



Wausau Area Virtual Education PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

Empowering 21st Century Learners – Anytime, Anywhere

SECONDARY- GRADES 6-12

2021-22

Parent / Student

Handbook

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Welcome to Wausau Area Virtual Education (WAVE)

Grades 6-12

Overview

The Wausau School District is dedicated to offering students and families a variety of pathways and learning options to achieve our District mission *to Advance Student Learning, Achievement, and Success*. Wausau Area Virtual Education (WAVE) has been developed to provide opportunities for students to choose their time and place of learning, determine the pace at which they approach their subjects, and provide them with the necessary tools to be successful in their skill development.

Wausau Area Virtual Education enables the Wausau School District to provide online learning options for our students including:

- Relevant courses in flexible locations using an accommodating time schedule
- High quality, interactive courses aligned to state and national standards
- Middle school and high school level curriculum
- More than 70 different course options
- Credit recovery courses for students who are credit deficient
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses
- Modified rates of learning to accommodate the student – traditional, accelerated or extended (including the potential for early graduation)
- The experience of online learning in preparation for future training in post-secondary education and career readiness
- Flexibility for students and families who are balancing a high quality education with sports, art, or other demanding schedules.
- Flexibility for families whose situations make day-to-day attendance in a brick and mortar school challenging

Wausau Area Virtual Education is in partnership with Wisconsin E-Network. All courses are aligned to national and state standards. Course goals and objectives are available upon request. All courses are 1 or 2 semesters in length and taught by Wisconsin certified teachers.

What is Online Education?

Online learning is an instructional delivery method that is not dependent upon the student and teacher being in the same location. Sometimes called an asynchronous environment, it is offered via the Internet. The courses offer a flexible pace, schedule, and location. Students work at their own pace with instruction and support from Wisconsin DPI certified staff that may or may not be Wausau School District teachers. With trained and certified teachers, students get one-on-one attention and communication on an ongoing basis throughout their courses. Students get upfront attention from their online instructor and receive support from an assigned Local Education Guide (LEG), sometimes referred to as a Coach, from the Wausau School District.

Blended Learning Opportunities

WAVE strives to create multiple pathways for student learning. In addition to virtual office hours, teachers may hold face-to-face opportunities for student engagement at the WAVE Center at Longfellow Administration Center: 415 Seymour Street, Wausau

Local Resident Advantages

Residents of the Wausau School District and surrounding communities have some advantages attending WAVE versus other online programs. Living in the area of your online school allows for access to participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, school events, and networking with a peer group. Additionally, students have the support of the Wausau School District technology department, school counseling staff, administration, and pupil services. Additionally, students have the option to take up to two courses on site at the middle or high schools.

Local Education Guide (LEG) / Coach and Online Instructor

A Local Education Guide (LEG) will serve as the local facilitator for the student taking an online course. This facilitator will act as a support system for the online student and as a liaison between the student and online course instructor when problems arise. The student will also have an online instructor for each virtual course who is responsible for monitoring student academic achievement. Students will be able to communicate with the online instructor regarding course content by phone, Google Hangout, or through email. Students can schedule real-time appointments with their online instructor at the mall location.

Student Commitment

Students must commit to completing any online course taken within the agreed time period of approximately 18 to 20 weeks per semester course. To be considered as a full time WAVE enrollee, a student must commit to successfully complete at least one grade level per calendar year (5.5 to 6 credits

or more) or to meet the best needs of the student as determined by the online learning team and the student's family.

Commitment to WAVE

Families who enroll at WAVE are agreeing to commit to at least one semester of enrollment. If after a semester the decision is made that the student is better served in the brick and mortar environment, arrangements will be made to transfer the student to his/her resident school at the end of the term.

Course Drop Policy

A student has 21 days from the time a course begins to withdraw without penalty. If the withdrawal request comes within the first 21 days, the student will receive a withdrawal pass (WP) on the transcript and it will not affect the student's GPA. After 21 days, the student will receive a withdrawal fail (WF) on the transcript, and it will be counted as part of the student's overall GPA.

Course End Date

Students typically have up to 20 weeks to complete a course. If a student enrolls late, the timeline may be shortened. The course end date is shown on the student's dashboard, in progress reports, and in the gradebook. It is important students pay attention to this end date and complete all work prior to the course expiring. Course content will be inaccessible at 10:00pm the night the course ends. Plan ahead to receive exam passwords and complete all work by the end date. Any work not completed by this point will turn to zeros in the gradebook which will negatively impact a student's grade in the course.

Course Extension:

- A two week course extension can be provided to students if a written request is submitted to the WAVE principal before the course end date, not to extend 5 months of open class time.
- Any extension beyond two weeks will be considered if there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. medical reasons, family emergency, etc.). This request must be initiated by the student or parent/guardian and submitted to the WAVE principal for consideration. The principal, and if necessary, guidance counselor and the student's teachers, will decide on an appropriate end date based on the circumstances.

Parent Engagement

WAVE strongly supports the role of the parent in the educational process of the students. In any online setting, the commitment of the parents to the educational process directly enhances the learning success of the student. Parents are a critical part of the support of their child as an online learner. Parent participation in the learning process should include:

- Maintaining regular communication with the LEG, and if needed, the teacher.
- Ensuring your child is spending adequate time on the courses and is progressing each day through the prescribed instructional activities.
- Advocating for your child by encouraging him/her to ask questions of the teacher and seeking additional help whenever necessary.

- Following the procedures required for state and course assessments.

Communication

Consistent and timely communication is a necessity for success in an online school. It is expected that communication to and from teachers/administrators/LEGS/parents and students is responded to within a 24 hour time period. Failure to meet these expectations may be grounds for probation or dismissal from the program.

Enrollment Procedures

Students must complete an application for Wausau Area Virtual Education. This application can be accessed on WAVE's website: www.wsdwave.org.

Students who are new to the district must also complete District registration materials. A face-to-face meeting will take place between the student/parent and school principal to determine if online education appears to be a good fit for the student. Aspects to be reviewed include current grades and attendance records. This can be an important indicator of the student's future progress in WAVE. The students and parents will be expected to sign contracts indicating acceptance and adherence to established guidelines and expectations.

Secondary Enrollment Options (Grades 6-12):

- Residents of the Wausau School District can participate full-time in WAVE with an opportunity to take up to two classes face-to-face at their middle or high school of residence. Students are eligible to participate in athletic and co-curricular activities at their middle or high school of residence.
- At this time, the only way a resident student is allowed to take an individual course (part-time enrollment at WAVE) is through counselor or principal recommendation. This is done on a case by case basis where data supports the idea a course taken virtually will benefit the student.

Enrollment for out-of-district students

- Students who wish to open enroll to WAVE from outside the Wausau School District must follow the open enrollment procedures dictated by the [Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\)](#). All timelines must be adhered to as prescribed by the DPI.

Full-Time Enrollment Status

In general, full-time enrollment status requires taking a minimum of six (6) half-credit classes per semester. All enrollments should lead to fulfillment of graduation requirements of the Wausau School District. During the senior year, should a student need less than six half-credit classes for graduation, the student may request a waiver to take fewer than six classes. This is accomplished by the student and

parent submitting a written request outlining why this request is being made. The student and parent will be notified, in writing, within 10 business days whether the request is being honored.

Students with Disabilities

Students with special education needs should contact the Director of Special Education, Wendy Cartledge, at 715-261-0532 to discuss current IEP placement and goals. These will help determine the proper placement for the student and identify the necessary accommodations needed to assist him/her in being successful in an online setting.

Individualized Program Planning

In order to provide a high quality, standards-based curriculum, courses will be provided through the Wausau School District using a vetted curriculum. All courses are aligned to national and state standards. Course goals and objectives are available upon request. Students will work with WAVE personnel to develop a yearlong plan that meets Wausau School District Board of Education established criteria for a full-time student and leads to the completion of graduation requirements. If a home-based learner is participating on a part-time basis, parents must file an application for home-based learning with the Department of Public Instruction. Students can expect to spend just as many hours completing an online course as they would in completing a course in a traditional setting. **Students should plan to spend 4-5 hours per day working on their online courses in order to complete 5.5 to 6+ credits per year.**

Assessments

Course assessments are typically completed in the same environment used for course work. It may occasionally be necessary for students to be proctored during a testing period (i.e. AP tests, or in some instances final exams will be proctored at a designated site on a set date). Most exams are password protected and students will contact either their teacher or their LEG for the password.

Additionally, the State of Wisconsin requires testing of all public education students including those enrolled at WAVE. The tests take place in a specific time frame designated by the State of Wisconsin each year. In accordance with State law. It is required that State tests be administered by a trained proctor who must be present at all times while the tests are administered. Parents are permitted to opt their children out of all state required examinations by requesting so in writing to WAVE Administration.

NOTE:

- Required Civics Exam- students are required to take a state mandated 100 question civics exam as a graduation requirement. In order to pass, students must earn a 65% on the test. Students with IEPs must also take the test, but they do not have to pass to graduate.

Requesting Exam Passwords

Many mid-term and final exams within courses are password protected. In general, a student must have completed all work preceding the exam before the password will be given. Most course exams can be proctored at home by a trusted adult, however, in some instances students may be required to attend the WAVE location at the mall, Longfellow Administration Center, or another location to take these exams.

Students must plan ahead to ensure they request passwords or make arrangements to take tests on location prior to the close of the class. Passwords will be provided to the student by either the classroom teacher or the Local Education Guide (LEG).

On-Site Courses for Students Residing in or Near Wausau

Full-time WAVE students who choose to take up to two face-to-face courses at either a Wausau School District Middle School or High School will be responsible for their own transportation for any course requiring transportation other than the regularly scheduled resident district transportation. Students are eligible to take up to two face-to-face course(s) open to their grade level. All prerequisite procedures apply. Students are responsible for all course requirements, attendance policies, and school rules or procedures.

Transfer Credits

Public and private school students wishing to transfer previously earned credits must provide a properly authorized transcript indicating all courses completed prior to enrolling in WAVE. These will be reviewed before final acceptance. Students wishing to transfer credits into WAVE from home-based learning should contact the WAVE administrator. Home-based credits will be reviewed by the Education Department and Pupil Services Department to determine applicability. To begin the process, students must provide course work documentation including a copy of the DPI application for home-based education.

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA)

Students must be enrolled in the district as a full time student to be eligible for WIAA athletic participation. Students will be required to check with the athletic director of their high school of residence regarding their eligibility for WIAA participation. Please see the WIAA website for a comprehensive list of rules and guidelines. (<https://www.wiaawi.org/Schools/EligibilityRulesForms.aspx>)

NCAA Courses

If a student wants to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II school, he or she should start by registering for a Certification Account with the NCAA Eligibility Center at **eligibilitycenter.org**. If the student wants to

play Division III sports or the student athlete is not sure where he or she wants to compete, start by creating a Profile Page at eligibilitycenter.org.

WAVE offers NCAA approved classes, but it is the student's responsibility to ensure they are meeting all requirements for Division I or II eligibility.

Advanced Placement Courses

WAVE offers over 20 Advanced Placement (AP) course options for students. Students who wish to take the AP tests in the spring will be required to take the initiative in signing up for these courses and paying the required fees. WAVE's College Board # is 500022.

Co-Curricular School Activities

Students enrolled in WAVE may participate in all co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered in the District assuming the students are located in Wausau or the surrounding community and can have access to transportation. WAVE is proud to offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Our programs are seen as an extension of the classroom. Our desire is that activities can be an enriching and healthful experience in which physical, mental, and social growth is stimulated through academic, athletic, and social organizations. We encourage student participation in these activities.

Grading

All online grades will be based on a 4.0 pt. scale and monitored by the Local Education Guide (LEG). Grades will be used to calculate Grade Point Averages (GPA) and class rank. The following system will be used for calculation of GPAs for grades 6-12:

A = 4.0

B = 3.0

C = 2.0

D = 1.0

F = 0.0

The percentage necessary for each grade is:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% and below

Academic Awards (full-time students)

Academic awards are based on semester grades. Qualifications shown below:

Medal Awards: Based on Semester GPA

Gold Award	4.0 GPA
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Silver Award	3.75 GPA ↑
Bronze Award	3.5 GPA ↑

Varsity Letters “W” Award: Based on Cumulative GPA

Senior	4.0 GPA
Junior	3.75 GPA ↑
Sophomore	3.5 GPA ↑

Course Failure and Repeat of Course for Credit

Students are permitted to retake courses with an earned grade of D or F (failed) that have been taken at WAVE. Courses taken in other Districts or other states are not available for retake.

Grade replacement for D or F grades is permitted under these circumstances:

- Student must have earned a grade of D or F; no grade replacement will be allowed for grades higher than this
- The student enrolls in the identical course in which the D or F was earned

Other considerations regarding grade replacement policy:

- Grade replacement is not offered for courses in which a grade of withdraw fail (W/F) was issued
- Where the identical course is no longer available, a student will not be permitted to utilize grade replacement
- When a student utilizes grade replacement, only the higher of the two grades earned for the course will be awarded credit and quality points (for GPA purposes) and appear on the transcript.

Academic Integrity Policy

Wausau Area Virtual Education (WAVE) regards academic honesty as a cornerstone of its educational mission. It is expected that all work submitted for the purpose of meeting course requirements will represent the original efforts of the individual student. This includes, but is not limited to, test taking, homework, math computation, class assignments, and the original creation of essays, compositions, poetry, term papers and research.

All work submitted by a student should be a true reflection of that person’s effort and ability. If this is not the case, then the student has demonstrated unacceptable academic behavior and will be subject to disciplinary action. Administrators, teachers, students and families are all important contributors to upholding academic integrity in the school learning community.

Plagiarism is defined as copying/stealing and passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another, using someone else's created production without crediting the source, or committing literary theft. Examples include the following-

- Turning in a paper retrieved from an Internet source as one's own
- Using another student's work in whole or part and handing it in as one's own
- Using information from an encyclopedia, book, textbook, website, database, etc., without citing the source
- Using another person's idea, opinion, or theory without citing the source
- Using facts, statistics, graphs, drawings, pictures, images, sounds or other pieces of information which was found from any source that is not common knowledge, without citing the source
- Using quotations of another person's actual spoken or written word without citing the source
- Paraphrasing (putting into your own words) another person's unique ideas, spoken or written, without citing the source
- Submitting math calculations or answers to problems obtained from outside sources
- Using online translators for global language assignments and assessment

As the Internet becomes increasingly more accessible and sophisticated, the incidents of plagiarism in submitted student papers and projects have increased. Many institutions of higher education (post-high school) penalize plagiarism with student expulsion. Therefore, in the interest of the student's future education, as well as the school's part in the personal development of students, WAVE will follow the policy on plagiarism as outlined below:

A first plagiarism offense will result in: The teacher will provide written documentation of the plagiarism and will:

- Discuss the plagiarism issue with the student
- Contact the school principal to make him/her aware of the situation
- Contact the parents to inform them of the plagiarism issue
- The student may be allowed to redo the assignment according to teacher specifications. The student's grade on the redone assignment will be no higher than a "70%." Failure to rewrite the assignment will result in a "0" for that assignment.

A second plagiarism offense will result in: a "0" for the assignment and it may not be redone. The teacher, parents, and student in consultation with the principal may consider additional consequences for the second plagiarism offense.

A third plagiarism offense will result in: a "0" for course and the student will be removed from the course. Additionally, the teacher, parents, and student in consultation with the principal will determine whether the student may remain enrolled in WAVE.

High School Graduation Requirements

Students who attend WAVE will have the opportunity to receive a WAVE diploma. The District awards diplomas to students who have met academic requirements of the District as prescribed by Wausau School District Diploma and Equivalency Certificate Requirements - Policy 5515. In order to graduate with a WAVE diploma, a student must satisfy the requirements set out in this policy. The policy requirements are grounded in the District's curriculum and state law requirements applicable to granting a diploma.

A student must earn 23 credits (including required subjects outlined below). These credits must be earned in high school level courses.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

English	4.0 credits
Math	3.0 credits
Science	3.0 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits
Physical Education	1.5 credits
Health	0.5 credits
Financial Literacy	0.5 credits
Electives	7.0 credits
TOTAL	23.0 credits

** As part of graduation requirements, all students must pass a state required civics exam.*

Early Graduation

The Wausau School District Board of Education believes in a philosophy of education that recognizes students learn and mature at widely differing rates and that some students may be prepared to accept and take advantage of career and educational opportunities before the end of four years of high school. For this reason, a request for early graduation may be granted by the high school principal if all of the following criteria are met:

1. A written request signed by the student and parent/guardian for early graduation has been submitted to the high school principal no later than December 1 for a mid-year graduation and April 15 for an end of year graduation
2. The student must submit the rationale for early graduation and any post high school plans.
3. The high school principal and high school counselor have approved the idea of early graduation for the student following conferences with the student and parent/guardian.
4. All District graduation requirements must be met prior to the date of graduation.

Honor Cords

Graduates earning a cumulative 3.5 GPA after semester 1 of their graduating year are eligible for honor cords. Qualifying students will have the option to purchase these cords prior to graduation.

Transcript Changes

All requests for changes or modifications to transcripts must be made to the WAVE Principal in writing and must be submitted by the student requesting the change. Upon receipt of the request, the Principal will have 10 business days in which to research and verify the validity of the request. Once a decision has been made on the request, the Principal will notify the student in writing of the decision, and if necessary, order an appropriate change to the transcript. The request along with any supporting documentation or evidence will become part of the student's permanent file.

Reasons for a Transcript Change or Modification:

- Replacement grade for a course retaken due to a grade of D or F.
- Clerical error
- Identification of falsified records from another institution

Academic Probation

Grades: Maintaining passing grades is a requirement for all students enrolled in WAVE. It is especially important with the inherent flexibility online instruction provides that students are held to a high standard of academic rigor. Progress checks will be performed throughout the school year. If at any time students are failing 2+ classes at a progress monitoring check, that student and his/her guardian will be notified in writing that the student is being placed on academic probation. If this situation persists, and grades are not improved, the student can be dismissed from WAVE and will be returned to their home school of residence.

Academic Integrity: Students must abide by the Academic Integrity Policy. Failure to do so can result in Academic Probation or dismissal from WAVE.

Attendance: Students must login to their coursework and spend a minimum of 180 minutes per school day on their classes, or an average of 900 minutes per week. It will take consistent effort for students to be successful. If a student does not login in during a five day window, that student will be considered absent without permission. If a situation arises and a student will not be working for a period of five days or longer, the student / parent must notify WAVE administrators. All planned absences must be pre-authorized. It is possible to work ahead of schedule to maintain pacing and attendance expectations. Unexcused, frequent, and prolonged absences from the coursework will be grounds for probation or dismissal. (See DPI Guidelines on *Failure to Participate*- page 13)

Communication: It is essential that emails are answered within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). Much of what happens in the online school is based on scope and sequence. Frequently, communication will be an important part of this process. Furthermore, it is important that questions are answered in a timely fashion to alleviate frustration and provide a productive and collaborative learning environment. Failure to comply with these expectations may be grounds for probation or dismissal.

Online Attendance & Course Work Completion Requirements

Attendance: Students in WAVE must meet attendance requirements. Attendance in online programming is performance-based and measured not only by logging into the course(s) but by successful submission

of completed coursework, participation in course activities, such as threaded discussions, and communication with the online instructor.

The minimum attendance requirement is to successfully submit coursework to pace for each online course. This means logging in on a daily basis to complete work and submit required assignments for all courses. A full-time online student should be logged in and working for a minimum of 180 minutes per day on school days. **Because attendance is measured by logging in and completing work, a period of inactivity (not logging in to work, no assignment submission) for 5 school days will be viewed as Habitual Truancy and is therefore in violation of Wisconsin's Compulsory Attendance Statutes 118.15(1)(a) that require a child attend school regularly until graduation from high school, or until the end of the semester in which he/she turns 18 years of age, or until he/she is excused from attendance by the school board.** The student and parent(s) will be contacted and a face-to-face meeting will be scheduled with the student, parent, and principal to discuss options. The student may be dropped from WAVE and required to return to their home school of residence. This WAVE policy is reflected in the DPI guidelines below:

Failure to Participate (Virtual Charter School) - DPI Guidelines

Whenever a pupil attending a virtual charter school fails to respond appropriately to a school assignment or directive from instructional staff within 5 school days, the virtual charter school must notify the pupil's parent or legal guardian.

*The third time in the same semester that a pupil fails to respond appropriately to a school assignment or directive from instructional staff within 5 school days, the virtual charter school must also notify the nonresident district, the pupil's resident district and the DPI. The nonresident district may terminate the pupil's open enrollment. **[In the case of a resident student enrolled in the virtual charter, the student's home school will be notified and the student may be sent back to that school.]***

If the pupil's parent notifies the virtual charter school in writing before the assignment or directive that the pupil will not be available to respond to the assignment or directive during a specified period, not to exceed a total of 10 days during a school year, the school days during that period do not count against the 5 school days. The pupil must complete any assignments missed during that period.

Course Work Completion: Students are required to complete all **gradable and non-gradable** coursework as prescribed through the course and instructor. Students must complete all required assignments before earning course credit. Modifications can be made to course requirements when agreed upon by all stakeholders or through an IEP. Failure to keep up with course pacing can result in a student's dismissal from WAVE. Oftentimes, students will be asked to revise and resubmit work. This is part of the teaching and learning that happens in an online school. Assignments are considered complete when an instructor deems them so.

Final Exams: Students are required to take course exams as outlined in the course. Exam passwords will be provided by the teacher or the LEG upon assignment completion and student readiness for the exam. In some instances, exams may need to be proctored.

WAVE Independent Governance Council

The Wausau Area Virtual Education (WAVE) Governance Council is empowered under the charter and authorization of the Wausau School District Board of Education to determine the curriculum, content, staffing organization, calendar, budget, and operations of the charter school. If you are interested in participating, please notify the WAVE Principal for more details.

The WAVE Governance Council meets every other month, and is composed of school administrators, community representatives, and WAVE parents. The WAVE Governance Council determines the overall direction of WAVE in regards to budget, staffing, content, marketing and policies.

Parent Involvement

Parents who have ideas or concerns regarding the school are encouraged to contact a Governance Council member. Parents will be required to sign a PARENT CONTRACT at the time of enrollment.

Acceptable Computer Use

Students are responsible for their behaviors and are expected to comply with Wausau School District Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet Safety –[TECHNOLOGY USE](#). Every parent and student will be asked to sign a form acknowledging their willingness to abide by this policy during the enrollment process.

Student Readiness

Students choosing to participate in courses through WAVE need to examine their personal skills and aptitudes for taking a class online. The following attributes will greatly contribute to a student's success:

1. **Self-motivation** - Students must be able to direct their own learning environment, fulfill course requirements, and achieve individual academic success.
2. **Independent learner** - The online environment enables students to learn at their own pace: traditional, extended, or accelerated -- relieving the stress of feeling rushed or pressured and providing enjoyment in the learning process.
3. **Computer literate** - Although it is not necessary to have advanced computer skills, students should possess a working knowledge of email, the Internet, and basic keyboarding and word processing skills.
4. **Time management** - Students must be able to organize and plan their own best "time to learn." There is no one best time for everyone, but the key to learning is to commit the time to learn.
5. **Effective written communication skills** - Students must use email to communicate with their peers as well as the instructors. The ability to write clearly in order to communicate ideas

and assignments is very important to student success as well as a means to inform instructors of any concerns or problems.

6. **Personal commitment** - Since there are no bells that begin and end classes, students must have a strong desire to learn and achieve knowledge and skills via online courses. Making a commitment to learn in this manner is a very personal decision and requires a strong commitment to participate in order to achieve academic success.

Keys To Success In Online Courses

Students who are able to demonstrate the following discipline may be more successful at online coursework:

- Schedule time each day to work on the course
- Read all information, view all resources, and be responsible for understanding the information
- Communicate regularly with the online teacher and local education guide
- Work closely with WAVE personnel and LEG to plan appropriate course selection and to communicate needs
- Notify the LEG and all teachers when planning to be out of town for any period exceeding 5 school days.

The Wausau School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability ("Protected Classes").

Disclaimer:

This handbook is designed to be a resource, and as such is a working document subject to revision.