeless liaison.

#### **HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

The Holocaust and genocide education and awareness are required subjects taught in the District's social studies curriculum (beginning in the 2018-2019 school year).

#### **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals.

Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student's work in school.

In order for homework to be an effective support for learning, the homework policy requires a partnership among the school system represented by the teacher, the student and their parents. Without this partnership in support of learning, students will not achieve their full potential.

## **HONOR ROLL**

An honor roll is published at the end of each term and at the end of the school year. To be considered for the honor roll, students must meet the appropriate criteria.

There are two divisions of the honor roll at Watertown High School: high honors, and honors.

To achieve high honors a student must:

1. Have a 90.00 average for the marking period.
2. Have no grade lower than 85.00

To achieve honors a student must:

1. Have an 85.00 average for the marking period.
2. Have no grade lower than 75.00

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

Commencing with the Class of 2023, and for each graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a minimum of 26 credits, including not fewer than: (1) Nine credits in the Humanities, including Civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health education; (5) two credits in world languages; and (6) a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment.

## **INSURANCE**

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangement is contractual between the parent and insurance carriers and Watertown Public Schools assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

## **INTER-DISTRICT COLLABORATIVES**

The Watertown Public Schools System has established collaborations with other school districts in order to offer a wider variety of learning environments and specialized curriculum in response to the interests and needs of its students.

## **ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL**

In order to ensure student safety and the protection of personal property, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor closely those items that are brought or worn to school by students. The following items are specifically prohibited on school grounds: weapons, including martial arts (real or fake), knives, razor blades, sharp items, skate boards, roller skates, roller blades, sneakers with wheels, baseball bats, lacrosse sticks, matches, caps, fireworks, laser pointers and portable game systems.

## **LASER POINTERS**

Students are not permitted to possess or use laser pointers while on school property, while using District transportation, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property unless under a staff member's supervision and in the context of instruction. Laser pointers will be confiscated and students will be disciplined.

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS (ENGLISH LEARNERS)**

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students/English Learners participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the English Learners program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to: English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

## **LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE**

In the event of a critical emergency, all school personnel, including students, will follow the "Lock Down Procedures". Students will be informed of specific actions they should take when a Lock Down Procedure is put into effect. Lock down drills, like fire drills, will occur periodically during the school year.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any articles which are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in at the main office. Unclaimed articles will be disposed of at the end of the school year. Loss or suspected

theft of personal or school property should be reported to the main office. Whenever practical, items brought to school should have a name placed on them to assure return to the rightful owner.

### **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5140](#))**

Students are invited to use the books, magazines, newspapers, videos, CD's and other materials, including computers, located in the media center. Students are responsible for any material they sign out. Materials must be returned to the librarian at the circulation desk. Students must pay for any materials they lose or damage. A student's grades, transcript or report card may be withheld until a student's obligation is met.

Guidelines have been established for the use of the Internet. Student violations of the guidelines can result in the termination of access privileges and in disciplinary actions. It is the policy of the Board of Education that all students must sign an acceptable use policy which indicates that a student agrees to use the Internet exclusively for educational purposes. Each contract must also include a signature from the student's parent/guardian.

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer systems just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the computer systems are often public in nature and general school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with district standards and will act in a responsible and legal manner, at all times in accordance with district standards, as well as with state and federal laws.

It is important that students and parents understand that the district, as the owner of the computer systems, reserves the right to monitor and review the use of these computer systems. The district intends to monitor and review in a limited fashion, but will do so as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes.

As part of the monitoring and reviewing process, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for email, can be bypassed for these purposes. The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitoring and reviewing process also includes, but is not limited to; oversight of Internet site access, the right to review emails sent and received, the right to track students' access to blogs, electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms, and the right to review a student's document downloading and printing.

The Administration will take measures: to assure the safety and security of students when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; to prohibit unauthorized access, - 5 - including “hacking” and other unlawful activities by minors online; to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students; to educate minor students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response; and to restrict students’ access to online materials harmful to minors, including obscene materials and child pornography.

Therefore, all users must be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these computer systems.

Before being allowed to use the district’s computer systems, students and/or their parents/guardians must sign a computer system use agreement, stating that they have read and understood the district’s policies and regulations regarding the use of its computer systems.

## **LUNCH CHARGING**

The District strongly discourages meal charges, however the district is committed to ensuring no student shall be deprived of a complete and reimbursable meal.

Students may not charge 2nd meals or a la carte snacks.

## **MAGNET SCHOOLS**

It is recognized that some students may benefit from attendance at a magnet school not limited by school district boundaries. District students may enroll directly into a magnet school, with which the District does not have a participation agreement, on a space available basis. The District will be responsible for any tuition for such enrollment, but not for transportation, unless the magnet school is within the boundaries of the school district. Tuition will not be paid by the district for students placed by their parents/guardians in a pre-school (PK) magnet program. Parents/Guardians are required, not later than two weeks following an enrollment lottery for an interdistrict magnet school, to notify the district of their child’s enrollment or placement on a waiting list for enrollment in the coming school year.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

A student will be permitted to make-up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of an excused absence. Secondary teachers may assign a late penalty to any project in accordance with time-lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

For any class missed, students may be assigned make-up work based on the instructional objectives of the subject or course and the needs of the student. The student is responsible for obtaining and completing make-up work within the time specified by the teacher.

### **MASCOTS/LOGOS**

The school district believes mascots/logos should reflect positive images, community spirit, and traditions. The selection of a mascot, team names, school colors, as well as other school identifiers must and will be respectful of diverse cultural values and reflect a positive school culture. All mascots, nicknames and descriptors, including symbols, banners, flags, pennants, mascots or other identifiers used by school's sports teams, extracurricular clubs, curricular clubs or organizations shall respect cultural differences and values. The use of any race or ethnic group as a mascot or nickname is prohibited.

### **MEDICAID BILLING FOR HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows certain health-related services provided under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to be covered by Medicaid. Such services could include audiologist services, evaluation and testing, nursing services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, psychological services and/or social work services. Recent Connecticut legislation requires the Board of Education to determine a child's Medicaid Services. The District is required to provide all IEP services, at no cost to parents, even if parent/guardians deny permission to bill Medicare.

### **MEDICAL (PALLIATIVE) USE OF MARIJUANA**

Connecticut law authorizes, under specific conditions and for identified illnesses, the medical use of marijuana for both adults and minors. However, such use is not permitted on the school campus or school buses.

### **MIGRANT STUDENTS**

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

## **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

Federal legislation requires schools selected to participate in this national testing program to notify parents of children who will be taking the test of their right to exclude their child. Parents also have the right to inspect all NAEP data, questions and assessment instruments.

## **ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT**

Students at the high school level will be informed of the availability of (1) vocational, technical and technological education and training of technical high schools and (2) agricultural sciences and technology education at regional agricultural science and technology education centers. Full access for the recruitment of students by technical high schools, regional agricultural science and technology education centers, magnet schools, and charter schools will be provided. Military recruiters and institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings unless the student's parent/guardians submits a written request that such information not be released without their prior written consent.

## **ONLINE COURSE CREDIT (Adopted from [BOE Policy 6010](#))**

Students will be awarded credit toward graduation for the successful completion of online courses provided the online course(s) fulfill the statutory requirements.

Students identified as being in danger of failing to graduate will be allowed to complete online district approved coursework toward meeting high school graduation requirements.

To receive credit for online courses to be used toward high school graduation requirements, students must, prior to registering for the course, receive approval from the high school principal or his/her designee. The decision of the principal or his/her designee with regard to online course credit approval is final.

## **OPIOID USE AND RELATED DISORDERS**

The District, as required, will provide instruction on opioid use and related disorders, as part of its program of instruction.

## **OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT**

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized board policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.

Examples of off-school conduct that may result in such discipline include but are not limited to:

1. Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including martial arts weapons;
2. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs;
3. Violent conduct;
4. Making of a bomb threat;
5. Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

## **PANDEMIC/EPIDEMIC EMERGENCIES**

A pandemic/epidemic outbreak is a serious threat that affects students, staff and the entire community. At all times, the health, safety and welfare of students will be of primary concern.

CDC, Connecticut Department of Public Health and State Department of Education guidelines will be followed during an epidemic/pandemic. Such guidelines, followed by the District, will address potential school closures, quarantine, infection control, use of PPEs, social distancing, cleaning and disinfection of school facilities and the manner in which instruction will be provided.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference.

A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Some conferences are held during school hours but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS**

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications, interactions and engagement. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the District's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at board of education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged.

## **PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**

The Board of Education has enhanced its student information system to include a parent portal. The parent portal will allow a parent/guardian of students in grades 9 to 12 to access student records via a secure website. A parent/guardian will be able to view attendance, homework assignments and grades.

## **PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

PTO is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Its aim is to support the school and coordinate efforts of parents/guardians to develop a closer relationship between home and school. Thus, parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO.

Announcements of booster organization events will clearly indicate that it is sponsored by the group and not the school or District.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATION (Adopted from [BOE Policy 1200](#))**

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact the school principal. Note: If the district is implementing the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) concept, similar requirements as above must be met. Notice will be provided at least 24 hours in advance of the application of a pesticide either on the school's homepage or on the school or district's primary social media account.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

From time-to-time during the school year, school personnel and/or the media take photographs. If a parent/guardian does not want their child to be photographed for school use, school website use or for media purposes, the school office must be alerted in writing. Photos of individual and classroom groups are taken annually, which may be purchased by parents/guardians, but they are not obligated to do so.

## **POSTERS**

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by the principal. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed. Any student who posts such material without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## **PROMOTION, RETENTION AND PLACEMENT (Adopted from [BOE Policy 6045](#))**

Student promotion shall be determined by academic performance and social and emotional maturity. The Administration and faculty shall apply these criteria when determining whether to promote or retain a student. Retention is an extraordinary measure that should be the result of the combined professional judgment of the school principal, teachers, guidance counselor and/or other support personnel.

Student promotion is dependent on each student's mastery and acquisition of basic learning objectives. Normally, students will progress annually from grade to grade. Students who master objectives at an exceptional rate may be considered for acceleration to another grade or class. Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate will be considered for retention. Retention and acceleration decisions are the responsibility of the teaching staff and principal, after prior notification and discussion with parents. The final decision rests with the school principal.

Students must demonstrate attainment of the basic skills needed for graduation based on the district's assessment program. A failure to attain these skills may necessitate involvement in additional courses, special help programs, summer school, retesting, etc.

## **PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline up to and including arrest or civil prosecution as deemed appropriate.

In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Each student is assigned a locker and a Chromebook. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, and should be kept in good order and not abused.

Searches of lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's locker.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the main office immediately if it isn't functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

### **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisors, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

### **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

The right of community members to register individual or group concerns about district instruction, programs, materials, operations and/or staff members is recognized. Complaints and grievances will be handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible. Complaints will be referred back through the proper administrative channels before investigation or action by the Board unless the complaint concerns Board actions or operations only. A procedure also exists for the placing and response to criticism or approval of instructional materials.

Specialized complaint procedures exist regarding identification, evaluation or educational placement of a student with a disability; loss of credit due to absences; discrimination on the basis of sex; harassment; sexual abuse or harassment; and instructional materials.

### **RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

The District prohibits the covert recording of classroom activities. The recording of teachers or students in class is inherently disruptive to the educational process. Students violating this rule will be subject to discipline and confiscation of the electronic device.

## **RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS**

The school district acknowledges each individual's rights to follow or not to follow religious beliefs and practices, free from discriminatory or harassing behavior. The District strives to provide religious accommodations to students in an equitable and appropriate way in accordance with District policies and corresponding guidelines.

## **RESPECT**

All students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents and all who enter our school are expected to treat each other with respect.

## **RIDESHARING SERVICES**

The Board of Education does not condone students leaving the school campus in third-party ride sharing vehicles (e.g. Uber, Lyft) If parents/guardians allow their child(ren) to be dropped off or picked up at school by a ridesharing service, it is with the express acknowledgment that the District and its employees have no responsibility for their decision to use such a service and have no responsibility of liability to such parents/guardians or their child(ren) related to the ridesharing service.

## **SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

Information regarding drug and alcohol information and policy and regulations are available in the school office and on the district website.

## **SAFE HAVEN LAW INSTRUCTION**

At the high school level, the District will provide instruction related to the [safe haven law](#).

## **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS**

Students should start early to establish records worthy of scholarship consideration. In general requirements for scholarship consideration are some combination of the following: serious attention to studies, good character, financial need and involvement in the activities of the school.

Many scholarships and awards are available to qualified students. Students should consult a Guidance Counselor for information about what scholarships are available and how, when and where to apply.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS**

Students will attend the school designated within the school boundary in which the student resides, except that in the best interests of the child the Superintendent, within his/her sole discretion, may approve a student's attending a school in another school attendance area.

## **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as, but not limited to, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Presidents Day are encouraged. Watertown High Schools reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in

these activities is voluntary. Nonparticipants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

### **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

School climate means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students' parents' and guardians' and school employees' experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

In order for teaching and learning to occur there must be a positive climate in which students are appreciative and accepting of individual differences and behave responsibly toward others. Students are encouraged to report bullying, discrimination or harassment to any faculty member or administrator and may request anonymity.

### **SCHOOL CLOSURE OR CANCELLATION OF CLASSES IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION**

In the event of the need to close schools and cancel classes for an extended period of time, as a result of a directive from the Governor's office and/or the federal government, the District will implement a program of instruction using computers and distance learning. Transportation to schools and school after-school activities will not be available. In addition, students receiving free breakfast and/or lunch programs will continue to receive them. Pickup points or a means of delivery will be announced via the district's emergency notification system and through information posted on district and school websites.

In an extended period of school closure and cancellation of classes, many other items of importance will be brought to the attention of students and parents electronically and mainly through links provided on district and school websites.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS**

Interested persons may inspect "public district records" which are maintained at the office of the Superintendent of Schools, during normal hours of business. Copies of records, permitted by law to be disclosed, may also be attained.

### **SCHOOL PARTIES**

The District encourages the use of nutrient-dense food for all school functions and activities. Nutrient-dense foods are those foods that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals and relatively few calories. At any function (parties, celebrations, feasts, etc.) healthy food

choices should be made available. Questions about food that is acceptable and safe for school events can be directed to the Principal, classroom teacher, or school nurse.

## **SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY**

Each school in the District will develop and implement a school security and safety plan based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Each school, as required by law, shall establish a school security and safety committee which will assist in the development and administration of the school's security and safety plan. Each district school will conduct a security and vulnerability assessment every two years and develop a school security and safety plan based upon the standards developed by DESPP.

The District has developed and maintains an emergency disaster preparedness and response plan for implementation as needed ("School Security and Safety Plan"). The plan is based upon the standards promulgated by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Development and implementation of the plan includes collaboration with local and state emergency responders, (law enforcement, fire department, emergency rescue squads and local public health administrators). The plan, representing an all hazards approach, utilizes the four recognized phases of crisis management: (1) mitigation/prevention, (2) preparedness, (3) response, (4) recovery.

Watertown High School is staffed with a School Resource Officer who is currently an active WPD officer and was carefully selected for our school. Our school Resource Officer prioritizes the use of a graduated response model in student disciplinary situations. In addition, police patrols visit every school every day to enhance security and maintain strong relationships with the students and staff.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5090](#))**

The right to inspect lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker and other property under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's locker or property contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows lockers or other property to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities.

Student vehicles parked on school grounds may be searched if there is reasonable cause to search. The District may use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used on lockers and vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. Drug-sniffing dogs will not be used to sniff students. A locker, a vehicle, or an item in the classroom to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

#### **SECLUSION/RESTRAINT/EXCLUSIONARY TIME OUT, USE OF (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5085](#))**

The Board of Education seeks to foster a safe and positive learning environment for all students. Board of Education employees will restrict the use of physical restraint and seclusion of students to emergency situations, in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative regulations and applicable law. Physical restraint or seclusion of a student may be necessary in an emergency situation to maintain the safety of the student or another individual. The Board also regulates the use of exclusionary time out in accordance with this Policy and accompanying regulations and applicable law.

The use of restraint or seclusion will be used only by trained school staff as an emergency intervention only to prevent immediate or imminent injury to a student or others. Restraint or seclusion will not be used to discipline a student or because it is convenient or instead of a less restrictive alternative. Such use will also be constantly monitored by a school employee. When used, parents will be notified within 24 hours, but a reasonable attempt will be made to notify parents/guardians immediately after restraint or seclusion is initiated.

Seclusion will not be used as a planned intervention in a student's behavioral intervention plan, IEP or 504 plan. Seclusion involves the involuntary confinement of a student in a room from which he/she is physically prevented from leaving. Physical restraint includes, among other things, carrying or forcibly moving a person from one location to another. Exclusionary time out is a temporary, continuously monitored separation of a student from an ongoing activity in a non-locked setting, for the purpose of calming such student or de-escalating such student's behavior. It may be used as a planned intervention. However, exclusionary time out may not be used as a form of discipline.

## **SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM REGISTRAR PROGRAM**

Male students ages 18-25 are required under Federal law to register with the Selective Service System. Failure to register could result in a fine and also may cause men to permanently lose eligibility for student college financial aid, grants, government employment, job training and U.S. citizenship for male immigrants. Registration can be done online ([www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)), at any U.S. Post Office or through the school's guidance department.

## **SERVICE ANIMALS (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5146](#))**

The Board of Education, in compliance with state and federal laws, allows service animals to accompany persons with disabilities on the District campus. A service animal is usually a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. This does not include animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Statements or other conduct indicating that a student's submission to, or rejection of, sexual overtures or advances will affect the student's grades and/or other academic progress.
2. Unwelcome attention and/or advances of a sexual nature, including verbal comments, sexual invitations, leering and physical touching.
3. Display of sexually suggestive objects, or use of sexually suggestive or obscene remarks, invitations, letters, emails, text messages, notes, slurs, jokes, pictures, cartoons, epithets or gestures.
4. Touching of a sexual nature or telling sexual or dirty jokes.
5. Transmitting or displaying emails or websites of a sexual nature.
6. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse, or any

responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint. The administration will take action to investigate the allegations.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Perri Murdica.

## **SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION**

The district has a developmentally-appropriate sexual health education program for students in grades 9 through 12, inclusive, with the goal of providing young people with the knowledge and skills to promote their health and well-being while improving student outcomes and reducing risky sexual behavior.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

The District believes children's social and emotional development are essential underpinnings/foundations to school readiness and academic success. Therefore, the District's educational program has included social and emotional learning and development to support the learning of skills needed to prepare students for careers, college and life. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. The key characteristics of the SEL program include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

The schools utilize resources and draw on the RULER approach to (1) increase the emotional intelligence of students, faculty and the community, and, (2) apply Positive Behavior Interventions and supports. RULER stands for the five skills of emotional intelligence: recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing and regulating emotion. RULER is an evidence-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools, developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property or at District-sponsored activities unless the posting is approved by a District representative/teacher/staff member. Social media websites are websites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, You Tube, Flickr and Twitter.

The District will not be liable for information/comments posted by students on social media websites when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment. For safety purposes, the district employs both Internet filters and firewalls.

The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs such as but not limited to, bilingual, learning disabilities and for those with other disabilities which affect a student's success at school. A student or parent with questions about these programs should begin by contacting the school principal; the coordinator of each program is available to answer questions about eligibility requirements, programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations.

The District utilizes the Response to Intervention (RTI) process which combines systematic assessment, decision-making and a multi-tiered delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students. Academic and behavioral support and targeted interventions will be provided for students who are not making academic progress at expected levels in the general curriculum. When students are experiencing difficulty with academics or behavior, every effort is made to provide support to help the child succeed within the regular classroom setting through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs.

Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan, based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions. Parents have the right to have the school paraprofessional assigned to their child, if any, attend and participate in PPT meetings. Parents, as required by law, will be provided

information at PPT meetings about their right to have advisors and paraprofessionals attend PPT meetings.

A school must offer an IEP that is “reasonably calculated to enable a child to make appropriate progress in light of the child’s circumstances.” Every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM/PEER PROGRAM**

Student volunteers are trained, through the peer mediation program, to assist other students in resolving conflicts. Mediation is a process used in which a neutral third party helps disputing parties find their own solutions to conflicts.

### **STUDENT AUTOMOBILE USE**

Student’s use of motor vehicles at Watertown High School is a privilege granted by the school to authorized students only. Students should request an application for a parking sticker during the first week of school.

Students are subject to the rules, regulations and administrative guidelines in the parking regulations and must comply with all state laws and relicense requirements.

### **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES: DUE PROCESS**

A student or parent who has a complaint should first bring the matter to the appropriate teacher. If the outcome is not satisfactory, a conference with the principal should be requested within 7 calendar days of the event or events causing the complaint. If the outcome of the conference with the principal is not satisfactory, a conference with the Superintendent or designee can be requested within 7 calendar days following the conference with the principal. If the outcome of this conference is not satisfactory, the student or parent may appear before the Board of Education, in accordance with Board policy.

A student and/or parent with a complaint regarding possible discrimination on the basis of gender should contact the school principal.

A complaint or concern regarding the placement of a student with disabilities concerning special education or programs and services should be discussed with the Office of Student Services.

## **STUDENT DATA PRIVACY**

Connecticut legislation, PA 16-189, (C.G.S. 10-234bb (a)) An Act Concerning Student Data Privacy, as amended by PA 17-200 and PA 18-125, restricts how student information may be used by (1) entities that contract to provide educational software and electronic storage of student records (“contractors”) and (2) operators of websites, online services or mobile applications (i.e., apps). Not later than five (5) business days after executing a contract with such contractors, the contract will be posted on the District’s website. The notice will include a brief description of the content and the purpose of the contract and will state what student information, student records or student-generated content may be collected as a result of the contract. Student information will be deleted by operators of websites, online services, or mobile apps upon student, parent, guardian or board of education request. Such operators may not create student profiles for use in targeted advertising and for purposes unrelated to school. Parents and students will be notified of data breaches. Students and parents/guardians will be notified not later than two business days upon notice of a breach of security by a contractor to the Board of Education.

## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

Students have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form, limited solely by those restrictions imposed on all citizens generally and those specifically applicable to children and youths in a school setting.

The school encourages student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views and a means of communicating both within and beyond the school community.

All student publications must comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, also statements, materials advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school policies and/or regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

Expressions of personal opinion must be clearly identified as such and must bear the name of the author. Opportunity for the expression of opinions differing from those of the student publishers must be provided.

In addition, student newspapers and/or publications which are paid for by the school district and/or produced under the direction of a teacher as part of the school curriculum are not considered a public forum. In such cases, the Board of Education reserves the right to edit or delete such student speech which it feels is inconsistent with the district’s basic educational mission.

**Distribution of Literature**

Students have a right to distribute literature on school grounds and in school buildings provided such distribution does not interfere with or disrupt the educational process. No literature may be distributed unless a copy is submitted in advance to the Superintendent of Schools and/or the Building Principal.

**STUDENT RECORDS (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5025](#))**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee such as an administrator, teacher, support staff, Board of Education member, attorney, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requester has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requester has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principals or superintendent's office.

Copies of student records are available at no cost. A fee no greater than \$0.50 will be charged per page, payable in advance for additional copies. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

Military recruiters or institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students names, addresses and telephone listings, unless a parent/guardian or secondary student aged 18 or over requests in writing that such information not be released.

The District will release to the Parent Teacher Association the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the

school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTA for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 5400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

The district's HIPPA Privacy Officer is the Director of Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services.

## **STUDENT SCHEDULE**

### **Schedule for 2022-23**

<b>A Day</b>	<b>B Day</b>	<b>C Day</b>	<b>D Day</b>
<b>Period 1</b> 7:40-8:43	<b>Period 2</b> 7:40-8:43	<b>Period 3</b> 7:40-8:43	<b>Period 4</b> 7:40-8:43
<b>Period 3</b> 8:47-9:51	<b>Period 4</b> 8:47-9:51	<b>Period 1</b> 8:47-9:51	<b>Period 2</b> 8:47-9:51
<b>Period 5</b> 9:55-10:58	<b>Period 6</b> 9:55-10:58	<b>Period 7</b> 9:55-10:58	<b>Period 8</b> 9:55-10:58
<b>WIN/SSP/HR</b>  L1 11:02-11:32 C1 11:32-1:02  C2 11:02-11:32 L2 11:32-12:02 C2 12:02-1:02  C3 11:02-12:02 L3 12:02-12:32 C3 12:32-1:02	<b>WIN/SSP/HR</b>  L1 11:02-11:32 C1 11:32-1:02  C2 11:02-11:32 L2 11:32-12:02 C2 12:02-1:02  C3 11:02-12:02 L3 12:02-12:32 C3 12:32-1:02	<b>WIN/SSP/HR</b>  L1 11:02-11:32 C1 11:32-1:02  C2 11:02-11:32 L2 11:32-12:02 C2 12:02-1:02  C3 11:02-12:02 L3 12:02-12:32 C3 12:32-1:02	<b>WIN/SSP/HR</b>  L1 11:02-11:32 C1 11:32-1:02  C2 11:02-11:32 L2 11:32-12:02 C2 12:02-1:02  C3 11:02-12:02 L3 12:02-12:32 C3 12:32-1:02

C4 11:02-11:32 L4 12:32-1:02	C4 11:02-11:32 L4 12:32-1:02	C4 11:02-11:32 L4 12:32-1:02	C4 11:02-11:32 L4 12:32-1:02
<b>Period 7</b> 1:06-2:10	<b>Period 8</b> 1:06-2:10	<b>Period 5</b> 1:06-2:10	<b>Period 6</b> 1:06-2:10

<b>September 2022</b>			1* -9th	2* - 1-8
	6- A	7 - B	8 - C	9 - D
12- A	13 - B	14 - C	15 - D	16 - A
19 - B	20 - C	21 - D	22* - A	23 - B
26 - C	27 - D	28 -A	29 - B	30 -C

3 - D	4- A	5 - B	6 - C	7 - D
	11 - A	12 - PSAT	13 - B	14 - C
17 - D	18 - A	19 - B	20* - C	21 - D
24 - A	25 - B	26 -C	27 - D	28 -A
31 - B	<b>October 2022</b>			

	1 - C	2 - D	3 - A	4 - B
7 - C		9 - D	10* - A	
14 - B	15 - C	16 - D	17 - A	18 - B
21 - C	22 - D	23** - A		
28 - A	29 - B	30 - C	<b>November 2022</b>	

<b>December 2022</b>			1* -D	2 - A
5 - B	6- C	7 - D	8 - A	9 - B
12- C	13 - D	14 - A	15* - B	16 - C
19 - D	20 - A	21 - B	22* - C	

	3 - A	4 - B	5 - C*	6 - D
9 - A	10 - B	11 - C	12 - D	13 - 1-8
	17 - 1&2	18 - 3&4	19* -	20 - 7&8

			5&6	
23 - Makeup	24 - A	25 - B	26 - C	27 - D
30 - A	31 - B	January 2023		

## **STUDENT SUCCESS PLANNING**

A student success plan for each student enrolled in grades six through twelve shall be created. Such student success plans shall include a student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. Such plans shall provide evidence of career exploration in each grade including, but not limited to, careers in manufacturing. In creating the student success plan, consideration must be given to careers and academic choices in computer science, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. When possible, the student success plan should be created in collaboration with each student and the student's parent or guardian.

The Student Success Plan (SSP) is an individualized student driven plan developed to address every student's needs and interests to help the student stay connected in school and to achieve postsecondary educational and career goals.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Beginning with the graduating class of 2023, student support and remedial services will be provided to students beginning in grade seven (2017-2018 school year). Such services provide an alternate means for the student to complete any of the high school graduation requirements. These support and remedial services allow students to retake courses in summer school or through an online course. Students are also permitted to enroll in a class offered at a community or state college. Alternate forms of the required end-of-year examinations will also be provided. Alternate assessments for those eligible students, in the five core courses, is another option.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Students are required to maintain high standards of behavior when being taught by a substitute teacher. Substitute teachers must be given the cooperation, courtesy and respect of all students. Misbehavior for a substitute teacher will result in teacher and office disciplinary action.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Students in danger of failing will be notified prior to a retention decision. The school district shall provide and may require a student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial

assistance, including summer school. The fee for Summer School will be posted in the Spring of each school year.

### **SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individual with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children.

Parents will be notified of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance administered by the school and which is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students. Parents will be given an opportunity to opt their child out of the exam. Hearing, vision and scoliosis screening are not subject to prior notifications.

The District will not collect, disclose or use personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or providing it to others for that purpose.

### **TARDY PROCEDURE**

If a student arrives after the start of the official starting time, he/she is to report directly to the office for check-in. All tardy arrivals will be considered unexcused unless accompanied by a doctor's note for illness and be signed by a parent. All unexcused tardy arrivals are subject to school disciplinary consequences.

### **TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5150](#))**

Students shall not use electronic telecommunications devices, such as but not limited to, a remotely activated paging device, cellular telephone and related devices while on school

property, on school transportation or while attending a school sponsored activity on or off school property unless used as part of the instructional process under teacher supervision and guidelines. Items of this nature may be confiscated. Camera cellphones are not permitted to be used during the school day in areas where there is an expectation of privacy.

A student's privately owned technological device may be searched if the device is on Board property or in a student's possession at a school-sponsored activity and if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Any such search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

### **TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested, as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications. To request this information, please contact the Director of Operations, Curriculum and Instruction.

### **TESTING**

All students in grade 11 shall annually take a statewide mastery examination in reading, language arts and mathematics. Students in grade 11 shall annually take a statewide mastery examination in science. Special education students participate in mastery testing programs except in the rare case when participation in an alternate assessment is detrimental to the student's IEP. In order to graduate students must meet District standards for graduation, in addition to required course credits. The mastery examination test is one of the measures to be used to determine if students have met the identified standards. Student scores on each component of the statewide grade 11 state assessment test may/shall be included on transcripts and permanent records. All English learners are required to participate in all content areas of the state summative assessment.

### **TEXTBOOK CARE AND OBLIGATIONS**

Students are responsible for the care of books and supplies entrusted to their use. They will be assessed for damage to textbooks, equipment or materials. In accordance with state law, the school reserves the right to withhold grades, transcripts, or report cards until the student pays for or returns the textbooks, library book or other educational materials.

## **TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES**

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

## **TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental and family engagement involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs and opportunities for parents and family members to participate in the education of their children.

## **TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Students withdrawing from school must notify the guidance office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms for their parents to complete. Included will be a formal written statement of withdrawal and release of records form.

On their last day of attendance, students will be given a form that must be signed by each of their teachers. This form will indicate their grade at the time of withdrawal and that all materials have been returned. Records cannot be forwarded until all materials have been returned.

## **TRANSPORTATION (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5145](#))**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditioned upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Unsatisfactory student behavior on the bus may result in suspension of transportation services or such other disciplinary action that is appropriate for misconduct.

Students will be notified of their bus stop and times for pick-up and drop-off prior to the start of school. Students and parents are asked to wait safely at their bus stop and abide by all COVID-19 protocols. Marie Kashuba is the District's Transportation Coordinator.

Parents should park in the designated area at each school. Cars should not be parked in undesignated areas which include on the grass, in fire lanes, on the curb, etc. at any time.

Parents who choose to drive their children to school and drop them off should drive into the designated drop off area with their vehicles, remain in the vehicle, and drop off their child.

The following rules shall apply to student conduct on school transportation:

1. Passengers shall follow the driver's directions at all times.
2. Passengers shall board and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest their home.
3. Passengers shall not stand while the bus is in motion.
4. Passengers shall keep books, instrument cases, feet, and other objects out of the aisle of the bus.
5. Passengers shall not deface the bus and/or its equipment.
6. Passengers shall not extend head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window nor hold any object out of the window nor throw objects within or out of the bus.
7. Passengers shall not smoke or use any form of tobacco.
8. Passengers shall not eat on the bus.
9. Usual classroom conduct shall be observed. Unruly conduct, including the use of obscene language, will subject the passenger to disciplinary action.
10. Upon leaving the bus, the passenger will wait for the driver's signal before crossing in front of the bus.
11. Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned.

The following procedures shall be followed when a discipline concern arises on a bus serving a regular route or an extracurricular activity:

1. A conference involving the principal, the student passenger, the driver, and the parent(s) may be required.
2. The principal may suspend the student's bus-riding privileges. If such a suspension occurs, the parents will be notified prior to the time the suspension takes effect.
3. In the case of serious misconduct that endangers the safety of other passengers or the driver, the driver shall have the authority to remove the student and call for law enforcement assistance. The principal and parents shall be notified of the situation as soon as possible. The student shall not be provided bus service again until a conference involving all persons listed above has been held.

Disciplinary sanctions and changes in transportation for a student with a disability shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

All vehicles coming into or leaving the school grounds are subject to the regulations of the school.

A student may drive to school, provided the student abides by the traffic rules and has parental permission.

Students are not allowed to go to their cars during school hours. In case of emergency, they will be given a pass to do so by the administration. Any violation of proper automobile use may result in the suspension of parking privilege or any such discipline which is appropriate for the circumstances.

### **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the District Business Manager. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

### **TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS**

The District believes when students are healthy, safe, supported, engaged and challenged, they are then able to learn to the best of their ability. Schools are trauma-sensitive in the implementation of policies to help children feel safe in order for them to learn. Policies, practices and the school culture will be sensitive to the needs of traumatized individuals. A flexible framework provides universal supports, is sensitive to students' unique needs. Emphasis will be placed on building supporting relationships.

### **TUTORING**

Teachers may not teach privately (tutor) students of the school in which he/she teaches. This does not apply to teachers of homebound children employed by the Board of Education.

### **UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS (Drones)**

The use of drones is prohibited by any person on or over school property without the permission of the building principal or her designee.

### **VACATIONS**

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation or trip that takes place when school is in session may be considered "unexcused absences," in light of SBE guidelines.

### **VIDEO RECORDERS ON SCHOOL BUSES/SCHOOL CAMPUS**

(for School Security Purposes)

The district has installed video recording equipment on school buses to monitor school transportation and discipline. Videotaping will be done randomly during the school year, students will not be notified when a recording device has been installed and in use on their bus. Tapes will be viewed by the administration. Students violating bus conduct rules will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken. Videotapes shall be treated as protected student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Video equipment is used to enhance the safety and security of all individuals. It is also used to monitor student behavior in common areas or campus. Video surveillance cameras are used in public areas and school buses for security and to assist in maintaining student safety. The principal or his/her designee will review the tapes routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the District's discipline policy. Any student, staff member, or visitor to the school is prohibited from tampering with or damaging the school's video surveillance equipment.

Visitors may not be allowed into school buildings during the COVID-19 health emergency or any such similar emergency.

### **VIRTUAL/REMOTE LEARNING CODE OF CONDUCT**

District students receiving remote instruction are subject to all existing District and school policies regarding student conduct. Remote learning is an extension of the school and must be practiced in a responsible, safe, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Parents/guardians are expected to monitor online behavior and to teach/reinforce responsible Internet usage.

### **VISITORS (Adopted from [BOE Policy 1600](#))**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit district schools. All visitors must first report to the principal's office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

All doors that open to the outside of any school must remain locked in order to preserve the safety and security of students and staff. Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or uncivil discourse will not be permitted. Visits cannot interfere with the educational program of the school nor interrupt teaching activities.

### **VOICE ASSISTANT DEVICES IN CLASSROOMS**

The District reserves the right to determine whether such devices may be used in classrooms.

Necessary measures will be taken to properly regulate and control such use. It must be stressed that information and communications sent utilizing such voice-activated devices may not be secure.

## **WEBSITES**

School web pages must contain material that reflects on educational purposes. School web pages are not to be used for personal, commercial or political purposes; and are considered a publication of the Board of Education. The Principal or his/her designee will approve all material posted on the school's web page. Students maintaining personal web pages may be subject to disciplinary action for the content of such sites under certain conditions. The District/School is committed to ensuring accessibility of its website(s) for parents, students and members of the community with disabilities. School website links are listed below.

<https://www.watertownps.org/>

<https://www.watertownps.org/o/watertown-high-school>

## **WELLNESS (Adopted from [BOE Policy 5155](#))**

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

If a student needs to withdraw from school during the school year, the student's parent/guardian must complete a withdrawal form and obtain all necessary signatures. All books, materials, athletic equipment and other equipment loaned by the school must be returned or paid for by the student or his/her parents/guardians.

## **DISTRICT BOE POLICY NOTIFICATION**

In addition to the rules and regulations outlined in other sections of the handbook, the school system is governed by policies passed by the Board of Education. The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of the handbook will be made available to students and parents/guardians through District and school websites and other communications. For the full text of these policies, as well as all other policies, visit the District's website to access the Board of Education's policy manual.