

Watertown Public Schools

2025 -2026
STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
HANDBOOK

SECTION II



Dr. Dede Galdston
Superintendent of Schools
30 Common Street
Watertown, MA 02472

Please call your child's school to have this document translated or use Google Translate.
Additionally, all documents that are required to be distributed can be found at
www.watertown.k12.ma.us and can be translated online into several languages.

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IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

Early Childhood:

**Early Steps Preschool
and Watertown PreK**

Ms. Chrissy Gibelli

1 Concord Street

617-926-7765

Elementary Schools:

Cunniff Elementary School	Ms. Julia MacEwan	246 Warren Street	617-926-7726
Hosmer Elementary School	Ms. Erin Moulton	1 Concord Road	617-926-7740
Lowell Elementary School	Mrs. Stacy Phelan	175 Orchard Street	617-926-7770

Middle and High Schools:

Watertown Middle School	Mr. Jeff Gaglione	68 Waverley Avenue	617-926-7783
Watertown High School	Mr. Joel Giacobozzi	50 Columbia Street	617-926-7760

Central Administration

Superintendent of Schools:	Dr. Dede Galdston	617-926-7700
Assistant Superintendent, Teaching, Learning, & Assessment:	Ms. Emilys Pena	617-926-7700
Director of Finance and Operations:	Ms. Lisa Gibbons	617-926-7710
Director of Human Resources:	Ms. Amanda Owens	617-926-7700
Director of Student Services:	Dr. Kathleen Desmarais	617-926-7766
Assistant Director of Student Services:	Ms. Sadye Ezersky	617-926-7766
Director of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging	Dr. Ceronne Daly	617-926-7708

Curriculum and Program Coordinators

Special Education Compliance and Out of District Coordinator	Ms. Penelope Giannakopoulos	617-926-7766
PreK-12 Mental and Behavioral Health Services Coordinator	Ms. Lauren Hohler	617-926-7766
PreK-12 Nursing Coordinator	Ms. Jennifer Thermenos	617-926-7766
K-12 ESL Director	Ms. Kathryn Phillipson	617-926-4297
K-12 Digital Learning Coordinator	Dr. Susan Bisson	617-926-7748
K-12 World Languages Coordinator	Mr. Adam Silverberg	617-926-7760
K-12 Fine and Practical Arts Coordinator	Mr. Richard Saunders	617-926-7783
K-12 Health and P.E. Coordinator	Mr. Frank Cacia	617-926-7760
K-8 Literacy Coordinator K-5 Social Studies	Ms. Debra Opar	617-926-7700
K-8 Math Coordinator K-5 Science	Ms. Elizabeth Kaplan	617-926-7760
9-12 ELA Coordinator	Ms. Casey Andrews	617-926-7700
9-12 Mathematics Coordinator	Mr. Dan Wulf	617-926-7760
6-12 Social Studies Coordinator	Mr. David Bedar	617-926-7700
6-12 Science Coordinator	Ms. Lindsay Kraemer	617-926-7760
6-12 CTE Coordinator	Ms. Laura Alderson	617-926-7760

FAMILY COMMUNICATION MAP

You may have questions about your child's transition to school this fall. Recognizing that some of our school year staff may be away this summer, we are providing this streamlined Family Communication Map to help you connect with individuals who can respond to your questions.

In general, we ask that questions be directed to your child's school. This will help us to respond in the most efficient manner. Please see the map below to learn about the appropriate transition to school contacts for each of our schools.

I need to contact someone at:

[Hosmer Elementary School](#) [Watertown Middle School](#)

[J.R. Lowell Elementary School](#) [Watertown High School](#)

[Cunniff Elementary School](#) [Early Steps Preschool](#)

Hosmer Elementary School		
Name	Email	Topics
Erin Moulton, Principal	erin.moulton@watertown.k12.ma.us	General concerns
MaryKate Fitzpatrick, Assistant Principal	marykatherine.fitzpatrick@watertown.k12.ma.us	General Concerns Student Placement
Janet Shaw, Administrative Assistant	Janet.Shaw@watertown.k12.ma.us	Main office/ Calendar and Events Powerschool Management
Katie Callaghan, Evaluation Team Chair	kathleen.callaghan@watertown.k12.ma.us	504/Special Education/ Team Meetings

Colin Gardiner, School Counselor Grades k-2 Allison Velie, School Counselor Grades 3-5	colin.gardiner@watertown.k12.ma.us allison.velie@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling
Gabriella Sabatino, School Nurse	gabriella.sabatino@watertown.k12.ma.us	Nursing
Dave Silva, Technology Support	deividy.dasilva@watertown.k12.ma.us	Technology Support

J.R. Lowell Elementary School		
Name	Email	Topics
Please contact your child's teacher for academic concerns.		
Stacy Phelan, Principal	Stacy.phelan@watertown.k12.ma.us	General Concerns
Tara Rufo, Asst. Principal	tara.rufo@watertown.k12.ma.us	Student placement/SEL Curriculum/Student Study Team
Gregory Roberts, Evaluation Team Chair	Gregory.roberts@watertown.k12.ma.us	504/Special Education/Team meetings/IEP questions
Kelly McCollum, Website Curator	Kelly.McCollum@watertown.k12.ma.us	School Website Management
Dave Silva, Technology Support	deividy.dasilva@watertown.k12.ma.us	Technology Support
Kara Flynn, Administrative Assistant	Kara.flynn@watertown.k12.ma.us	Main office/ Calendar and Events

		Powerschool Management
Melina Jacovides, K-2 School Counselor	Melina.jacovides@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling/Student Placement
Brian Connors, 3-5 School Counselor	brian.connors@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling/Student Placement
Kristen Thibodeau, School Nurse	kristen.thibodeau@watertown.k12.ma.us	Nursing/Health

Cunniff Elementary School		
Name	Email	Topics
Julia MacEwan, Principal	julia.macewan@watertown.k12.ma.us	General Concerns
Susan Carle, Assistant Principal	susan.carle@watertown.k12.ma.us	Student placement/SEL Curriculum/Student Study Team
Kim Golden, School Counselor	kimberly.golden@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling, SEL
AnneMarie Dangler, Office Administrator	annemarie.dangler@watertown.k12.ma.us	Main Office: PowerSchool, Registration, Calendar
Ilana Sommer, Special Education Team Chair	ilana.sommer@watertown.k12.ma.us	504/Special Education
Dave Silva , Technology Support	deividy.dasilva@watertown.k12.ma.us	Technology Support
Lidia Dilesio, Website Curator	lidia.diieso@watertown.k12.ma.us	School Website Postings
Jen Cullen, School Nurse	jennifer.cullen@watertown.k12.ma.us	Nursing/Health

Watertown Middle School		
Name	Email	Topics
Jeff Gaglione, Principal	jeffrey.gaglione@watertown.k12.ma.us	General Concerns, Student placement
Mike Kenney, Asst. Principal	michael.kenney@watertown.k12.ma.us	Social/Emotional Learning and Health, Student concerns
Jennifer Sarmiento, Asst. Principal	jennifer.sarmiento@watertown.k12.ma.us	Academics and Operations, Student concerns
Lisa Gallagher, School Nurse	lisa.gallagher@watertown.k12.ma.us	Nursing, Health
Patti Eleftheriou, Special Education, Team Chair	mary.eleftheriou@watertown.k12.ma.us	504/Special Education
Amanda Skypeck, Grade 6 Guidance Counselor	amanda.skypeck@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling, Student placement
Thomas Cloherty, Grade 7 Guidance Counselor	thomas.cloherty@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling, Student placement
Lauren Petrillo, Grade 8 Guidance Counselor	jody.gladstein@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling, Student placement
Laurie Brackett, Administrative Assistant	laurie.brackett@watertown.k12.ma.us	Powerschool Management
Saira Chaudery, Administrative Assistant	saira.chaudhry@watertown.k12.ma.us	Main office/ Calendar and Events

Watertown High School		
Name	Email	Topics
Joel Giacobozzi, Principal	joel.giacobozzi@watertown.k12.ma.us	General questions
Adrienne Eaton, Asst.	adrienne.eaton@watertown.k12.ma.us	SEL and Student Concerns,

Principal		grades 9-10
Brian Brewer, Asst. Principal	brian.brewer@watertown.k12.ma.us	Operations and Student Concerns, grades 11-12
Courtney Healy, School Nurse	courtney.healy@watertown.k12.ma.us	Health & Nursing
Ryan Murphy, Dir. of Athletics	ryan.murphy@watertown.k12.ma.us	Athletics
Ian Ward, Evaluation Team Chair	ian.ward@watertown.k12.ma.us	504, Special Education Team meetings
Adrienne Eaton, Lead Guidance Counselor	adrienne.eaton@watertown.k12.ma.us	Counseling

Early Steps Preschool		
Name	Email	Topics
Chrissy Gibelli, Principal	christine.gibelli@watertown.k12.ma.us	General questions, schedule, lunch, placement, recess, developmental, screenings, special education, Counseling 504s
Kaitlyn Reynolds, Nurse, Early Childhood	kaitlyn.reynolds@watertown.k12.ma.us	Nursing/Health
Ilana Sommer, Evaluation Team Chair	ilana.sommer@watertown.k12.ma.us	504/IEP Team Meetings
Tricia D'Amelio, Administrative Assistant	tricia.damelio@watertown.k12.ma.us	Main Office: PowerSchool, Portal, Registration

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

From time to time, parents and other community members may have questions or concerns about our educational programs and services. So that we can respond to these issues in a timely manner, this Chain of Communication is provided for your use.

Please follow these steps for communication:	
Student Discipline/Bullying/Harassment Step 1. Classroom Teacher/Guidance Counselor Step 2. Principal/ Assistant Principal Step 3. Director of Student Services/ Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Step 4. Superintendent	Instruction/Curriculum Step 1. Classroom Teacher Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. Curriculum Coordinator Step 4. Assistant Superintendent Step 5. Superintendent
Special Education Step 1. Classroom Teacher/Special Education Teacher Liaison Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. Assistant Director of Student Services Step 4. Director of Student Services Step 5. Superintendent	Civil Rights/ Title IX/ 504 Step 1. Classroom Teacher/ Guidance Counselor Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. Director of Student Services/ Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Step 4. Superintendent
Multi-Lingual Learner (ML) Step 1. Classroom Teacher/ ESL Teacher Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. ESL Coordinator Step 4. Assistant Superintendent Step 5. Superintendent	Elementary Extended Day Programs Step 1. Extended Day Program Site Coordinator Step 2. Director of Community Education Step 3. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 4. Assistant Superintendent Step 5. Superintendent
Facilities/Grounds/Buildings Step 1. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 2. Director of Public Buildings Step 3. Director of Finance and Operations Step 4. Superintendent	Transportation Step 1. Bus Driver Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3: Transportation Manager Step 3. Director of Finance and Operations Step 4. Superintendent
Food Service Step 1. Cafeteria Supervisor Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. Director of School Nutrition Step 4. Director of Finance and Operations Step 5. Superintendent	Nursing Step 1. School Nurse Step 2. Principal/Assistant Principal Step 3. Nurse Coordinator Step 4. Director of Student Services Step 5. Superintendent
Preschool	Athletics

Step 1. Classroom Teacher Step 2. Early Childhood Principal Step 3. Director of Student Services Step 4. Superintendent	Step 1. Coach Step 2. Athletic Director Step 3. Principal/Assistant Principal Step. 4. Superintendent
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Watertown Public Schools
2025/2026

WPS creates an equitable, challenging, and innovative learning environment where everyone belongs and every student is empowered to shape the world around them.

WPS CORE VALUES:

Equity: We value the unique contributions of each individual student in our diverse school community and are committed to identifying and removing barriers to success while aligning resources with needs.

Excellence: We commit to high expectations by providing appropriate levels of support to develop students' confidence, independence, and resilience.

Community: We foster caring and collaborative relationships within an inclusive environment as the foundation for student engagement, achievement, and well-being.

WPS THEORY OF ACTION:

WHEN we ground all of our practices in *equity* and

- cultivate belonging and social-emotional wellness
- challenge all students with rigorous instruction while providing appropriate levels of support
- create a learning community that provides authentic, relevant, and engaging opportunities
- utilize all available resources to address student needs

THEN our students will become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and lifelong learners who are resilient, confident, compassionate, motivated scholars who are empowered to shape the world around them.

WPS VISION:

Learning Together To Build A Better Future.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students and parents/caregivers with information about policies and procedures that affect all students in the Watertown Public Schools. The Handbook-Part II accompanies the school-specific handbooks which outline the expectations and procedures specific to a building. The policies contained in this book are derived from both federal and state laws and regulations or the Watertown School Committee policies and procedures. It is important that both students and parents/caregivers thoroughly read and review the information contained in this handbook as well as the school-specific handbook, as they both define the rights that students have and responsibilities that they are held accountable for. All Watertown School Committee [Policies](#) can be found on the district website at www.watertown.k12.ma.us under the School Committee top tab. Essential to each student's lifetime development is acquiring and developing perception, reason, choice, and evaluation. To learn and exercise such skills it is necessary that students understand their rights and responsibilities so that they may make informed decisions throughout their school careers.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Watertown School Committee and Watertown Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members, that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Watertown Public Schools.

Watertown Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of WPS from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities. Race includes traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

The Watertown Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The Watertown Public Schools will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the Watertown School Committee intends to:

- Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
- Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
- Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
- Use all appropriate communications and strategies to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
- Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
- Engage in processes of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the Watertown School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and empathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition (M.G.L. ch. 76, section 5)..

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

The Watertown Public Schools will take action to investigate all complaints and may discipline or take other appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy. Any student or staff member who feels he or she had been a victim of discrimination because of race, religion, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or gender bias, should file a report with the Harassment Complaint Officer, Ms. Kathleen Desmarais, Director of Student Services.

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

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN INSTRUCTION, SC POLICY IJNDB

Purpose

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of the curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, including seeking knowledge

and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

Availability

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using the school district network and digital devices, whether personal or school owned, is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgment to others for their ideas and work
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology to the appropriate school personnel immediately

Students shall use digital resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

District-Provided Student Devices

The district provides Chromebooks and other devices for students' educational use. Depending on a student's grade level, these devices may be taken home (or otherwise used outside of school hours). They remain the property of the district and must be returned to the school when requested.

District policies remain in effect wherever a student is using a district-issued device, connection, or service, regardless of time of day or location. Additionally, students and families:

- Are responsible for the proper care of their assigned Chromebook (or other WPS-issued device), as well as any other WPS technology equipment they use. This includes keeping it safe and secure.
- Should not attempt to modify, repair, or take apart the Chromebook, and should report any problems with a WPS-issued device to their teacher or principal.
- Will be held liable for damages resulting from intentional misuse or vandalism, including the cost of repair or replacement.
- Must not attempt to bypass system security measures, remove district-installed programs, or gain unauthorized access to systems or accounts.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO STUDENTS, SC POLICY JLCD

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or caregiver and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). If a student has been approved for self-administration, a student who needs medication during the school day may be reminded to take the medicine by the school nurse or another individual designated by the school nurse in the student's medical administration plan. This provision only applies when the school nurse has a medical administration plan in place for the student. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

Exceptions:

The Watertown School District shall, through the district Health Systems Manager, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the Health Systems Manager, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life-threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, the School Committee shall vote to approve such training, and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.
4. Students with life-threatening allergies may possess and administer epinephrine.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

In compliance with the regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency the Watertown Public Schools has an ongoing Operations and Management Program for monitoring the condition of asbestos in the school buildings.

A copy of our district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in each school and at the main administrative office during regular school hours. The district continues to update and improve the AHERA Asbestos Management Plans. Any inquiries regarding the management of asbestos-containing materials in our schools should be directed to our district's AHERA Designated Person, Lori Kabel, the Director of Public Buildings, 30 Common Street, Watertown, MA, 02472 or at or at (617) 926-7700.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Watertown Public Schools, in compliance with the American Disabilities Act, prohibits the discriminatory assignment of students with disabilities to segregated classes or facilities based solely on the student's disability. Students with disabilities may be assigned to separate facilities or courses when such a placement is necessary to provide equal educational opportunity.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is the most important aspect of educating our students. When students are not here, they do not have access to instruction. To focus attention on the importance of attendance the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or No Child Left Behind, specifically mentions attendance, reflecting the increasing awareness that attendance is a key indicator for assessing school and student success.

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

At Watertown Public Schools, we pride ourselves in maintaining a very high attendance rate throughout the year. Understandably, there will be times when our students will need to take time away from school for a variety of excused reasons. The following procedure is in place to ensure good attendance, support our families, and follow state and federal laws.

EXCUSED Absences

We expect regular and punctual attendance in all classes. Grades reflect attendance, effort, classroom participation, and academic progress. We recognize that occasional absences are unavoidable.

EXCUSED absences are those reported to the office through the use of the school-specific google excused absence attendance form; otherwise, any absence will be considered **unexcused**.

- Short-term illness (three consecutive days or fewer) reported to the school using the attendance google form
- Extended illness (four or more consecutive days) requires a doctor's note with a return date, submitted to the school nurse
- Death of a student's family member
- Court appearances
- Religious observances and holidays
- The Principal may decide to excuse an absence that does not fit within the above categories. The parent/caregiver must contact the principal to discuss these circumstances.

Parent/caregiver **communication (Attendance Google Form, call-ins and/or notes from home)** are required for an excused absence. All notes to excuse an absence need to be turned in within two school days of a student's return to school. Any questions/concerns should be addressed to the Assistant Principals' Office. Students with more than three excused absences in a quarter may be asked to produce formal documentation to excuse further absences that quarter.

Students must be in school for at least ½ of the day to be considered present. For Elementary this is arrival before 11:20 or dismissal no earlier than 11:20. For Middle School this is arrival before 11:00 or dismissal no earlier than 11:00. For high school students, the times are arrival no later than 11:45 and dismissal no earlier than 11:45. Any arrival or departure that exceeds these times will be considered an absence for the full day.

Students who are absent for any reason may not participate in any extra-curricular school activities, Extended Day, or events on the day of the absence, including games and dances, *unless excused by the administration.*

UNEXCUSED absences:

- Cutting class (not being where you are scheduled to be)
- Family vacation
- Work

- Any absence of four or more consecutive days that are not documented by a doctor's note

Excessive absence notification and intervention

Resulting Actions:

- After 3 days of **unexcused absences** with no contact with the school from the parent, the Assistant Principal will be notified and will reach out to the parent/guardian.
- After 5 days of **unexcused absences** a letter of concern will be sent to parents/caregivers.
- At 10 absences (**excused or unexcused**) or suspected truancy, a letter and support meeting will be scheduled with parents/guardian, guidance, and administration to create an Attendance Plan, which clearly outlines the school, parent and student obligations to improve the problem.
- At 15 absences (**excused or unexcused**) - guidance, administration, community outreach counselor, and Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) warning; review AIP
- At 20 absences (**excused or unexcused**) - If absenteeism continues, further action will be taken, up to and including petitioning the Juvenile Courts with a Child Requiring Assistance, (CRA)
- In appropriate cases, the school may report to DCF.

For additional information regarding school absences, please refer to School Committee Policy JH [Policy Manual](#).

AN ACT RELATIVE TO BULLYING IN THE SCHOOLS, M.G.L. C 71, § 370

The law requires each Plan to include a statement prohibiting bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. All acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

The Watertown School Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying (See School Committee Policy JICFB)

Please see the following document:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jA3aRteC8oFyzg-STVzKAIW-XII9-GtpETWdYNoGkow/edit> for

detailed information on Watertown's specific procedures when considering bullying, including reporting a suspected case of bullying, investigation procedures, timelines, filing complaints, and the District's anti-bullying curriculum.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Under certain circumstances, parents/caregivers (or individuals authorized by parents/caregivers), accompanied by school personnel, may arrange to visit the school to observe classes. Each building principal is the point of contact for parents/caregivers/designees wishing to arrange a classroom observation. School Committee Policy KI further clarifies when classroom observations are allowable.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, SC POLICY JLCC

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to disabled children under the law. The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases. Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance.

The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school. The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures.

Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement. In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

Staying Home When Sick

Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infections. Under routine circumstances, some illness spread among school communities is expected. In general, children with improving symptoms should be able to participate in school.

If a child's needs while sick with an infectious illness would interfere with school staff's ability to teach and care for other students, the child should stay home. Schools must balance the risk of infectious disease spread with educational, social, and mental health needs of children when determining when students should stay home.

Schools, parents, and caregivers often do not know what specific illness a child may have; rather, children present with symptoms. If someone has the following symptoms, they should stay home because their illness could affect their ability to participate in school and there is concern that they might spread an infection to staff and students.

- Fever, including a fever with a new rash, within the preceding 24 hours
- Vomiting more than twice in the preceding 24 hours
- Diarrhea that causes 'accidents', is bloody, or results in greater than two bowel movements above what the child normally experiences in a 24-hour period
- Skin sores that are draining fluid on an uncovered part of the body and are unable to be covered with a bandage
- [Respiratory virus symptoms](#) that are worsening or not improving and not better explained by another cause such as seasonal allergies

The above list describes symptoms of common illnesses experienced in school-aged children and can also apply to school staff.

Return to School

When a person can return to school depends on the nature of the illness. In general, a child returning to school should be well enough to participate in school (e.g., can adequately manage improving cough and congestion on own, not overly fatigued), and care of the returning child should not interfere with the school staff's ability to teach or care for other students. Students and staff returning to school following an illness may still be contagious, but are likely to be less contagious as symptoms improve, depending on factors like duration and severity of illness. Parents and caregivers should consult their child's health care providers with specific questions about their child's condition or recovery.

For the general symptoms described in the stay at home when sick section of this guidance, policies can allow return to the school setting when:

- The child has not had a fever (and is not using fever-reducing medicine) for at least 24 hours.
- Fever with a new rash has been evaluated by a healthcare provider and fever has resolved.
- Uncovered skin sores are crusting, and the child is under treatment from a provider.
- Vomiting has resolved for 24 hours.
- Diarrhea has improved, the child is no longer having accidents or is having bowel movements no more than 2 above normal per 24-hour period for the child. Bloody diarrhea should be evaluated by a healthcare provider prior to return.
- Respiratory virus symptoms are getting [better overall](#) for at least 24 hours. Students and staff returning after a respiratory illness can consider [additional actions](#) to reduce spread.

State and local health departments may have additional guidance for staying home when sick and return to school considerations for some illnesses; schools should refer to those policies, in addition to this guidance. There may be instances when schools adjust illness exclusion procedures due to community disease spread (e.g., during an outbreak or pandemic or a time of excessive absences due to respiratory or gastrointestinal illness).

CONCUSSION POLICY (SC Policy JJIF)

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities [1] including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents/caregivers.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in their act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents/caregivers, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be “fine” on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The Watertown Public Schools has developed a concussion protocol that describes what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and post concussion syndrome. This protocol can be found in the SC Policy JJIF.

C.O.R.I. and S.O.R.I REQUIREMENTS, SC POLICY ADDA

It shall be the policy of the district to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and **Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) from the Sex Offender Registry Board and/or U.S. Department of Justice (collectively SORB)** of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI and SORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

CREDIT FOR GRADUATION/PROMOTION, SC POLICY IKE

In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, students must comply with the graduation requirements as listed in the Watertown High School Student Handbook.

DISCIPLINE, FROM SC POLICY JIC

The Watertown School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents/caregivers.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

Due Process Suspension Procedures for Offenses Under Chapter 71 Section 37H 3/4

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed (except for offenses involving assault on an educational staff member, possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance or felony charges/convictions referenced in the note at the end of this policy), a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension:

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent/caregiver oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent/caregiver an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent/caregiver in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent/caregiver present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

Emergency Removal

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/caregiver of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent/caregiver as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent/caregiver an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent/caregiver; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension – not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days for Offenses Under Chapter 71 Section 37H 3/4

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent/caregiver, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent/caregiver of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

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

Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative) for Offenses Under Chapter 71 Section 37H 3/4

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent/caregiver's expense; The right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/caregiver requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/caregiver upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent/caregiver by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/caregiver for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent/caregiver.

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

receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

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

Superintendent's Hearing For Appeal or Offenses Under Chapter 71 Section 37H 3/4

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

The student or parent/caregiver shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.

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

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/caregiver in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/caregiver and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/caregiver of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/caregiver upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/caregiver upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. C.71, § 37H

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

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

After said hearing, a principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Under appropriate circumstances, the principal, in his/her discretion, may consider the readmission of a student expelled from school pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, § 37H. The principal shall notify the student, in writing, at the time of his/her expulsion, of the terms and conditions which the student shall fulfill in order to petition the principal for readmission, as well as the process and timelines for such a petition. The principal's decision on an expelled student's petition shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. C.71, § 37H1/2

M.G.L. c.71, § 37H1/2 allows the principal or designee of a school to suspend a student who has been charged with a felony or is the subject of a felony delinquency complaint, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the

general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or caregiver within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, city or regional school district with regard to the suspension. The statute also allows the principal to expel a student who has been convicted, adjudicated, or admitted guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent/caregiver of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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

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

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

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

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H ¾; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE:

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

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

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent/caregiver of a student or an eligible student. **Parents/caregivers of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually.** In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/caregiver or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters, as required by ESSA, unless the parent/caregiver or eligible student specifically directs otherwise.

DISCIPLINE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Code of Conduct applies to all students. There is a specific procedure, however, for disciplining students with disabilities. Your child's school can give you a copy of this document upon request. This procedure is also included in the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure that you receive with your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

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

1. Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) school days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities and in accordance with the due process procedures in this handbook.

2. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

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

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

Special Circumstances for Exclusion

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

Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. School personnel will provide Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. The parent, caregiver and/or student may petition the Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504).

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

If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

- a) The parent/caregiver had expressed concern in writing; or
- b) The parent/caregiver had requested an evaluation; or
- c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent/caregiver has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/caregiver requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

If the student is found eligible for an IEP or 504 Plan, then they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

In the case of a disagreement with the Team's determination: If the parent/caregiver disagrees with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with the decision relating to placement of the student in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, the parent/caregiver has the right to appeal the Team's decision by requesting an expedited due process

hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Parents/caregivers will be provided with a Notice of Parents' Procedural Safeguards at the Manifestation Determination meeting.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED (SC Policy JICH)

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/caregivers shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/caregivers shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

MULTI-LINGUAL LEARNERS, SC POLICY IHBEA

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified **Multi-lingual Learners (MLs)** in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance.

ENTRANCE AGE/MANDATORY ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS, SC POLICY JEB

Any child meeting the requirements of the various other policies and agreements of the School Committee concerning the availability of services may enter kindergarten during the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of five (5) before the first (1st) day of September. Children entering Watertown Public Schools who have turned 6 before September 1 will enter into first grade unless a waiver is granted by the Superintendent or their designee. A birth certificate, record of immunization

and proof of residency (e.g. utility bill, tax bill, letter from landlord or real estate agency) are required before a child shall be registered for the kindergarten program.

Entrance Age for PreKindergartgen:

Any child meeting the requirements of the various other policies and agreements of the Watertown School Committee concerning the availability of services may enter prekindergarten during the academic year in which they reach the age of four (4) before September 1st.

504 ACCOMMODATION PLANS

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

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

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

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

Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. This list is not exhaustive. In the ADA

Amendments Act 2008 Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Congress also provided a non-exhaustive list of examples of “major bodily functions” that are major life activities, such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. An impairment that is episodic or in remission, is also considered a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

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

If the parent/caregiver disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, they have the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. Any questions concerning the implementation of policy and procedures may be directed to Ms. Kathleen Desmarais, Director of Student Services. A student with disabilities has the same legal rights as “a handicapped person.” As stated under the federal law, the definition is as follows:

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

For further information, contact the Evaluation Team Chairperson at your child’s school.

FUND-RAISING BY STUDENT GROUPS, SC POLICY JJE

While the Watertown School Committee recognizes that fundraising activities have become a part of the school environment at all levels, the Committee wishes to ensure that students are not exploited by the process, and that all activities are considered through an equity lens.

The Committee supports student involvement in the sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events, school dramatic and musical performances, and other school events where sales are required. Also, student publications which require the sale of advertising to sustain themselves and serve the student body and/or the community may involve students in such sales.

Charitable fundraising activities, especially those that are part of a community service event or program are encouraged provided such proposals are submitted to and approved by both the building Principal and the Superintendent or designee.

Other fundraising activities that wish to involve students in the fundraising process shall be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for approval.

For safety reasons and because the School Committee recognizes that community members receive requests for support from many worthy causes, activities such as canning and door-to-door sales are strongly discouraged.

No money collections of any kind may be held in the schools without the specific consent of the Superintendent or designee.

GANG ACTIVITY, SC POLICY JICF

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, a gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols: The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or their designee as the need for it arises at individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education: The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

Secret Societies: Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NONCONFORMING STUDENTS, SC POLICY JBB

It is our policy to protect all students from discrimination and bullying, including on the basis of gender identity and expression. To this end, the school district shall implement ongoing professional development to build an understanding of gender identity and expression and to equip all staff

members in identifying, responding to, and ultimately preventing bullying, harassment, and discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression. Staff shall seek to include gender diverse voices in curriculum/when planning curricula.

Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential medical information. Disclosing this information to other students, their parents, or other third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The fact that a student chooses to disclose his or her transgender status to staff or other students does not authorize school staff to disclose other medical information about the student.

Schools may maintain separate restrooms, locker rooms or changing facilities for male and female students, provided that they allow students to access them based on their gender identity. The school shall respond to student requests to change their preferred locker room at any time during the school year. Students uncomfortable with a specified gender space shall be given access to a safe non-gendered changing area.

Every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronouns that correspond to the student's gender identity. Regardless of whether a transgender or gender nonconforming student has legally changed their name or gender, schools will allow such students to use a chosen name and gender pronouns that reflect their identity. (GLSEN).

Watertown is committed to providing ongoing professional development, support and education for all staff members around transgender/gender non-conforming students and to providing a safe environment for all students of all gender identities.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

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

HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION

The Watertown Public Schools is committed to maintaining school environments free of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability.

Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in any form or for any reason is prohibited. This includes harassment or discrimination by administrators, personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. Retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or

discrimination to the attention of school officials or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this Procedure is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Watertown Public Schools.

Persons who engage in harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school district administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

Non-Applicability of This Procedure to Title IX Sexual Discrimination Allegations

This policy (ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure) shall not apply to reports of sexual discrimination as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and its implementing regulations ("Title IX") effective August of 2024.

Allegations of conduct that could, if proven, meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall be addressed through the District's Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure (ACGB). Similarly, allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sex-based harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), [M.G.L. c. 151B](#) (employees), and/or [M.G.L. c. 151C](#) (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure (ACGB).

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of **sex-based** harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), [M.G.L. c. 151B](#) (employees), and/or [M.G.L. c. 151C](#) (students), will be addressed through the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Procedure:

A. "Discrimination" means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or religion by which an individual is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school district.

B. "Harassment" means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity disability, or religion that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create or contribute to a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures or other conduct which rises to the level of a hostile environment. A hostile environment is one which unreasonably interfered with an individual's participation in, denied the individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjected the individual to discrimination under any program or activity of the District.

a. Non-Title IX Sexual Harassment

[M.G.L. c. 151B, § 1](#) - the term "sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly

or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment.

M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1 - the term "sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. A hostile environment on the basis of sex is created when the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment.

When determining whether an environment is hostile, the District shall consider the context, nature, frequency, and location of the incidents as well as the credibility of witnesses and the identity, number and relationships of the persons involved. The District must consider whether the alleged harassment was sufficient to have created such an environment for a reasonable person of the same age, gender, and experience as the Complainant, and under similar circumstances. Off campus conduct may constitute harassment if it creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; however, conduct does not constitute harassment where the incident occurs off-campus at a non-school sponsored activity and does not create a hostile environment at school for the victim.

C. Retaliation: Retaliatory acts against any individual who exercises their rights under the civil rights statutes covered by this Procedure or the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure are considered to be discrimination and are unlawful. Individuals are prohibited from coercing, intimidating, threatening, or interfering with an individual because the individual exercised any right granted or protected under these procedures and/or the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

D. Complainant: An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this Procedure. Parents and/or legal guardians of a complainant are not considered a complainant but may file formal complaints on behalf of a minor child and act on behalf of the minor child in any civil rights matter.

E. Party or Parties: The complainant and/or respondent.

F. Principal: The Principal or Principal's designee.

G. Respondent: An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this Procedure.

How to make a complaint

Any student or employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Students may also report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor. Any complaint received by a school personnel shall be promptly reported to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. A complaint will not be dismissed because it was reported to the incorrect school personnel. Students or employees who are unsure whether discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the Principal. There may be instances where another third-party, who has not experienced but is aware of the occurrence of prohibited conduct, may bring a complaint under this Procedure. In such circumstances, that person is referred to as the "reporter."

A. Any District employee who observes or receives a report of discrimination, harassment or retaliation shall promptly notify the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, identified below. Any District employee who observes discrimination, harassment or retaliation against a student should intervene to stop the conduct and report it to Principal. Upon receipt of a report of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Principal shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator of the report, and the District will respond in a manner consistent with this Procedure. If the report involves an accusation against the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, the employee shall report the incident to the Superintendent or designee.

B. Informal Reports: Individuals may wish to file a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, or to report informally (i.e., without initiating a formal complaint). Such informal reports may be made to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. The District shall inform anyone making an informal report that they may initiate a formal complaint at any time, regardless of what steps are being or have been taken in response to an informal report.

C. Anonymous Reports: Complainants and reporters should be aware that although the District will often be able to maintain confidentiality of reporting persons, the District may sometimes be required to take actions to protect the safety of the school community that may result in the identity of the reporting person being disclosed (to the police, for example). When reporters or Complainants seek to remain anonymous or have their identities kept confidential, they will be informed that honoring such a request may limit the ability of the District to respond fully to any reported event, including limitations on the ability to take disciplinary action against an Respondent.

D. Informal Process: If the District concludes that it is possible to resolve a matter, whether after formal complaint or an informal report, in a prompt, fair and adequate manner through an informal process involving, and with the consent of, the Complainant and Respondent, the

District may seek to do so. The informal process is voluntary, and the Complainant and/or Respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time, without penalty.

E. Formal Process: A formal complaint shall state (if known to the reporter or Complainant) the name(s) of the persons involved and witnesses to the conduct, describe the conduct, and identify, to the extent possible, the dates and locations of the conduct. The complaint shall be signed and dated by the reporter and/or Complainant. Complaints will be investigated promptly and equitably by the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal. Investigations may be initiated whenever warranted, in the absence of a formal complaint, or after a formal complaint has been withdrawn.

F. Initial Assessments: The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will make an initial assessment following a complaint. Based on that assessment, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may: (a) if the conduct, even if substantiated, would not constitute harassment, discrimination or retaliation, dismiss the complaint; (b) if the alleged conduct (or complaint) could not, even if true, constitute discrimination, harassment or retaliation, but is within the scope of another procedure, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall refer the matter to the appropriate personnel; (c) if the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal concludes that it is possible to resolve the complaint in a prompt, fair and adequate manner through an informal process involving and with the consent of both parties, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may seek to do so in accordance with Section D, above; or (d) if the alleged conduct, if substantiated, would constitute discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will initiate an investigation. The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may also identify and initiate any interim measures. See Section G.

G. Interim Measures: The District will provide prompt and reasonable interim measures during the pendency of the investigation, if appropriate, to support and protect the safety of the parties, the educational environment, and the District and/or school community; to deter retaliation; and to preserve the integrity of the investigation and resolution process. Any interim measures will be monitored to ensure they are effective based on the evolving needs of the parties. Violations of the restrictions imposed by interim measures could be considered a violation of school rules and may be considered in determining whether discrimination, harassment or retaliation has occurred.

H. Timeframes: The District will seek to complete any investigation within twenty (20) school days after receipt of a complaint and provide the written notice of the outcome of the investigation within twenty-five (25) school days. The investigator may impose reasonable timeframes on all parties to facilitate the timely completion of the investigation. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond the time period identified due to extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If a complaint or report of discrimination, harassment or retaliation is received within three (3) weeks of the end of the academic school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the

District will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame, but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, they will notify the Complainant and Respondent of the extension. A report to the law enforcement will not automatically delay an investigation; however, a request from law enforcement to delay the investigation may require a temporary suspension of an investigation, and the District will promptly resume its investigation upon being advised that law enforcement's evidence gathering is completed. Any interim measures provided to the parties may continue during the period of postponement. See Section G.

I. Under the formal resolution procedure, the complaint will be investigated by the Principal, Civil Rights Coordinator or other individual designated by the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator who has responsibility for seeking and gathering evidence relative to the investigation. A formal complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. During the formal resolution procedure:

1. The Complainant shall be provided with an opportunity to be heard and have the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.
2. The Respondent will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
3. The privacy rights of the parties shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
4. The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.
5. The investigation will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.
6. The notification of the outcome of the investigation, including, if appropriate, a description of the remedies taken, will be provided to the parties within twenty-five (25) school days of the receipt of the complaint, unless extended for good cause.
7. Nothing in this Procedure will preclude the investigator, in their discretion, from completing the investigation sooner than the time period described above.

J. Standard of Proof: The investigation shall made factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

K. If the investigator determines that discrimination, harassment or retaliation has occurred, the District shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which shall include but not be limited to:

1. Identifying what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment or retaliation, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and
2. Informing the Complainant and Respondent or, in the case of minor children, the parties' parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) in accordance with the above timelines. The notification will include the notice of the opportunity for appeal; however, failure to provide notice of appeal shall not constitute a violation of this policy.

The school district administration may also refer the offender for disciplinary procedures to be conducted in accordance with federal and state law. Nothing in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure shall be interpreted as limiting or prohibiting the District's ability to take appropriate disciplinary action against the offender in accordance with the applicable code(s) of conduct or employment contracts or policies, where appropriate, prior to completion of the investigation, in accordance with the due process rights of employees and students, as applicable. When informing the parties' parent(s)/legal guardian(s) about the results of the investigation, the school district may consider appropriate notification processes when special circumstances may apply (e.g., disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression).

L. Appeal: If the Complainant or the Respondent is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the Superintendent or designee within seven (7) calendar days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation, except for circumstances in which the Respondent is subject to long-term suspension as a result of a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation. In such an instance, the appeal rights of the Respondent will be provided in a manner consistent with the disciplinary due process requirements applicable to the circumstances (e.g., [M.G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾](#)). Appeals must be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the Superintendent, Watertown Public Schools 30 Common Street, Watertown, Massachusetts 02472. The Superintendent will decide the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of receipt of the written appeal.

M. Identification of Civil Rights Coordinator for complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation under this Procedure is:

Director of Student Services, Dr. Kathleen Desmarias, 30 Common Street, Watertown MA, 617-926-7766, kathleen.desmarias@watertown.k12.ma.us

N. Employment Agencies: The contact information for state and federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies is as follows: (1) Federal: United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); John F. Kennedy Federal Building; 15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475; Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000; EEOC Boston Area Office Website: <https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location>; and (2) State: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Headquarters; One Ashburton Place; Sixth Floor, Room 601; Boston, MA 02108; (617)-994-6000;

SEXUAL & SEX-BASED HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Watertown Public Schools is committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all employees, applicants and students and does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability in all aspects of employment and education.

The Watertown Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school and work environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or handicap. The Watertown Public Schools expects all employees, students, and other members of the school community to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

This policy has been developed to ensure that the educational opportunities of all students, and the employment conditions of all employees, are not threatened or limited by such discrimination and/or harassment, and to ensure that individuals are free to work, learn, and develop relationships without fear of intimidation, humiliation, or degradation.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or student of the Watertown Public Schools, or any other person having business with the Watertown Public Schools, to discriminate against and/or harass another employee, adult member of the school community, student, applicant for employment, or other person having business to conduct with the Watertown Public Schools as defined below.

Unlawful and Prohibited Conduct

Unlawful and prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome actions which are related to a person's sex/gender, gender identity, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

Discrimination or harassment based on a person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation consists of conduct that:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive work or education environment, both from an objective and a subjective perspective;
- has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a person's work or academic performance, both from an objective and a subjective perspective;
- or otherwise adversely affects a person's academic standing or employment opportunities.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Watertown Public Schools, including, but not necessarily limited to, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Because the Watertown Public Schools takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment, and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definitions of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment. Specifically, under regulations promulgated under Title IX, sexual harassment includes three types of misconduct on the basis of sex:

1. Any instance of “quid pro quo” conduct (conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct) by an employee.
2. Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access.
3. Any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking (all as defined by federal laws).

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are examples of such conduct.

- Unwelcome sexual advances -- whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences, and
- Discussion of one's sexual activities
- Taking or posting of photographs, videos, or images of a sexual nature without consent

Title IX Coordinator: The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the Watertown Public Schools' compliance with Title IX and the Grievance Process. The Watertown Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator is:

Dr. Kathleen Desmarais
 (617) 926-7708
 Kathleen.Desmarais@watertown.k12.ma.us

Response to Sexual Harassment:

A student wishing to report sexual harassment may inform the Title IX Coordinator or any other employee. Any Watertown Public Schools employee including, but not limited to principals, teachers, school counselors, coaches, paraprofessionals, school bus drivers, administrative assistants, custodians, food service staff with knowledge of an allegation of sexual harassment, must report it, whether they personally witness the sexual harassment, learn of it from a third party or the alleged victim themselves.

The Title IX Coordinator, or her designee, will ensure that each report of sexual harassment is responded to appropriately and the relevant grievance process is followed. That process may include, but is not limited to: the implementation of supportive measures; an investigation that includes collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses; informal resolution sessions; restorative measures; and the imposition of discipline.

The Committee's policy of sexual harassment will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, homeless status, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions or disability.

State and Federal Remedies:

In addition to the above, employees who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit employees from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC - 180 days; MCAD - 6 months).

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”)
One Congress Street, 10th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02114
617-565-3200

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (“MCAD”)
Boston Office:
One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617-727-3990

The Office for Civil Rights
US Department of Education
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

PROHIBITION OF HAZING, SC POLICY JICFA

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the Watertown School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee, volunteer, or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school-sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school.

Any student who organizes or participates in the hazing of another student or other person may be suspended from school.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

Hazing Law And Policy

Hazing as defined in Chapter 269 under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is prohibited in the Watertown Public Schools.

M.G.L. Chapter 269; Section 17 Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined

Whoever is the principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. (Added by St. 1985, c.536)

M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing:

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. (Added by St. 1985, c.536; Amended by St. 1987, c.665)

Ch. 269, S.19. Hazing Statutes To Be Provided; Statement Of Compliance And Discipline Policy Required:

- Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.
- Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

HEALTH EDUCATION, SC POLICY IHAM

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The Watertown School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive, research-based health education program as an integral part of each student's general education, which will be offered at all grade levels. The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the system's health education program.

HEALTH EDUCATION (EXEMPTION PROCEDURE), SC POLICY IHAM-R

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of the health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/caregiver.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/caregiver of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION, SC POLICY IHAMA

In accordance with the law, the Watertown School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and caregivers of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. All parents/caregivers of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s).

Parents/caregivers of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/caregivers will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/caregivers will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/caregivers that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/caregiver under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/caregivers and others to the extent practicable. Parents/caregivers may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/caregiver who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/caregiver a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/caregiver who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/caregiver a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/caregiver who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute. The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each Principal by September 1 of each year.

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES, SC POLICY JFABD

Every child without a permanent home has the right to an education. To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, English as a Supplemental Language services, bilingual

education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Being abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
- Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

Specifically, homeless students have the right to:

- Access the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to all other children.
- Remain in the school he/she attended before becoming homeless.
- Receive transportation to the school they attend before your family became homeless or the school they last attended if you or a caregiver requests such transportation.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve disputes over enrolling your child.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children.

Families in need of assistance enrolling their child(ren) into school contact: Director of Student Services, Kathleen Desmarais, at 617 926-7700.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families. To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or caregivers of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools.

Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district. If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in

which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or caregiver shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies.

Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and meal programs. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

IMMUNIZATIONS OF STUDENTS, SC POLICY JLCB

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or caregiver stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent/caregiver.

MAXIMUM AGE OF ENROLLMENT, SC POLICY JEB

Watertown Public Schools may enroll students through age 21 or until they graduate, whichever comes first. Students may not have previously acquired a high school diploma or its equivalent.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles; and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations. The term "school grounds" shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the district to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the Watertown School District has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS, SC POLICY KBBA

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given legal documentation that:
 - 1.The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 - 2.The parent has been denied visitation, or
 - 3.The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 - 4.There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
- c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school Principal.

- d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).
- e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to noncustodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H 603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents 20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP, SC POLICY ACE

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the Watertown School District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined once in each school year for screening in sight or hearing and for other physical problems as provided in the laws. Department of Health regulations call for vision screenings in grades 1-5, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; hearing screenings in grades 1-3, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; BMI in grades 1, 4, 7, 10. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

The school health program encourages the performance of required physical examinations of every student by the student's own physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, whenever possible. School health services can assist the parents/caregivers in finding a primary care physician for a

student, if a student does not already have a primary care physician. In the event of an emergency, and when it has been determined to be medically necessary, the school physician, upon referral from a school nurse, may examine a student when, in their opinion, such examination is necessary to protect the student's health. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

Documentation of physical examinations by the primary care physician is required upon entering school and when entering grades 4, 7, and 10. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining if any accommodations or modifications are required for the student to access school. The school nurse maintains students' health records separately from the cumulative and temporary records.

Every candidate for a school athletic team will provide a consent form that has been signed by the student's parent/ caregiver prior to being able to participate on an athletic team and the student also will be required, on an annual basis, to have a physical examination prior to participating on a school athletic team and with the written consent of the student's parent/caregiver will be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The physical examination is only valid for thirteen months and must be renewed in order for a student to be able to participate on an athletic team. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the Director of Athletics or designee.

Whenever the school nurse finds a child experiencing any disease or medical problem, the situation will be reported to the parent/caregiver in writing or by telephone. A copy of the written report and summary of any verbal report will be filed at the school in the school nurse's office.

The school nurse will make a monthly report to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health of the number of students examined; the number excluded; and the number recommended for treatment or special adjustment of work and such information will be provided to the Superintendent or designee upon request. Additionally, all exclusions of students are promptly reported to the school principal and the Superintendent or designee. In all cases of exclusion or recommendation, the causes will be included in the report.

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS, SC POLICY JG

The placement of students for instructional purposes is the prerogative and responsibility of the school. The sole purpose of careful placement procedures is to place each student in classroom and group settings in which optimal learning will take place. **All decisions of the building principal are final and not subject to appeal.**

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

The Watertown Public Schools in keeping with the regulations set out in the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment requires notification to parents/caregivers and/or students under the following conditions:

- Instructional materials are made available for inspection by parents/caregivers if those materials will be used in connection with a federal U.S. Department of Education or other publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and
- That schools obtain prior written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education or other publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
 2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent/caregiver; or
 8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
- The right of parents/caregivers to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students. This term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.
- The right to prior knowledge and consent if the school district administers physical examinations or screenings. This does not include hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.
- The right to prior knowledge of the school district's collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.
- The right to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of personal information.

The Watertown Public Schools will notify parents, caregivers, and/or eligible students the specific or approximate dates during the school year if and when these activities are scheduled. Such notification will be provided through specific notices, newsletters, and/or the Watertown Public Schools website.

This federal requirement is not intended to preempt applicable provisions of State law that require parental notification. The law does not apply to any physical examination or screening that is permitted or required by State law, including such examinations or screenings without parental notification. The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The requirements under PPRA do not supersede any of the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM STUDENTS, SC POLICY JIE

The Watertown School Committee wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave. After giving birth, the student is eligible to return immediately or can access up to eight weeks of tutoring.

The school district does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

PREVENTION OF THE RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS, SC POLICY JKAA

The Watertown Public Schools complies with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) restraint regulations, 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. ("Regulations"), to the extent required by law. According to their terms, the Regulations apply not only at school but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. A copy of the Regulations can be obtained at www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html.

SAFETY, SECURITY, AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Watertown Public Schools have developed safety, security, and emergency preparedness protocols in collaboration with the Watertown Fire Department, the Watertown Police Department, and the Watertown Health Department. The procedures are reviewed at least annually and cover a wide range of scenarios. Each staff member is provided with a copy of the Emergency Operations Plan for reference. The plan includes specific steps to take in the event of situations including, but not limited to, the need for sheltering-in-place, responding to an active shooter, and evacuating a school.

Training and Drills

Every year, all staff review the procedures outlined in the district Emergency Operations Plan so they are familiar with how to proceed in the event of an emergency. Staff and students participate in regular practice drills to establish routines for responding swiftly and effectively. Drills are conducted in a manner that is appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children in each class and grade level.

District and City Critical Incident Team

The Watertown Public Schools has a district Critical Incident Team (CIT) that is responsible for drafting emergency policies and procedures, training staff, and assembling to determine a course of action in times of crisis. The CIT meets monthly and includes representatives from the five schools and preschool program, school nursing staff, the police and fire departments, and district administration.

School Specific Critical Incident Teams

Each individual school also has a safety team that includes administrators, teachers, staff and parents from that school. The team meets periodically throughout the year to review procedures and plan for emergency response. The school safety team also meets as needed to evaluate and respond to challenging community situations, plan next steps, and offer support to children, parents, and staff.

Definitions and Processes

The following safety drills are practiced throughout the school year.

Evacuation "*Leave immediately*" - This protocol is used when there is a fire or other internal unsafe condition. Students and staff evacuate to a designated area at a safe distance from the school building.

Shelter-in-Place "*Stay where you are*" - This protocol is used when there is an external security threat such as severe weather. It may also be used when there is an acute medical situation in school. During a shelter-in-place, students and staff stay inside their classrooms. External doors may be locked based upon the specific situation. Instruction can continue as usual during a shelter-in-place.

Lockdown "*Silent and invisible*" - This response is used when there is an internal security threat. Students and staff are hidden and quiet in locked and darkened classrooms.

ALICE "*Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate*" - This protocol is used when there is an active shooter or other type of violence in progress. Students and staff assess the situation and determine the best course(s) of action. They may evacuate immediately or they may follow lockdown procedures described above. The situation is assessed continuously and staff/students may change course as events unfold.

Social and Emotional Well Being

While the above paragraphs describe how the district prepares to respond to emergency situations, including active school shootings, prevention remains the most important aspect of the schools' work. The most important factor in prevention of violence targeting schools is to ensure that all students within the Watertown Public Schools community feel connected with others. A positive relationship with at least one peer or adult within the school setting significantly reduces the risk that a student will resort to violence against the school. To support the social and emotional health of all students, Watertown Public Schools:

- Maintains a low student to school counselor ratio of approximately 1:135 (American School Counselor Association recommends 250 students per counselor)
- Employs additional mental health staff, including school psychologists and behavioral specialists, to increase likelihood of students connecting with at least one staff member
- Begins teaching social and emotional skills at the preschool level using AI's Pals curriculum
- Utilizes the Responsive Classroom approach to Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in grades k-5 and Responsive Advisory in grades 6-8
- Utilizes practice of Restorative Justice PreK-12

- Teaches Signs of Suicide curriculum in grades 7 and 9
- Responds to all reports of bullying and harassment
- Conducts and analyzes Youth Behavioral Risk Survey data
- Screens students for substance use in grades 7 and 9

Security

All school buildings are secured with locked doors. Visitors must report to a single entrance door equipped with a camera. Upon entering, identification is run through the RAPTOR system to verify identity as well as to alert of any known safety concerns. All faculty and staff members, as well as volunteers, are fingerprinted as well as having periodic CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks.

School Resource Officers - SROs

Watertown Public Schools partners with the Watertown Police Department to provide a School Resource Officer at Watertown Middle School and Watertown High School. This is a long-standing partnership that is meant to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all Watertown students.

A “school resource officer” is a duly sworn municipal police officer, or a special officer appointed by the chief of police, with all necessary training and up-to-date certificates, including special school resource officer certification as required by subsection (b) of section 3 of chapter 6E of the Massachusetts General Laws and is charged with: (i) providing law enforcement; (ii) promoting school safety and security services to elementary and secondary public schools; and (iii) maintaining a positive school climate for all students, families and staff. Additionally, the program is designed to enhance cultural understanding between students and law enforcement; promote school participation and completion by students; facilitate appropriate information-sharing to best support students both inside and outside of the school setting; and inform the Parties’ collaborative relationship to best serve the school community. When necessary, the SRO may be granted access to personally identifiable information in order to maintain the safety of students and staff within the school. This information shall not be shared with any other police official or governmental agency.

Importantly, the principal or principal’s designee shall be responsible for student code of conduct violations and routine disciplinary violations. Many acts of student conduct that may contain all the necessary elements of a criminal offense are best handled through the school’s disciplinary process. In order to maintain safety within the school, it may be necessary to involve the SRO when all other interventions have been exhausted. The SRO may be responsible for investigating and responding to potential criminal or delinquent offenses as well as student conduct that requires immediate intervention. The Watertown Public Schools has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Watertown Police Department with the purpose of facilitating relationship-building by the SRO such that students, faculty, staff, and community members see the SRO as contributing to a positive school climate. This will be realized by supporting and fostering the safe and healthy development of all students and families in the District through strategic and appropriate use of law enforcement resources and with

the mutual understanding that school participation and completion are indispensable to achieving positive outcomes for youth and public safety. If for any reason any person wishes to file a complaint against a School Resource Officer, they may do so at the following link:
<https://www.openpolice.org/dept/MA-watertown-police-dept>.

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS: SC POLICY JF

All children of school age who reside in the town will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under Watertown School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency and of legal guardianship are required by the school administration.

A statement declaring Watertown as the student's place of residency is also required prior to entering the 6th and 9th grades.

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES, SC POLICY ADC

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The goals of the Watertown School District's special education program are to allow each child with a disability to grow and achieve at their own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to learn alongside their peers to the greatest extent feasible.

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for evaluation, in designing appropriate individual education programs (IEPs), and in assessing educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all students with special needs between the ages of three and twenty-one who have not attained a high school diploma are eligible for special education.

The School Committee recognizes that most children with special needs are best educated in the general education classroom if they are provided the specially designed instruction, accommodations, and support they need.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of some children are such that separate programs, classes, or schools may be necessary to provide a free and appropriate public education. In keeping with federal and state laws and regulations, special education services are provided in a continuum of placements: full inclusion, partial inclusion, substantially separate, day school, and residential school.

Family and student participation in decision making is one of the core tenets of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and as such it is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with families in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs.

Parents/caregivers, and, as appropriate, students will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning disability, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parent/caregivers will be advised of their due process rights under the law.

Parents/caregivers who believe their child may have a disability and be in need of special education services should contact the Principal or Evaluation Team Chairperson to assist with the process. State regulations governing the Chapter 766 process and the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure are available in all schools for review. Further questions about the special education process can be directed to the Director of Student Services, Kathleen Desmarais at kathleen.desmarais@watertown.k12.ma.us or 617 926 7766.

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES, SC POLICY JQ

The Watertown School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. While no student will be denied access due to an inability to pay fees, all students will be required to remit charges and fines.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon Committee approval. The schools, however, may:

- Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.
- Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the denial of participation in extra class activities and graduation exercises and activities while the student is enrolled in the District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS, SC POLICY JLC

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment. The District recognizes that parents/caregivers have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision. Each year parents/caregivers shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/caregiver is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have. The District shall maintain an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies.

Emergency procedures shall include the following: Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the Paramedic Assistance Unit of the Fire Department. In instances when the Paramedic Assistance Unit is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have; Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parents/caregivers.

Requests made by parents/caregivers for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee; Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately; Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or caregiver will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation. Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expenses incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District. 1 of 2 Page 281 of 322 File: JLC Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, SC POLICY JJA

Student organizations in the Watertown School District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building Principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the board.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate District administrator for review of the Principal's decision.

The eligibility of a student for participation in extracurricular activities will be determined through the application of Policy JJIC.

All extracurricular activities sponsored by the Watertown Public Schools are nondiscriminatory in that they do not exclude students on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, national origin,

sexual orientation, or disability. Students experiencing homelessness or who are not proficient with English who meet the relevant eligibility criteria shall have the opportunity to access and participate in extracurricular school activities.

STUDENT PRODUCED MEDIA, SC POLICY JICE

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student produced media, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

The Watertown School Committee will at least annually review their support of student produced media, and encourage student produced media 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 subject to the limitations as contained in this policy.

Student produced media will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

All student produced media shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

Distribution of Literature

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, SC POLICY JI

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his/her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents/caregivers through handbooks distributed annually.

STUDENT TRAVEL, SC POLICY JJH

All student trips which include late night or overnight travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought from the Superintendent or designee no less than 30 days (90 days for international travel) prior to the scheduled trip dates.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The School Committee will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

The Watertown School Committee authorizes athletic teams, extra-curricular participants and/or individual athletes to travel out-of-state for the purpose of regularly scheduled contests, scrimmages, or regional events. The Athletic Director and/or Principal is responsible for scheduling such events. All out-of-state travel for athletic purposes must be approved by the High School Principal.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SC POLICY JJIC/JJJ

It is the policy of the Watertown Public Schools to exceed MIAA requirements for student eligibility.

1. A student at Watertown High School who wishes to participate in any Watertown High School interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activity must be in compliance with Watertown High School eligibility requirements as published annually in the student handbook.
2. A student who feels there has been a misinterpretation or that an inequitable or unjust application of these eligibility requirements has occurred may seek remediation through the application of School Committee policy or student grievance procedures.

To be eligible to take part in an athletic program, a student's academic standing and care of school-owned equipment must adhere to the following policies of the School Committee.

1. No student who has been declared ineligible under the guidelines of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) may participate at any level of athletics including practice or scrimmages.
2. Students must reimburse the school for lost school-owned equipment that was loaned to the students' custody and control. A student will remain ineligible to participate in Athletics until reimbursement is made. The school Principal may waive this policy on cases where:
 - a. The student stored and locked athletic equipment on school-owned or school-controlled property (Victory Field) and the student demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Principal that a theft took place; or
 - b. When the Principal determines the student does not have the financial resources to meet the cost of reimbursement.

TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO, SC POLICY IHAMB

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs in grades K-12.

WELLNESS POLICY, SC POLICY ADF

Watertown Public School District is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social emotional success, we need to provide positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Watertown Public Schools endeavors to ensure environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions.

To that end we strive to ensure:

- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus – in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- We encourage students to be physically active before, during and after school including weekends;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The District coordinates the wellness policy with other aspects of school management, including the District's School Improvement Plan, when appropriate.

This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in the District.

Items available on the Watertown Public Schools Website under the “Parent/Student” tab:

- AHERA Asbestos Notification
- Community Building Use
- Watertown Public Schools Health Curriculum Outline, K-12
- Memorandum of Understanding Between the Watertown Public Schools and the Watertown Police Department

SUMMARIES & SIGNATURE PAGE

Complete and return the signature page to your child's school no later than one week after the receipt of the WPS Student Handbook.

The Watertown Public Schools is required to collect signatures to ascertain that parents/caregivers and students have read and understand the following:

1. Content of the Student Handbook (including Media Release, Directory Information, Transfer of Records, and Student Publication on the Internet)
2. Information concerning an Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)

To assist you, please refer to the following summaries.

Complete and return the signature page to your child's school no later than one week after the receipt of the Student Handbook.

Pictures, Names, or Quotes in the Media

Sometimes media (such as newspaper, television, radio, or cable) reporters or photographers would like to be involved in activities in the schools. Having a picture in the paper for participating in a program is usually acceptable to parent/caregivers, but occasionally, for legal reasons, it is not prudent. **If you do not wish your child's name to be used or picture to be taken for the media, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

Directory Information Notice

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

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: name; telephone number; date of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees, honors, and awards received; and post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the School System's discretion, without the consent of a parent/caregiver of a student or an eligible student. Parents/caregivers and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/caregiver or eligible student, or otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Any parent/caregiver or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file a written notification to this effect with the school's principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. You can write this notification on the bottom of the Signature Page.

In the event a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither parent/caregiver nor eligible student objects to the release of directory information.

Notice on Transfer of Records to Another School

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07 (g), notice is hereby given that the Watertown Public Schools forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent/caregiver or eligible student.

An Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)

Parent Notification

The Health Education and Science programs of Watertown Public Schools contain comprehensive PreK-12 curricula. The goal of the program is to help students acquire appropriate content background to develop the life skills, including problem solving, communication, and decision-making abilities, to prepare for a healthy and productive future.

The Health Education and Science programs have been designed by our professional staff, using their own research based programs as well as programs developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Red Cross, Operation Lifesaver, and other health and science education resources.

During health and science classes, student questions will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be required to answer questions or reveal personal information. Material is presented factually.

Under Massachusetts law and the Watertown School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. If you would like to exempt your child from a particular class, please send the request in writing.

The Coordinator of Health Education or the Principal are available to meet with you to review curriculum and materials. To review these materials, please call to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions regarding the exemption process for the Health and Science Programs, please call your school's principal.

To exempt your child from any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.

An Act Relative to Bullying in the Schools, M.G.L. c 71, § 370

Please read section “Anti-bullying” in this handbook.

WPS HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE:

***THIS FORM IS PART OF THE ONLINE REGISTRATION OR ONLINE VERIFICATION PROCESS
OR YOU CAN DELIVER A HARD COPY TO SCHOOL OR HOMEROOM TEACHER***

Complete and sign both sides of this page.

Student Name:

Parent/caregiver Name:

☐

I acknowledge that I have read and we have discussed the preceding rules and regulations of both the SCHOOL(S) AND DISTRICT HANDBOOK.

☐

I acknowledge that I have read the information concerning parent notification of any classes that will be held on human sexual education or sexual issues as related to Sex Education M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A

☐

I acknowledge that I have read the information concerning parent/caregiver notification on bullying as related to An Act Relative to Bullying in the Schools, M.G.L., c 71 § 370.

Student Signature:

Date:

Parent/caregiver Signature:

Date:

STUDENT RECORD DIRECTORY INFORMATION OPT-OUT

State law (603 CMR 23.07) permits the Watertown Public Schools to release the following directory information without the consent of the eligible student or parent/caregiver: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. If you wish to **OPT OUT** of this information sharing and have the school withhold all or part of your student's directory information, **PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW** and return it to your student's school.

By signing the box below, I hereby **OPT OUT** and do not permit the student's personally identifiable directory information to be released as part of its information sharing:

Student's Name			
Parent/caregiver Signature		Date:	

PARENT/CAREGIVER PERMISSION FOR STUDENT PUBLICATION ON THE INTERNET

During the school year, students attending Watertown Public Schools will be creating many different projects or participating in events, some of which will appear on the district, school, and classroom websites and social media accounts. These projects or events will pertain directly to the curriculum. This gives students the added incentive to produce meaningful work that is published in a real platform for others to see. These projects may include: photographs and/or video of students, the student's voice or student work such as illustrations and writing. We will only include students' first name with their published work.

Please check the boxes below as they apply

I give my permission for the following to be published on the District's website or social media accounts (check all of the boxes that apply)

☐

Student's Voice

☐

Student's Photograph/Video

☐

Student's Work

By signing below, I verify that I understand the above release about publishing my child's voice, photo or student work on the District, School, or Classroom web pages or social media accounts and that I have indicated my preferences. If my preference changes during the school year, I will notify the teacher or principal.

Student Name _____

Student's Grade & Classroom teacher (K-5)/English teacher (6-12) _____

Parent/caregiver Signature _____

Parent/caregiver

Name _____ Date _____

Please let us know if you have access to the Internet at home. This will help us in our plans to have Internet available before and after school.

We have Internet access at home.

Yes

☐

No

☐

If no, we will provide you with paper copies of the handbooks. You will also receive a separate form for updating contact information from your school.

Please indicate if you would like your information shared with the Parent-Teacher Organization for your child's school and if so, which information:

Yes

☐

No

☐

If yes, which information:

Parents/caregivers' names:

☐

Street Address:

☐

Primary Phone:

☐

Email:

☐