

Davis Hill Elementary School

Student Handbook

2011-2012

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The student code of conduct, grievance procedures, sexual harassment policies, special education discipline policies, restraint policies and any other section of the student handbook will be translated into the primary language of a parent/guardian upon request.

The Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, in the operation of the educational programs, activities or employment policies; further, no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in the admission to its public schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

The School District, in complying with the laws of the Federal Government and Massachusetts, notifies you of this action and informs you that the coordinator for compliance at the building level is the school principal.

At the District level, the ADA (disability pertaining to non-students), Title VI and Title IX (race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, and sexual orientation Coordinator is Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670

At the District level, the ADA and Section 504 (disability pertaining to students) Coordinator is Nancy Houle, Ph.D., Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 608-829-1670

Notice of Procedural Safeguards (formerly titled “Parent’s Rights Brochure”) can be accessed at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/>.

If you need this booklet translated, please contact the main office of your child's school.

Portuguese/Português

Se você necessitar este livreto traduzido, contate por favor o escritório principal da escola da sua criança.

Spanish/ Español

Si usted necesita este librete traducido, entre en contacto con por favor la oficina principal de la escuela de su niño.

French/ Français

Si vous avez besoin de ce livret traduit, entrez en contact avec svp le bureau principal de l'école de votre enfant.

German/ Deutsch

Wenn Sie diese übersetzte Broschüre benötigen, treten Sie bitte mit dem Hauptbüro der Schule Ihres Kindes in Verbindung.

Russian/Русско

Если вы этот переведенный буклет, то пожалуйста контактируйте главный офис школы вашего ребенка.

Korean/한국어

너가 번역되는 이 소책자를 필요로 하면, 너의 아이 학교의 본사를 접촉하십시오.

Chinese/汉语

如果您需要这本小册子被翻译，请与您的儿童的学校大会办公处联系。

Japanese/日本語

翻訳されるこの小冊子を必要とすれば あなたの子供の学校の主要なオフィスに連絡しなさい。

Hindi/ihndi

Agar Aapka yah puistka ki Anavaaidt AavaSyakta ho tba kRpyaa Apnao baccao ko ivaValaya ka mau#ya kayaa-laya sampk- kiryao .

Polish/Polski

Jeśli potrzebujesz tej broszury przetłumaczone, skontaktuj się z głównego urzędu Twoje dziecko w szkole.

Greek

Αν χρειάζεστε το φυλλάδιο αυτό μεταφράστηκε, παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με την κύρια έδρα του σχολείου του παιδιού σας.

Italian/Italia

Se hai bisogno di questo opuscolo tradotto, si prega di contattare l'ufficio principale del vostro bambino scuola.

Arabic

المكتب رئيسية من طفلك مدرسة. اتصل ب إن أنت تحتاج هذا كراس يترجم, رجاء

Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians of Davis Hill Students,

Davis Hill School is dedicated to children and learning. In our nurturing environment your child will learn with a faculty who will celebrate and honor the individual nature of each child. Our primary goal is to provide challenging, appropriate learning experiences that will facilitate every child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth.

You are our partners in the education of your child. Both good sense and research tell us that when schools and families work together, children experience greater educational success; therefore, we value and need your involvement. Please consider joining the PTO or becoming a member of the Davis Hill School Council, or volunteering in your child's classroom or other activities that are a part of our school.

Along with your support, we value your input. If you have a question, comment or concern, you are encouraged to contact your child's teacher. Of course, we are available to assist you in any way that we can. I may be reached through the main office or e-mail. My e-mail is mark_aucoin@wrsd.net. Please know that your call or visit is always welcome.

On behalf of the entire faculty we are pleased to work with you to make this year the very best your child has ever had. My entire faculty feels privileged to share with you the amazing explorations and discoveries that your child will make this year. Together we will make a difference for your child.

Sincerely,

Mark Aucoin

Vision and Mission Statement

The mission of Davis Hill School is to improve the acquisition of knowledge, the appreciation and tolerance for differences and diversity, and the development of the skills for learning. Students who leave Davis Hill at the end of the fifth grade will be able to read, write and compute to a high standard; will be able to make personal decisions which reflect ethical behavior and a clear understanding of their own and other's self worth and dignity; and will be prepared to further pursue their life's goals.

Statement of Goals and Core Values

Goals

1. Davis Hill students will be provided every opportunity and challenge to reach their full potential.
2. Davis Hill students will be provided with a cooperative and respectful environment.
3. Davis Hill students will be provided an environment that promotes the development of life long learners.
4. The Davis Hill community will be provided a broad system of communication.
5. Davis Hill will develop intervention strategies to enable the WRSD Special Education Subgroup to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in English Language Arts and Math.

Core Values

Academic excellence, Cooperative and Respectful Environment, and Lifelong Learning

General Information

School Organization

Davis Hill School is a part of the Wachusett Regional School District and is located at 80 Jamieson Road, Holden, Massachusetts. The school accommodates students in grades K-5.

School office hours are from 8:30am to 5:00pm. School hours for students are from 9:00am to 3:30 pm. Supervision of students does not begin until 8:50am. Therefore, students must not be left off at school prior to that time. Students should be dropped off at the far right of the building at the east entrance in the morning.

Kindergarten is scheduled for five-half days per week with no changeover at the half year. The half-day schedule is as follows: AM classes: 9:00am to 11:33 am and PM classes: 12:47pm to 3:30 pm.

Telephone numbers are: School Office, **(508) 829-1754**; Fax, **(508) 829-2057**; School Nurse, **(508) 829-2273**; and Wachusett Regional School District Offices, **(508) 829-1670**

The Wachusett Regional School District's web site is: www.wrsd.net. The Davis Hill School web site is: www.wrsd.net/davishill/davishill.htm.

No-School & Delayed Opening Announcements

No-school announcements and delayed opening announcements will be aired on the following stations: WORC (1310 AM); WSRS (96.0 FM); WTAG (580 AM); WBMX (98.5 FM); WEIM (1280 AM); and TV Channels 4-5-7.

The announcements will begin at approximately 6:15 A.M. During the winter months, bad weather occasionally makes it necessary to delay the opening of school. If the announcement is for a **delayed opening**, students or their parents should continue listening to these radio stations for further announcements as a **no school** announcement may follow. Delays could be up to two hours. Delayed openings do not affect dismissal times. When a two-hour delayed opening is called, there will be no A.M. kindergarten.

In an emergency such as severe weather or boiler breakdown, school may be dismissed earlier than the regular closing time. **Parents should be certain that all emergency forms are kept up to date, and should inform their children as to what they should do in case of early dismissal.** Afternoon kindergarten classes may be cancelled due to storms.

Attendance

Education requires good attendance in order to reap its fullest reward. Any day missed affects school attitudes and overall progress. Children who are sick, however, should be kept at home. If your child is going to be out of school for the day, please call the school and leave a message on the absentee line. Absences not verified by a parent will be checked each day, either by a call to the home and/or the place of employment. Calls by students will not be accepted. The school has a right to request that the students who are absent more than 10 days in a marking period bring a doctor's note for each subsequent absence.

Notes From Parents

A note is required after a child has been absent, if communication hasn't transpired between parent and school. Students who are tardy must report to the office accompanied by a parent or a guardian or present a note signed by the parent or guardian verifying the student's tardiness.

If children are to be sent home by other than normal means, a note is required. The school will not dismiss your child to another person unless advised to do so by you in writing. (Principal discretion).

Dismissals Early dismissal of pupils can be arranged through the office. Please see that your child brings a note stating a reason for dismissal, the time he/she is to be dismissed, and who will pick up the child. Your child should then be picked up at the office for dismissal during the school day, but not during the period between 3:15pm and 3:30pm. Please do not call for dismissal except in the case of an emergency. Children will not be allowed to go home with another child without a written note from a parent/guardian. Children are not able to change busses to go home with another child. Students without notes will return home in accordance with their regular routine.

Vacations During School Time We do not recommend that parents take children out of school for vacations during the regularly scheduled school time. Schoolwork tends to suffer from the lack of attendance at school, and foreseen absences place a burden on the student, the teacher(s), and other students. Please plan early so that your vacations coincide with school vacations.

If you do plan to take your child out of school, it is the duty of the parent to notify the teacher(s) (by means of a note, or by a conference) of the upcoming vacation and to get necessary instructions on how to proceed. The parents/guardians must also keep in mind the teacher(s) cannot be held responsible for providing the student with instruction on the material covered during the absence.

Hot Lunch Program Hot lunches are available throughout the year and can be paid on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. For those wishing to bring a cold lunch, milk is available. A child may buy more than one carton if he/she chooses.

Free/Reduced Hot Lunch Free hot lunch or partial payment is considered under special request. Applications for the free or reduced lunch program are sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year. As financial situations do change, these forms are always available at the office. Forms must be updated whenever there is a change.

School Evacuation Drills Two types of emergency drills are held regularly to ensure the safety of all persons in the event of an emergency such as fire, severe weather, intruder, or bomb threat. One occurs when the building is to be immediately evacuated. Evacuation drills are held under the periodic supervision of the fire department. Students learn how to quietly and quickly exit the building, moving to safer outside areas in which to assemble. Lock down drills are held to practice containment of all persons within the building. Students learn how to seek safety in the nearest classroom and sit quietly in a designated safe area of the classroom.

Student Dress Parents are asked to listen to weather reports and dress their children appropriately. Children are expected to observe a standard of cleanliness. Jackets, sweaters, hats, mittens, etc. should be marked. Except for severely inclement weather, children are outdoors for recess. With this in mind, it is important that parents make sure children are prepared with appropriate wintertime clothing to protect them from cold and snow.

Parents must counsel children against wearing clothing with trendy slogans that may be offensive to others. These items have the potential to encourage disrespectful and undesired behavior at school. Students will not wear items that are distracting, revealing, or educationally disruptive. Children will be asked to replace offensive garments. Parents will be contacted.

During school or at school activities students will not wear hats, spiked bracelets or necklaces, wallet chains, or any chain worn as a belt or worn around the neck that may cause injury or do bodily harm. It is recommended that rubber soled shoes be worn in an effort to prevent students from slipping. Footwear that presents a safety hazard, such as in a time of evacuation, will be strictly prohibited. Shoes or sandals should have either a strap around the heel or a large strap across the instep; the child must be able to wear them safely. Flip-flops are not acceptable.

Bicycle Policy Children in grades 3-5 are allowed to ride their bicycles to and from school with written parental permission, but are not allowed to ride or play with their bicycles on school grounds during school hours. The students should walk the bicycle to and from the proper area (bicycle rack.) The privilege of riding a bicycle to school will be withdrawn if the child does not follow safety procedures or is being harmful to other students. *All children are required to wear a helmet* in compliance with Massachusetts's law.

Walking Policy Students walking to and/or from school must use sidewalks or walk at the edge of the street where sidewalks are not present. Crossing guards will enforce school and safety rules.

Parties Brief parties may be held for special occasions. Parents may offer to bring in a snack for a child's birthday, if they would like. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher. Although gift giving is discouraged, students may give gifts at traditional times.

Lost and Found Articles The school will not assume responsibility for items that are lost or stolen. Please label everything. Pupils are encouraged to turn in any article found to Lost and Found. Items not claimed will be donated to charity.

Care of School Books School books, textbooks, library books, etc., are loaned to students. The student is responsible for the care of these books and must pay for any which are lost or damaged. Textbooks are to be kept covered at all times as directed by the classroom teachers. Books, which are lost or damaged, must be paid for in total, plus shipping costs.

School Telephone Students will be permitted to use the telephone with the permission of a staff member. Students will not be called to the telephone except in a case of emergency.

Student Photographs As a service to parents, individual portraits and class portraits are taken at all grade levels.

Notices A monthly menu calendar along with the Principal's Newsletter is sent home with each student prior to the beginning of each month. Other school activity notices are sent home with students as need arises.

Field Trips All field trips are chaperoned by classroom teachers, parents and/or other staff members. Permission slips are sent home and must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian in order for a child to participate. Field trip costs will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Scholarship assistance can be obtained by contacting the principal. Persons wishing to chaperone field trips must have a current CORI conducted by the School District.

Pre-School Screening Parents may request pre-school screening for their child (age 3 and above) if they believe there is a disability. This evaluation could detect problems that may hinder the child's ability to learn. Parents should call the Special Education Office at the Superintendent's Office.

Prior to kindergarten each child is screened for possible vision and hearing problems. This is usually done at the time of registration. All children who have entered the Kindergarten Program are screened in September for vision, hearing, gross and fine motor skills, language development and speech.

Kindergarten Entrance *Registrations:* Registrations are conducted after the first of the year. Please watch the local paper for registration announcements. Age Requirement: The child must be five years of age by August 31.

The following must be brought to the registration appointment:

Birth Certificate (it is later returned to the parents), Record of all immunizations, and Completed Registration Forms and Emergency Information Card.

Parents should inform the school of any information that they feel might affect their child's school success.

School Enrollment of Students Parents/guardians of student residents within the Wachusett Regional School District who wish to have their child attend a school other than that assigned in the District may request another school through a written request to the Superintendent. The parent/guardian must assume any transportation burden unless required by law or when a unique circumstance exists as determined by the Superintendent.

Home Tutoring Home Tutoring is available for extended student absence due to illness and/or serious injury, or for children with a Chronic Illness Plan.

Report Cards Depending on the grade level, report cards may be issued up to four times per year. Report card formats vary at different grade levels. Final report cards (Grades 1-5) will not be issued until the last day of school. Parents wishing report cards to be mailed home must provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Regular Education Accommodation Plan The regular education accommodation plan provides a resource to both teachers and students in all areas and all grades as part of our regular education program. Students are evaluated to determine what, if any, accommodations might be required. Any programming modifications are discussed with the parent/guardian before being implemented. A written *Regular Education Accommodation Plan (REAP)* is then prepared by the classroom teacher with a copy to the parent/guardian.

Parent-Teacher Conferences Parents/guardians and teachers are welcome to set up parent/teacher conferences at any time. All teachers accept the responsibility of effectively communicating with parents/guardians at times that are mutually convenient. Parents/guardians and

teachers are encouraged to communicate with each other at any time that they may have questions concerning the student.

Audio, Video and/Or Stenographic Recording of Meetings (WRSDC P 3813)

The Wachusett Regional School Committee prohibits the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of parent/teacher conferences and/or Team meetings conducted in Wachusett Regional School District facilities. Exceptions to this policy will be made only where a parent/guardian or student is able to demonstrate that either the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of the meeting or conference is necessary to ensure the parent's/guardian's or student's full understanding of the proceedings or to otherwise accommodate a parent's/guardian's or student's documented disability.

Requests by a parent/guardian or student for authorization to audio, video and/or stenographic record a meeting or conference shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of the Wachusett Regional School District no less than three (3) business days prior to said meeting/conference. The Superintendent's decision on any such request shall be final.

Student Classroom Placement The sending grade level team, along with special education teachers, our school psychologist, use of parent questionnaires, and administration, meet to review the needs of all students and compose class lists for the next year. Parent input is vital to the process and questionnaires are sent to all families in March. With this information we develop balanced classrooms that reflect the best possible learning environment for your child.

Assessment Standardized achievement tests are administered periodically in the schools for Grades 3 to 5. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System testing is usually conducted in the spring. The results are sent home to parents. Individual parents may contact the school regarding further consultation and interpretation of the test scores. Religious holidays that fall on school days affect scheduled testing (WRSD Policy 3240).

Homework Children are encouraged to continue their school learning at home and in the community. Teachers may assign homework for this extended learning or for needed practice or enrichment. The following is an average amount of time your child should be spending on homework daily: Grades 1 and 2 – 15 to 20 minutes, Grades 3 and 4 – 30 to 45 minutes, and Grade 5 – 45 to 60 minutes. Some children will need more time to complete certain assignments; and from time to time assignments will be more extensive. If you have any questions, contact your child's teacher.

If the homework is incomplete after a serious attempt has been made over this period of time, the parent should **write a note** to the teacher stating the amount of time spent and that the homework was seriously attempted although incomplete. If any emergency arises, and your child is unable to complete his/her homework, please **write a note** to the teacher. In order to assure the teacher's notification in either of the above cases **telephone messages will not be accepted. It must be a note.** However, this does not excuse the student from completing the assignment the following evening.

Students' Roles and Responsibilities:

- Get the assignment and be able to ask for help, if the assignment is not clear.
- Copy all assignments into the planner carefully (grades 3-5), recording the due dates and important information.
- Set a time each day to do homework.
- Check work and, if possible, explain it to an adult.
- Maintain the highest quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all the necessary resources, such as packets, textbooks, notes and study guides to accurately complete homework.
- Bring the completed homework to school when it is due.
- Be responsible for getting assignments when you are absent from school.
- Be responsible for taking care of, and returning, any borrowed resource materials.

Parents' Role and Responsibilities:

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for quality of student work. Have your student show you her/his homework before sending it in to school.
- Provide structure, a place, and tools needed to help the child organize for the completion of homework.

Student Transfers Please inform the Davis Hill School office if you are moving and the last day that your child will attend school. The office will need your new address and the name of the next school your child will attend. Parents must sign release forms, so that school records may be forwarded to the new school.

Medical Information

Eye Protection (WRSDC P6613.1) The Wachusett Regional School District shall require that students, teachers, staff members, and visitors wear protective devices in accordance with Section 55C, Chapter 71 of the General Laws.

Health Services Students who become ill or injured will be directed to the school nurses for assessment, evaluation, treatment and/or referral. If the nurse is not available, students are to report to the office. Students are not to leave the building without authorization. Parents will be notified when a child must be sent home. If the parent cannot be contacted, the person indicated on the Emergency Card will be called. It is imperative that the Emergency Card be completed annually and updated as necessary.

Physical Examinations Massachusetts requires that a physical examination by a healthcare provider be on file with the nurse for kindergarten entry and every four years thereafter (grades 4 and 8). Students entering the District without records or recent physical must have a physical examination within the 1st year. A physical exam is also required prior to tryouts for competitive athletics or cheerleading.

Mandated Screening Programs Students in grades K, 1, 4, 6-8, and 9 are weighed and measured and students in grades K (at the time of Kindergarten registration) –5, 7 and 10 are tested for vision and hearing. Students in grades 5-8 and 9 receive an annual postural screening for scoliosis. The screening is done by the school nurse with assistance from the Physical Education staff. Parents will be notified if screening procedures identify possible problems.

Contagious Conditions Parents are requested to report any incidence of contagious disease or condition to the school nurse. This includes incidence of head lice and scabies. When these conditions are identified, the student will be sent home. Return to school is permitted following treatment and verification by the school nurse that the student is free of disease, lice, nits, or mites.

Immunizations All students must be compliant with immunizations required by Massachusetts's regulations (102 CMR 7.09 and 105 CMR 220.00) and established by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The only exemptions are for documented religious or medical reasons.

Medication Administration Medication, prescription and non-prescription, must be by written order of the health provider with written permission from the parent/guardian before medication may be administered by the nurse. Medication must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian or other designated responsible adult in the original container with the label intact. Students are not to transport medication to and from school. However, in the case of self-medicating students, students may transport and self-administer upon completion and the school's receipt of a statement from the student's physician.

Temporary or Permanent Exclusion From School Activities Students are expected to participate in all activities of the school program. If, for health reasons, a child must be excluded for a temporary time from any activity, we request written verification from home. For a long-term exclusion, a note will be required from your doctor.

General Discipline

Student Management Policies

Davis Hill School is a superb school with a long tradition of excellence. We are proud of our curriculum instruction and education support. Our school environment can only remain strong, however, if we maintain order and proper decorum in our building. All members of the Davis Hill community are expected to treat themselves and others with respect. Davis Hill Elementary School has clean behavioral expectations for our students; there are consequences for those who choose to disobey our rules.

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

1. **SHORT TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS:** A student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. In the event that the Principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.
2. **LONG TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (Principal/School Committee) will issue a written decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the

student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusion imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the Committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect.

3. **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline, please contact the Principal or the Administrator of Special Education.

Conduct Students are reminded that they must adhere to a code of good behavior not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others as well. In conjunction with School District Policy #6400, the school attempts to take a positive approach to the issue of conduct of students.

Students attending Davis Hill School are required to:

- Practice good manners
- Display good citizenship
- Respect the authority of school personnel
- Show respect and concern for the rights of others in all aspects of the school day
- Show respect and concern for all school property

Students attending Davis Hill School **do not** engage in the following activities during school time or during school sponsored activities:

- Possess drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Carry or wear dangerous weapons (i.e. sharp objects, knives)
- Deface, damage, destroy, or steal school or personal property
- Disrupt or instigate behavior that interferes with the operation of the school, classroom, auditorium, cafeteria or school buses
- Use profanity or abusive language
- Possess indecent literature
- Distribute any literature in class without permission from the teacher
- Intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury to another person
- Run in any part of the school (except when required for instruction)
- Leave the building or school grounds while school is in session unless by permission and/or with the supervision of a teacher.
- Enter areas designated as off limits.

There will be no violation of any federal, state or local laws or ordinances and school committee policies not already covered by these rules.

Each teacher, who, through his/her own means and methods, conforms to the policies established for the school, enforces student conduct in the classroom. The teachers are the authority within the classroom and throughout the school and exercise this authority to create an effective atmosphere for learning.

Failure to comply with established discipline practices and procedures may result in a verbal reprimand, loss of recess and/or parent involvement, or possible school suspension or expulsion and parent involvement.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The following information on bullying prevention and intervention may also be found in the WRSD Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Please visit our website for a complete version of the approved Plan or visit the school office to receive a copy:

Definitions

Aggressor/Perpetrator is a student who engages, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or

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

Cyber-bullying: Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target/Victim is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation is directed.

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

Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place 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,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts 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 prohibited.

Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. Contact your child's principal, or the District's Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, 508-829-1670 ext. 237, if you have questions or concerns.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of an aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Responses to Bullying.

1. Education and Skill Building

In determining the appropriate response to an incident of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation, the principal shall consider a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include, but are not limited to:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home.

2. Disciplinary Action

If the principal determines that disciplinary action is warranted, the disciplinary sanction will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.

Students found to have engaged in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation may be subject to a range of disciplinary consequences including, but not limited to, reprimand, detention, suspension, expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the principal. Any such disciplinary sanctions shall be imposed in accordance with the due process requirements of applicable laws, regulations, and District policies.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal shall, in conjunction with relevant school personnel, consider what services, adjustments and/or interventions, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of any witnesses. Any such adjustments or interventions to be provided for the target shall be documented in writing in an Individual Safety Plan.

4. Referral to outside services. Where appropriate and consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, students found to have engaged in or to have been the victim of bullying, may also be referred to outside agencies and/or services providers. It shall be the responsibility of the building principal, through consultation with staff, community service organizations, and District administration to identify resources and services available to such students, and their families, in their local communities.

5. Monitoring of Interventions

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

Age appropriate definition for bullying K-5

Bullying is unfair and one-sided. Bullying happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening or leaving someone out of activities on purpose. Bullying can happen at school or away from school. Bullying can happen face to face, behind someone's back, on-line, in a text message, repeated phone calls or a combination of each type.

Examples of bullying are: hitting or kicking; name calling or threatening or leaving friends out of activities just to hurt their feelings.

Pupil Services, Behavior and Discipline WRSDC P6400 The Wachusett Regional School District shall help students learn behavior patterns, which will enable them to be responsible, contributing members of society. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity and act with due regard for their fellow students and supervisory authority. Students shall have a right to reasonable treatment from the school and its employees, and in turn, the school and its employees shall have a right to expect reasonable behavior from students.

The principal will be responsible for administering behavior and discipline procedures at the school in accordance with District policy and school procedures. In order to assure that all students and staff are made aware of their specific rights and responsibilities, a student handbook shall be developed by each school, which defines the rights and responsibilities of students and others whose actions affect student behavior. References to all School Committee policies relating to student discipline will be included in the student handbook.

Corrective actions for misbehaviors outlined in the handbook shall be commensurate with the severity of the misbehavior. Consideration shall be given to the:

1. Age of the student;
2. Mitigating circumstances;
3. Previous behavior of the student; and
4. Attitude of the student.

Student Handbook.

The student handbook shall annually be reviewed with input sought from the school council. The student handbook shall be printed and distributed to all enrolled students and all staff members at the start of each school year. The student handbook shall include, but not be limited to, sections dealing with:

1. Student rights and responsibilities;
2. Student behavior and discipline; and
3. Glossary of terms.

Each building principal shall be responsible for providing orientation to the handbook to all enrolled students and all staff members at the start of the school year. The provisions of the student handbook shall be applied to students in a standardized, nondiscriminatory and non-arbitrary manner.

Liability for Damages.

The Wachusett Regional School District shall seek compensation for District property willfully damaged by a minor or student age 18 years or older. Civil action may be brought against the minor or his/her parents, or the individual if 18 years of age or older. All incidents shall be investigated, liabilities fixed, and all costs assessed in a nondiscriminatory and non-arbitrary manner. Schools shall be monitored to ensure that findings of liability are in accordance with District procedures in affording due process guarantees.

Corporal Punishment.

Corporal punishment is prohibited. Staff shall develop alternative techniques for managing student discipline in accordance with District policy.

Searches.

Wachusett Regional School District authorities may exercise their rights to conduct an inspection of student lockers and/or desks. A student shall not misuse lockers and desks assigned by school authorities. Lockers and desks remain, at all times, the property of the District.

A warrantless search (nonemergency) of a student's school locker or articles carried upon the student's person may be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that the search is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of students and staff, or to detect a violation of school rules. Such a search may be conducted if school authorities suspect that a student possesses such items as, but not limited to, weapons, dangerous instruments, stolen goods, narcotics, hallucinogenics, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, unregistered drugs, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, or evidence of cheating or other academic misconduct.

Student Suspensions.

The Wachusett Regional School District shall ensure that each pupil has an atmosphere and an environment, which is conducive to teaching and learning. To that end, schools shall maintain programs, which maximize opportunities for learning and minimize disruptions to the educational process. The District's first concern shall be to help maintain pupils in school so that their learning process is not interrupted. Students who create discipline problems, which cannot be resolved through less severe means, shall be suspended. As a last resort, the district shall, at the discretion of the school principal, and following the required due process, deny a pupil the right to attend school for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal's decision is final.

Students will have the right and the responsibility to complete all assignments and make up all tests missed during the suspension. It will be the student's responsibility to confer with teachers and to complete make-up work within a reasonable time but in no instance exceeding three weeks after the suspension expires.

Expulsion.

Expulsion shall be considered an action of last resort when the behavior of the student warrants such action at the discretion of the school principal. The expulsion shall be governed by Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 71, sections 37h and 37h1/2, and Ch. 76 section 17.

Policy Relating to Pupil Services P6437

Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination and Hate Crimes.

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment free from harassment, discrimination and hate crimes.

The District will not tolerate unlawful or disruptive behaviors at school or school-related activities including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parent involvement. The District will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes and will take prompt, effective action to end such behaviors including, when appropriate, referral to law enforcement agencies.

The Wachusett Regional School District prohibits all forms of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes related or unrelated to race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. The District will not tolerate retaliation against those taking action consistent with this policy. Threats or acts of retaliation, regardless of how they are expressed, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary or other corrective actions.

Harassment

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct on school property or at school-related activities relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational or work environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct that, if it persists, will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. A single incident may, depending upon its severity, create a hostile environment.

Student and Staff Responsibilities

All students and staff members, as members of the WRSD community, are responsible for complying with this policy and ensuring that he/she does not harass, discriminate or perpetuate a hate crime against another person on school grounds or at a school-related activity. Further, each student and staff member is responsible to make sure that he/she does not retaliate against any person who reports or files a complaint, or who helps someone report or file a complaint, or for cooperating in the investigation of a report of complaint.

Reporting Harassment, Discrimination or Hate Crimes

Students can report any case of harassment, discrimination or hate crimes to any adult in the school who is then responsible to inform the building principal or designee. The school principal or designee is responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations at the school level. At the District level, the District Equity Coordinator is responsible for receiving and addressing reports or complaints of violations of this policy.

Any member of the school community who is informed of or believes that harassment, discrimination, retaliation or a hate crime has occurred or may have occurred at school or in a school-related activity must promptly report the incidents to the building principal or designee, or the Title VI Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Equity Coordinator or Superintendent. In situations where a student or other person is uncomfortable reporting the incident to a designated official, he/she may report it to a trusted school employee who must promptly inform a designated official.

Upon receipt of a written or oral report or complaint, the principal (or designee) and the Equity Coordinator will promptly notify each other of the facts alleged and any initial action taken. If and when a report or complaint involves physical injury, the principal or designee will promptly report the incident to the Superintendent. All complaints or reports must be documented on the District's "Reporting/Complaint Form". If the complainant or reporter is unwilling or unable to complete the form, the designated official who receives the oral complaint or report will promptly prepare the written report using the reporter's or complainant's own words. The designated official will also summarize any initial action taken. If the complaint occurs at the school level, the designated official will promptly provide the principal with the completed Reporting/Complaint Form with a copy to the District Equity Coordinator.

A report or complaint involving a principal should be filed with the District Equity Coordinator or Superintendent. A report or complaint involving the Equity Coordinator should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint involving the Superintendent should be filed with the School Committee.

Reporting Other Incidences

Under General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A for purposes of reporting child abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Under MGL119, Sec. 51A, a school staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a student under the age of 18 is suffering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, school staff member or other caretaker must immediately report the abuse or neglect either directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or to the person designated by the school to accept those reports, who then promptly reports to DCF.

The principal and/or Superintendent will report to local police certain forms of sexual harassment and conduct that may constitute a crime.

The principal and/or Superintendent may report physical injury, destruction of public property, potential hate crimes and other acts of a serious criminal nature to local police for investigation.

Protection Against Retaliation

The District will take appropriate steps to protect from retaliation persons who take action consistent with this policy, or who report, file a complaint of, or cooperate in an investigation of a violation of this policy. Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action.

Ensuring Safety During Investigation

The designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will take any step he/she determines is necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation.

Determination of Proceedings

Upon receipt of a complaint or report, the District must determine whether to undertake formal or informal proceedings to resolve the complaint or report. Upon receipt of a complaint or report, a designated official will attempt to identify and obtain cooperation from the victim(s). Where the designated official does not obtain the identity or cooperation of the alleged victim(s), the District will proceed with an investigation and then proceed to formal or informal proceedings to the extent possible.

Informal proceedings will commence when criteria for Formal Proceedings are not met. In these cases, a designated official, in consultation with the Equity Coordinator, may apply either the Student Code of Conduct or initiate an Informal Proceeding, which strives to resolve the report or complaint through non-disciplinary corrective action, although the designated official may also determine that disciplinary action is appropriate and necessary.

Formal proceedings will commence when the designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator determines that:

- the allegation is serious enough that it appears to place the complainant or any other person at physical risk;
- the incident has resulted in a criminal charge;
- the incident involves a referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF);
- the allegation involves a serious form of harassment, discrimination or retaliation;
- there is a pending Formal Proceeding against the subject of the complaint;
- the subject of the complaint has previously been found to have violated this policy after Formal Proceedings, or
- that a formal proceeding is otherwise appropriate under the circumstances, the designated official must then commence a Formal Proceeding.

Formal Proceedings-Investigation

The designated official will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and, if a student, with their parent(s) or guardian(s), to tell them about the formal process, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the remedy the complainant seeks. The designated official will also explain that the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible, but that the District cannot promise absolute confidentiality, and may not be able to withhold the complainant's identity from the subject of the complaint, since such a promise could interfere with the District's ability to enforce its policy, conduct a fair and thorough investigation, or impose disciplinary or corrective action.

Following a prompt and thorough investigation, the designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will determine whether the allegations have been substantiated, and whether the policy, or, if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. The designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will prepare a written report that includes the investigative findings, the investigative steps taken, and the reasons for those findings. These findings will specify whether the allegations have been substantiated, whether the policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct, has been violated, and any decision or recommendation for disciplinary and corrective action.

The designated official will promptly notify the complainant and the subject of the complaint in writing to let them know whether the complaint has been substantiated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official will also promptly notify the complainant of any non-disciplinary corrective action imposed to protect him/her from future policy violations. If the complaint is substantiated and the offender remains a student in the school, the designated official will meet with the offender and his/her parent or guardian, to describe the disciplinary and/or corrective action imposed, the school's expectations for future behavior and the potential consequences for retaliation or future violation of the policy. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the investigation or outcome thereof, the designated official shall inform the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and/or the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

If the District's investigation results from a third party report, the designated official will inform that person that the District has taken steps consistent with the policy, while not providing information about any disciplinary action imposed or any other information that would violate applicable state and federal confidentiality laws or student record regulations.

Violations

Where a violation of the policy has been reported by a third party, and an alleged victim fails to cooperate with the investigation, or denies the incident occurred, disciplinary and corrective action may be precluded or limited, depending upon circumstances and availability of information from other sources.

False Reports

Any person making false charges of harassment, discrimination or the occurrence of a hate crime is subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline

If a student has been found in violation of this policy, the District will impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action to end and prevent further occurrences of the complained of action(s). The District will take into account harm suffered by the victim(s) as well as any damage to school or District property. The nature of any action taken must comply with District and school disciplinary policies. Any disciplinary or corrective action shall conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law.

Action concerning students may include a written warning; classroom or school transfer; suspension (short or long-term); exclusion from school-sponsored functions, after-school programs and/or extra-curricular activities; limited or denied access to parts or areas of the building; exclusion, expulsion or discharge from school; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; an apology to the victim; awareness training; empathy development awareness programs; counseling or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and/or school disciplinary code. The District complies with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities.

Oversight

The District has designated the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services as the District Equity Coordinator. The Equity Coordinator will, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools, ensure the successful administration of and compliance with this policy. Information including the name of the Equity Coordinator, his/her mailing address, telephone number and email address will be posted prominently in the District office as well as all school buildings within the District.

***Information from Attorney General Thomas Reilly's Safe Schools Initiative Sample Policy for Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination and Hate Crimes, June 24, 2005, was used in drafting this document.*

The District has a policy (P6438 Anti-Bullying Policy) that meets the legal requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*

Policy Relating to Pupil Services P6438 *Anti-Bullying Policy*

The Wachusett Regional School District fosters and maintains educational environments that are free from bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. No student in the Wachusett Regional School District shall be permitted to bully another student through conduct or communication or to retaliate against any individual for reporting bullying or cooperating with an investigation of bullying. A student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation will be subject to a range of

disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, reprimand, detention, suspension, expulsion, or other sanctions as determined by the school administration. Except where bullying has resulted in the student's permanent expulsion, students who engage in bullying may also be required to participate in instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying behavior(s).

The Wachusett Regional School District has established separate discrimination and harassment policies that provide protection to specific categories and groups of students and staff. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Wachusett Regional School District from responding to discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law.

A. Definitions

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

Cyber-bullying: *Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the*

definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Hostile Environment: A situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe to pervasive to alter the conditions of the target's education.

Target/Victim: A student who has been subject to bullying or retaliation by another student or group of students.

Aggressor/Perpetrator: A student who engaged, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Local law enforcement agency: local police department(s)

Principal: The administrative leader of a Wachusett District school or his/her designee for the purposes of investigating and responding to reports of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Retaliation: Intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses a bullying incident, or has reliable information about bullying.

B. Policy Jurisdiction

For purposes of this policy, bullying is prohibited:

- 1) *on school grounds, 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*
- 2) *at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or*

school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

C. Reporting Requirements

In furtherance of this policy and in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37O, a school staff member, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional, will immediately report to the school principal any instance of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation that the staff member has witnessed or has become aware of.

D. Investigations

Upon receipt of such a report or complaint of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, the principal will promptly commence an investigation. If the principal or a designee determines that bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or retaliation has occurred, the principal will:

- (i) notify the local law enforcement agency if the principal reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against an aggressor;
- (ii) take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action;
- (iii) notify the parents of the aggressor of the investigative findings;
- (iv) notify the parents of the target of the investigative findings and, as consistent with state and federal law, notify the target's parents of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and
- (v) take appropriate action to protect the target and witnesses from further bullying or retaliation.

E. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent will develop and implement a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in District schools.

(ii) Development of the Plan

The plan shall be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. The consultation shall include notice and a public comment period. The plan shall be updated biennially.

(iii) Contents of the Plan

The District-wide Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall include:

- (a) descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation;
- (b) procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians, and others to report bullying or retaliation;
- (c) a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously but that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
- (d) a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action;
- (e) procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;
- (f) information regarding the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor;
- (g) a provision for assessing and monitoring the target's need and the needs of witnesses for protective interventions;
- (h) procedures for notifying the parents of a target and of an aggressor of the investigative findings and actions to be taken;
- (i) provision for the notification of local law enforcement agencies if the principal reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor;
- (j) provision for annual and ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development training shall be in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c.71,§37O; and
- (k) provision for the implementation of an evidenced-based anti-bullying curriculum in grades K-12 and for informing parents regarding the curriculum contents and strategies for reinforcing the curriculum at home.

(iv) Implementation of the Plan

The school principal shall be responsible for implementing and adhering to the District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan within his/her school.

(iv) Public Notice

A summary of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be included in each school's student handbook and shall be posted on individual school and District websites. The Wachusett Regional School District shall also provide all school staff written notice of the Plan

Personnel Management, Physical Restraint **WRSDC P5252** The Wachusett Regional School District recognizes that on occasion physical restraint is required to protect the safety of school community members from serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint is defined as the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall only be used in emergency situations, in the judgment of the school staff member, when other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

A. Training

To ensure the proper use of restraint and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of restraint, all staff will receive training regarding the District's restraint policy and will be reviewed annually and employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment, which will include the following:

- The District's restraint policy;
- Interventions, which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors;
- Types of restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when an extended restraint is used;
- Administering physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
- Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training in the use of physical restraint.
- Designated staff members shall participate in at least sixteen hours of in depth training in the use of physical restraint. Those designated staff members will then be authorized to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.

B. Administration of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint may only be used in the following circumstances:

- When non-physical interventions would be ineffective; and
- The student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious harm to self and/or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:

- As a means of punishment; or
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm. However, in the judgment of the staff member, if the property destruction or the refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive might escalate into, or could itself lead to serious, imminent harm to the student or to others, physical restraint is appropriate.
 - Only school personnel who have received required training pursuant to this policy shall administer physical restraint on students with, wherever possible, one adult witness who does not participate in the restraint.
 - The training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of the school from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
 - Physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or others from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
 - A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation, subject to the safety requirements set forth in this policy. Floor or prone restraints may only be administered by a staff member who has received in-depth training as specified in this policy and, when in the judgment of the trained staff member, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others.
 - Physical restraint shall be discontinued, as soon as possible, when it is determined that the student is no longer at risk of causing imminent physical harm to self or others. (If, due to unusual circumstances, a restraint continues for more than twenty minutes, it shall be considered an "extended restraint" for purposes of the reporting requirements.)

Additional safety requirements:

- A restrained student shall not be prevented from breathing or speaking. A staff member will continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color and respiration, during the restraint.

- If at any time during a physical restraint the student demonstrates significant physical distress, as determined by the staff member, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
 - Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- At an appropriate time after release of a student from physical restraint, a school administrator or other appropriate school staff shall:
- Review the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint;
 - Review the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed; and
 - Consider whether any follow-up is appropriate for students and staff members who witnessed the incident.

C. Reporting

Staff shall report the use of physical restraint to the school principal after administration of a physical restraint that results in injury to a student or staff member; or lasts longer than five minutes. The following reporting procedure will be followed:

- The staff member shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint as soon as possible and shall provide a written report no later than the next school working day.
- The written report shall be provided to the principal or designee. The principal shall prepare the report, if the principal administered the restraint.
- The principal or designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the Department of Education, upon request.
- The principal shall send a copy of the report to the Superintendent at the Central Office.
- The principal or his/her designee shall verbally inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of such restraint as soon as possible, and by written report postmarked no later than three school days following the use of such restraint. If the school customarily provides school related information to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided in that language. The written report shall include:
 - Names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint.
 - A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to de-escalate the situation; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
 - A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.
- For extended restraints, the written report shall describe the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts and the justification for administering the extended restraint.
- Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student.
- Information regarding opportunities for the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student and/or any other related matter.
- When a restraint has resulted in a serious injury to a student or program staff member or when an extended restraint has been administered, the program shall provide a copy of the written report to the Department of Education within five (5) school days of the administration of the restraint. The program shall also provide the Department with a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the program administrator for the thirty-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint.

D. Special Circumstances

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may voluntarily waive the reporting requirements as stated above for restraints that do not result in serious injury to the student or to a staff member and do not constitute extended restraint.
- The Wachusett Regional School District may seek such individual waiver for students who present a high risk of frequent, dangerous behavior that may require the frequent use of restraint.
- The Wachusett Regional School District shall not require parental consent to such a waiver as a condition of admission or provision of services.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may withdraw consent to such waiver at any time without penalty.
- Extended restraints and restraint that result in serious injury to a student or staff member must be reported as described above, regardless of any individual waiver.

The following documentation regarding individual waiver of reporting requirements will be maintained on-site in the student's file and will be made available for inspection to the Department of Education upon request:

- Informed written consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) to the waiver, which shall specify those reporting requirements listed above that the parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to waive; and
- Specific information regarding when and how the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed regarding the administration of all restraints to the individual student.

Nothing herein shall be construed to allow a program or classroom to receive an exemption or waiver from any of the requirements of this policy on behalf of all of the students enrolled in a particular program or classroom.

E. Receiving/Investigating Complaints

Any student, or parent(s)/guardian(s) on said student's behalf, who believes he or she has been inappropriately restrained by an employee of the Wachusett Regional School District, should follow the procedure in P8151 **Policy Relating to Communication/Public Relations *Complaints about District Personnel***.

This policy shall be reviewed annually, provided to school staff, and shall be included in student handbooks. (M.G.L. chapter 69, section 1B, and chapter 71, section 37G; Massachusetts Department of Education Regulation 603 CMR 46.00 Physical Restraint)

Gun Free Schools Act Federal law regarding school safety will be observed for students bringing a firearm to school. The Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 requires school districts to expel from school for a period of not less than one year any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school. The superintendent of schools may modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. General Laws Chapter 71 grants broad discretion to school officials in matters where it is determined that a student poses a threat to others, such as expulsion for possession of a dangerous weapon, a controlled substance or assault on school staff.

Weapons/Controlled Substance Policy

Substance Abuse The Wachusett Regional School District prohibits the use of alcohol, illegal substances and the improper use of harmful substances.

The possession, use, transmittal, serving, or consumption of any alcoholic beverage, illegal/harmful substance on school property, and/or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited. Violations of this policy shall result in appropriate action as set forth in the Student Discipline Code.

Further, any student may be barred from a school-sponsored activity if there is reason to believe he/she has been drinking alcoholic beverages or using illegal substances prior to his/her attendance at or participation in said school-sponsored activity. Any staff member with knowledge of alcohol or harmful drug use or the carrying of harmful substances shall notify the principal or the superintendent and the appropriate legal authorities.

The District shall provide full cooperation with legal authorities.

WRSDC Policy 6433 (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, 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 school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

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

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal 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 the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of 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 reasons for said expulsion. See M.G.L. C71 S37H

Weapons P6435 The Wachusett Regional School District shall prohibit possession and/or use of any kind of weapon; weapons will not be tolerated on school premises or at school-related or school-sponsored activities and events.

For the purpose of this policy, “weapon” includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, or any other devices, or objects used to inflict or to threaten bodily harm.

1. Any weapon found in a locker or other storage space which is assigned to a student and which has a lock or other security device may be considered to be the property of the student assigned to the locker or other storage space for the purpose of disciplinary action under the Student Discipline Code. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored event may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.
2. Violations of this policy may lead to expulsion under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71 Section 37H. Procedures for enforcement shall be contained in the Student Discipline Code.
3. In addition to the school discipline indicated in the Student Discipline Code, provided in paragraph B., appropriate criminal action shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, Section 10.
4. The weapons policy and regulations shall be implemented in accordance with the due process provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations of the Department of Education, and the Student Discipline code.

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy It is the policy of the Wachusett Regional School District to oppose the use of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol in all schools. However, the District is dedicated to offering whatever services are available within its jurisdiction to help any student deal with a drug problem. The intent of this policy is to involve the student and parent to help seek a solution to a drug or alcohol problem and at the same time abide by the laws relating to any problem.

Drug, tobacco, and alcohol related problems will be dealt with as follows:

A.A student asking for help

1. Parents will be involved and if they so desire, school personnel will work with the student and the parent to resolve the problem.
2. In-house or community services will be explored for possible assistance.

B.A student suspected of using drugs or alcohol within the school

1. If there is cause to suspect that the student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, the principal shall inform the parents, a conference will be held, and the principal may suspend the student up to ten (10) days.
2. Police will become involved at this point on an informal basis.

C. A student present where a drug or alcohol is found

1. If, in the judgment of the principal, the student was aware of the presence of drugs or alcohol, the parent shall be notified.
2. Suspension is at the discretion of the principal (up to ten (10) days).
3. Notification of the problem shall be made to the police.

D. A student in possession of a drug or selling a drug on school property or at a school function

1. The student shall be referred to the principal or to his/her designee.
2. Parents will be notified immediately.
3. Police shall be notified immediately and provided with the necessary information in order to determine if the material is an illegal substance.
4. If the student had in his/her possession an illegal substance, the police shall be notified immediately and given all the details.
5. The student shall be suspended and referred to the Superintendent for further review and action he deems appropriate.

E. A student in possession of tobacco and alcohol

1. Parents shall be informed.
2. Student shall be suspended up to ten (10) days.
3. Police will be informed of an alcohol problem on an informal basis.

Special Education Discipline All students are expected to meet the standards of behavior as set by the Wachusett community. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and I.D.E.A. 1997 require that additional provision be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:

1. The I.E.P. for every special needs student will indicate if they can meet student management policies or if modifications are needed.

2. The principal (or designees) will notify the Special Education Office of any special needs students who have been suspended. The Director of Special Education will keep these suspensions on record.
3. When it becomes known that a special needs student will be suspended for more than ten days in a school year:
 - (a) services will be provided in order to ensure that the student receives FAPE, and
 - (b) a functional behavioral assessment will be conducted and a behavioral intervention plan will be implemented, and
 - (c) the team will conduct a manifestation determination in order to decide whether the infraction related to the student's disability, and if the team finds that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the District may not suspend the student.

Out-of-School Suspension In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend students from attending school. These instances involve serious disruptions of the school community, or when other forms of discipline do not appear to be effective. For the duration of an out-of-school suspension, students may not visit the campus or attend any school-related events. At the conclusion of an out-of-school suspension, a student's parent(s) or guardian must make an appointment with the student's administrator to reach agreement on conditions for the student's readmission to the school community.

Due process in the case of suspension requires the following:

- a. oral notice of the charge (telephone notification to parents)
- b. an explanation of the evidence
- c. the opportunity for the student to present his/her side of the story to an administrator

Exclusion / Expulsion Exclusion / Expulsion will be used as a disciplinary measure in extreme and chronic behavioral situations, such as possession/use of weapons, assault, possession, sale or use of an illegal substance, or other serious offenses.

Due process in the case of exclusion /expulsion requires the following:

- a. written notice of opportunity for a hearing
- b. written notice of the charges (telephone notification to parents with written copy of charges mailed to student's parents or guardian)
- c. the right to be represented by a lawyer or an advocate
- d. adequate time to prepare for a hearing
- e. access to documented evidence and opportunity to present witnesses and evidence in his/her behalf
- f. the right to question witnesses, and
- g. the written decision including the specific grounds for the decision
- h. any student expelled from school by the Principal shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Schools.

Bus Policy

Waiting for the Bus Your Child Should:

- Stay out of the road except when he/she must cross the street.
- Wait in an orderly manner. Rough behavior or running is inappropriate.
- Not throw stones or snowballs or other objects.
- Avoid trespassing on private property.
- Line up off the road and approach the bus only when the driver has opened the door.

Riding the Bus Your Child Should:

- Listen carefully to the driver's instructions. The driver is in full charge of the bus.
- Get on the bus quickly and be seated. Pupils may be expected to sit three in a seat. The bus driver may assign seats, and students must sit in their assigned seat.
- Help keep the bus clean. Not litter.
- Remain in his/her seat when the bus is moving. Not extend arms or heads out of the windows.
- Restrict his/her talking to those children who are sitting next to him/her. Shouting will distract the driver.
- Not swear or use abusive language.

Because buses may be filled to capacity, students will ride only their assigned buses. A student may get off at a different bus stop on his/her route, if the parent sends in written permission.

School Bus Evacuation Drills School Bus Evacuation Drills are held annually in conjunction with the school bus contractors, Police Department, Safety Officer and the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Suspension from Riding the Bus A student whose conduct represents a safety hazard will be subject to a suspension from riding the bus for a period of up to ten days. In this case, parents will be expected to provide transportation for the student to and from school. Notification to the parents will be in writing from the principal and any suspension will not be effective until the parents have

been notified (see WRSD Policy # P7340). Additional unacceptable behavior on buses may lead to permanent suspension from buses.

Procedures:

- The bus driver will submit a written complaint to the school principal.
- A disposition form will be sent to the parent/guardian for signature.
Parents/guardians will be called prior to bus suspension.
- The administration reserves the right to consider extenuating circumstances in determining disciplinary consequences.
- Serious violations will be treated accordingly.
- Restitution will be expected for vandalism.

WRSD Bus Discipline Regulations Riding the school bus is a privilege afforded to students for educational purposes. Appropriate behavior ensures safe transportation and is expected of all students. In that traveling to and from school is an extension of school activity, conduct is under the governance of school rules. Thus, the disciplinary consequences detailed below do not preclude the enforcement disciplinary procedures included in the Student Handbook.

The following is considered inappropriate behavior: Disrespect; Unsafe and/or disruptive behavior; Possession of prohibited material; and Vandalism.

At the discretion of the administration, consequences for offenses may be assigned as follows: written warning, 1 day bus suspension, up to 10-day bus suspension, or loss of bus privileges for the rest of the school year.

A copy of the Bus Discipline Procedures and Consequences is on the last page .

Alternate Student Transportation (WRSDC P6562) It shall be expected that students will go to and from school by the same means on a daily basis. A parent or high school student may choose an alternate mode of transportation over which the school system has no authority. Therefore, a choice to use an alternative form of transportation other than the school bus shall be at the risk of the parent and the student.

Procedures for requesting alternate transportation to and from school shall be contained in the student handbook. The high school student will be responsible to inform parent/guardian on taking a late bus or alternate means of transportation. K-8 students will be required to present a written permission notice to the school from parent/guardian when using alternate means of transportation. In case of emergencies, oral notification will be an acceptable alternative with the administration making a written record of the notification.

All high school students applying for a parking sticker and using a personal vehicle to transport other students will be required to carry personal liability insurance on the vehicle in the amount of \$100,000-\$300,000.

Transportation Safety and Security Procedures (WRSD P6621)

The Wachusett Regional School District and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing District requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders or damages properties will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges. Notification of this policy shall be contained in the Student Handbook.

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

Policy Relating to Pupil Services P6616

Insurance

The Wachusett Regional School District shall require each student participating in intramural programs and/or athletic teams to provide evidence of an active accident or health insurance policy covering the student.

Comprehensive Health Curriculum

Notice to Parents of Right of Exemption

Wachusett Regional School District has developed a K-12 Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, which was approved by the Wachusett Regional School Committee in October 1996. This framework is available in all of the District's schools. This program was developed by members of the professional staff and reviewed by members of the community. The overall goal of the course is to promote the health and well being of our students and to help them make wise and informed decisions throughout their lives.

Sex education is part of the health education curriculum beginning in Grades 4 and 5, including puberty and male and female anatomy, followed progressively through the grades by such topics as dating; relationships and communication skills; pregnancy; birth control; abortion; homosexuality; prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; and prevention of sexual abuse. Specific curriculum outlines for particular grade levels will also be available for review. If you would like to review these materials at the school, please call to arrange a convenient time.

During instructional time, students will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be put on the spot to ask or answer questions or reveal personal information. Material will be presented in a balanced, factual way.

Under Massachusetts General Law and School Committee, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

Parent Notification of Human Sexuality Issues

(WRSD P3313.1)

The Wachusett Regional School Committee supports the right of parents or guardians to exempt their children from any portion of the curriculum, which involves reference to human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The district will notify parents regarding the presentation of curricula that involves those issues.

Parents or guardians shall have the flexibility to exempt their children from any portion of the said curriculum through written notification to the school principal. No child so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption. In the event of such an exemption, a substitute assignment may be provided.

To the extent practical, the Wachusett Regional School District shall make program instruction materials for said curricula reasonably accessible to parents, guardians, educators, school administrators, and others for inspection and review.

Acceptable Internet Use Regulations for WRSD Students

The purpose of the WRSD network and the Internet is to enhance educational research. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate and/or potentially offensive to some people.

While the District's intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. It is the District's position that the benefits to students in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the potential disadvantages.

Rules for Student Use of Internet and E-Mail

Student behavior on school computer networks is governed by the behavioral expectations, which appear in the Student Handbooks. In conjunction with these behavioral expectations, students may use the Internet only for approved school-related activities. Students will not be permitted to:

- * Reveal their own personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, user names, passwords, etc., or that of other students;
- * Use another's password and/or trespass in another's folder(s), work, and/or file(s);
- * Access e-mail accounts or chat lines without permission and supervision;
- * Attempt to gain access to unauthorized resources or entities;
- * Post anonymous messages;
- * Download software, such as games, applications, etc., for personal use; use of resources, such as copy paper, printer toner, etc;
- * Access, send, or display sites that provide material, which does not conform with acceptable school use, such as pornography, obscenity, etc., without authorization;
- * Violate copyright laws;
- * Vandalize computers, computer software, computer systems, data, and/or the computer network;
- * Use the network for non-school related purposes, such as commercial ventures, to set up personal web pages, advertising, etc.

Violation may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

The administration reserves the right to review students' files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that the users are using the system within the authority provided by the District. Teachers and other staff members will make every attempt to monitor and guide students toward appropriate materials and the use of the system.

Pupil Services, Student Internet Access (WRSDC P6531) While the Wachusett Regional School Committee encourages the use of electronic communication to promote excellence in education, the School Committee also recognizes its responsibility to reasonably ensure the anonymity of students using the District's Internet to ensure this goal.

- The District prohibits non-educational use of its network facilities, the Internet and the Internet access.
- Access and use of the District's Internet is a privilege, not a right, and access to it may be denied to students violating this policy.
- The District prohibits student use of "chat" lines without the permission and supervision of authorized professional staff members.
- The District shall limit student use of e-mail to District supervised programs.

Each school shall include within the student handbook procedures, rules and responsibilities pertaining to student Internet access, which are age appropriate. The handbook shall also contain procedures on the following:

At the elementary school level:

1. Student work may be displayed on the school site web pages or the District web page with the student's first name only when prior written permission is received from the parent/guardian annually.
2. Photographs of students may be displayed on the school site web pages or District web page only identified by classroom teacher or grade when prior permission is received from the parent/guardian annually.

Education, Online Education Policy (WRSDC P3311.31) The Wachusett Regional School Committee supports technology as a tool for learning and supports online education as a viable methodology for the delivery of direct instruction. Online education should provide an opportunity for students to accelerate the curriculum, to complete the curriculum and to provide learning opportunities in areas not available to the student due to scheduling conflicts or uniqueness of offering. Online education should also be promoted as a tool for staff development. Consideration for online education may include:

1. The course is not offered at the school;
2. Although the course is offered at the school, the student will not be able to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict;
3. The course will serve as a supplement to extend instruction to those students who would be unable to attend classroom instruction;
4. Students who have been expelled from the regular school setting but who are eligible for continued educational services; or
5. In unique situations where there is consensus among student, teacher and administrative staff that, due to the differentiating needs of the student whether it be to accelerate and reinforce learning or for advanced learning opportunities, the student would require an additional service.

Requests for taking online courses may come from the student, the teacher or the parent. The school principal, in consultation with staff, shall make the final determination as to the acceptability of the course and upon approval, shall fund the course from the school budget, subject to availability of school funds. Consideration by the principal and school staff should include the educational workload of the student, the eligibility of the student to take such a course, equitable access and prerequisites.

Provision for monitoring and assessment of the progress of students who are provided with online learning opportunities should be included in the implementation plan. The school should establish standards and criteria of performance along with a mechanism of assessment for any student involved in the online education program.

Students and parents should be made aware annually of this policy.

Policy Relating to Pupil Services P6910 Student Records

The Wachusett Regional School District shall:

1. Take all reasonable precautions to preserve the confidentiality of a student's records.
2. Make available for inspection all school records of a student upon request of the parent or legal guardian.
3. Make available for inspection all school records of a student upon his or her request provided that the student is fourteen (14) years of age or older or upon entering the ninth grade.
4. Disseminate, to parents and students, State Regulations on Student Records and this policy annually.

Regulations:

The State Board of Education has adopted regulations pertaining to student records that are designed to ensure parents' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records.

The regulations apply to all information kept by the District on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extra-curricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed seven years after the student leaves the school system.

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

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

Confidentiality of Records - No individuals or organizations are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent, legal guardian, or student of legal age. Exceptions include only those state agencies that specifically are authorized to request student information.

According to federal law, the District is required to release the names, addresses, and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. Parents and eligible students have the right to request that this information not be released without their consent by notifying their school building office in writing. At the beginning of each school year, parents will be mailed a form to complete, indicating their choice to give or withhold their consent to release information.

The District Administration shall not release a student's social security number or date and place of birth to anyone except as required by law.

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

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

Consistent with the Education Reform Act, the District will transfer a student's record to a new school outside the Wachusett Regional School District without prior consent required from the parent or eligible student.

Authorized school personnel to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic

capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

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

As of 1998 Massachusetts law (MGL Chapter 71, § 34H) specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, contact the building principal.

In reference to the Internet, use of a student's name, photo or samples of their work on the Internet or District web page must be in accordance with the Wachusett Regional School Committee Policy P6531 *Policy Relating to Pupil Services Student Internet Policy*, which **requires prior written parental approval**. School principals shall provide appropriate authorization and release to be executed by parent/guardian prior to release, publication or posting of such information.

A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) in the United States Department of Education (202) 260-3887. If you have any questions regarding this notice, or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

All information in this notice complies with Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and Wachusett Regional School Committee Policies.
R5/20/03

Confidentiality (WRSDC P6650) The Wachusett Regional School District shall encourage communication between and among school personnel, students, and parents. The Committee recognizes that circumstances may arise when a student with a personal or medical problem may seek help from a member of the faculty or administration. In such instances, the Committee will respect the confidentiality of communications between student and a teacher, counselor, nurse, or administrator. However, it is not the intention of this statement of policy to encourage interference with parental or legal authority.

Child Find The Wachusett Regional School District wishes to identify all children, ages three years to twenty-one years, who reside within the District, have not yet graduated from high school, and who are in need of special education and related services. Any child suspected of having a disability and believed to be in need of special education and related services may be referred to the Administrator of Special Education Services, Wachusett Regional School District, Jefferson School, 1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522 (508-829-1670 X237).

Non-Discrimination (WRSDSC 6631) This is to notify all students that the Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies; further, no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to its public schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

The School District, in complying with the laws of the Federal Government and Massachusetts, notifies you of this action and informs you that the coordinator for compliance at the building level is the school Principal.

At the District level, the ADA (disability pertaining to non-students), Title VI and Title IX (race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, and sexual orientation) Coordinator is:

Susan Sullivan, Director of Administrative Services, Wachusett Regional School District, Jefferson School, 1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670

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

Nancy Houle, Director of Student/ Information Services, Wachusett Regional School District, Jefferson School, 1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670

Also found in this handbook is a Grievance Procedure. The purpose of the grievance procedure is to allow any citizen to be heard and recorded regarding any complaints or violations of this policy.

Notice of Procedural Safeguards (formerly titled "Parent's Rights Brochure") can be accessed at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/>.

W R S D Grievance Procedure for Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 (Federal Laws) and Chapter 622 (State Law)

Statement of Definition

A grievance is any alleged violation of the Wachusett District School Committee Policy on Non-Discrimination (#P6631) on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies.

Grievance Procedure

Step #1

An alleged grievance must be filed with the building coordinator (principal or designee) in writing within thirty (30) days of the alleged grievance. The building coordinator shall meet with and respond to the aggrieved party (in writing) within fifteen (15) days.

Step #2

If a satisfactory solution is not achieved at step #1, the aggrieved party may, within fifteen (15) days upon receiving the decision rendered at step #1, file the alleged grievance with the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services (for disability) or the Director of Administrative Services (for all others), who shall respond in writing and meet with the aggrieved party in an attempt to resolve the alleged grievance within fifteen (15) days.

Step #3

If a satisfactory solution is not achieved at step #2 within the fifteen (15) day period, the alleged grievance may be filed at the next step with the school committee. The school committee shall provide an opportunity for the alleged grievance to be heard at its next regularly scheduled meeting and a decision shall be rendered in writing to the aggrieved party within fifteen (15) days.

Statement

1. An aggrieved party, if not satisfied with the decision of the school committee, may refer the case to the Massachusetts State Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148 (781-338-3300) and to the Office of Civil Rights, Region I, U.S. Department of Education, John W. McCormack Post Office and Court House, Room 701, Boston, MA 02109 (617-223-9662).

2. It is the intention of this grievance procedure to render due process regarding complaints or violations of this policy at each step of this grievance procedure.

Information Regarding Section 504 Of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973

The Wachusett Regional School District will identify, evaluate and provide an appropriate public education to students who are handicapped within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Further information may be obtained from your school's principal or Jason Newton, the District's Section 504 Coordinator.

School Committee Operation, Distribution of School Committee Publications (WRSDC P1523)

The Wachusett Regional School District shall, in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Education regulations, provide all publications as approved by the School Committee and required by the State Department of Education.

The School Committee Policy Book shall be made available for review to any person, upon request to the Superintendent's Office. Copies of said publications shall be placed in each of the five (5) Town Libraries and all school libraries. A nominal fee, not to exceed the cost of production, shall be charged to any person requesting a copy of one of the publications.

This policy shall be included in all Student Handbooks.

Distribution of Notices by Students

(WRSDC P8130)

The Wachusett Regional School District shall permit only the distribution, via the students, of school and District related notices.

Student Publications (WRSDC P6515)

The Wachusett Regional School Committee recognizes and supports student publications and other literary activities that give students an experience in journalism. The School Committee recognizes that the District must maintain a level of objectivity deemed to be in the best interest of the community and, to this end, the following procedures are in effect:

1. No school publication will accept advocacy or political advertising that is political, religious or discriminatory in nature.
2. All advertising is subject to review and approval by the principal or a designee relative to content and appropriateness.
3. Final editorial control and approval of all materials intended for publication are the responsibility of, and may be subject to the approval of, the school administration.

4. A statement indicating the editorial control by the school administration regarding all advertising will be included on order forms or other similar correspondence.
5. This policy shall be referenced in the "Student Handbook".

Education, Enrichment (WRSDC P3611.4) The Wachusett Regional School Committee is committed to providing a high quality education for all students with the goal of maximizing the performance and achievement of every individual. Staff is encouraged and expected to use innovative teaching implementing the District curriculum in creative and flexible ways. It is recognized that students possess a broad range of intellectual skills and creative talents that can be challenged by diverse and stimulating activities.

Wachusett Regional School District shall:

- * provide opportunities for enriching activities appropriately accessible to all students;
- * encourage and support staff attendance at professional development programs designed to promote the implementation of gifted and talented instructional strategies;
- * promote the use of alternative strategies which may include, but are not limited to, cluster grouping, curriculum compacting, interest-based projects, independent studies, and teacher-pupil contracting, supported by appropriate classroom resources; and
- * inform parents of the enriching activities available in the area of gifted education and promote parent/community involvement and participating.

This policy shall be referenced in each school's student handbook. In addition, school councils shall annually review the needs of gifted and talented students.

Pupil Services, Sexual Harassment (WRSDC P6434) It is the policy of the Wachusett Regional School Committee to provide an educational environment free of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment as defined by this policy and law. Sexual harassment violates the policies of the District and also violates federal and state law, specifically Title IX and Massachusetts General Laws, C. 151C.

It will be a violation of this policy for any student to be sexually harassed by or to sexually harass another student, any employee or volunteer or other person connected with the District through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy. Retaliation against a student for filing a complaint, under this policy or for assisting in an investigation of sexual harassment is in violation of this policy.

DEFINITION:

The legal definition of sexual harassment is: Unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's success as a student;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of educational decisions affecting such individual(s); or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include the following types of activities, but is not limited to these examples:

- Touching (arm, breast, buttocks, shoulders, etc.)
- Verbal comments (about parts of the body, what type of sex the victim would "be good at," clothing, looks, etc.)
- Name calling (from "honey" to "bitch" and worse)
- Starting and repeating sexual rumors
- Leers and stares
- Sexual or "dirty" jokes
- Cartoons, pictures, and pornography
- Using the computer to leave sexual messages or graffiti, or to play sexually offensive computer games
- Gestures
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Cornering, blocking, standing too close, following
- Conversations that are too personal
- "Rating" an individual – for example, on a scale from 1 to 10
- Obscene t-shirts, hats, or pins
- Showing inappropriate videos and other materials during class
- Sexual assault and attempted sexual assault
- Massaging the neck, massaging the shoulders
- Touching oneself sexually in front of others

- Graffiti
- Making kissing sounds or smacking sounds, licking the lips suggestively
- Howling, catcalls, whistles
- Repeatedly asking someone out when he/she is not interested
- Pulling down someone's pants or forcibly removing other articles of clothing
- Facial expressions (winking, kissing, etc.)
- "Slam books" (lists of students' names with derogatory sexual comments written about them by other students)

Complaint Procedure:

If you feel that someone has sexually harassed or is sexually harassing you, you should file a complaint by following the steps outlined below:

1. Speak or send a note to any employee of the school district, whom you trust, (i.e., nurse, psychologist/counselor, teacher, principal, assistant principal, superintendent, etc.). You can also speak to your parents who can then notify the superintendent, principal or assistant principal. Remember that the complaint procedure does not start until school/district personnel receive the complaint.

2. Within two school days of receipt of the verbal complaint, the employee will notify the principal/superintendent, and your parent/guardian will be notified of the pending complaint.

3. If you have not or do not want to put the complaint in writing, the employee will do so. This should be done no later than two (2) school days after you have talked, or given the note, to the employee. The complaint has to be put in writing to make sure that the employee fully and correctly understands the issue(s). A copy of the complaint, in writing, will be reviewed with you and your parent/guardian to ensure accuracy, before it is shared with the subject of the complaint.

4. The employee will refer the written complaint to the principal/superintendent. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may speak with you to get more information. In any case, the principal/superintendent or his/her designee will speak to the person who is alleged to have sexually harassed you (called the "respondent") to obtain information as well.

a. If the principal/superintendent feels that the complaint can be resolved without a formal investigation, he/she may use the informal procedure. The informal procedure simply attempts to resolve the situation and can be done in many ways. Examples are:

- The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have a conversation between you and the respondent where you can tell the respondent that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
- The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have you write a letter to the respondent saying that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
- The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have separate conversations with you and the respondent

Examples of possible resolutions are as follows:

- Verbal statements of apology;
- Letters of apology;
- Assurances that the offensive behavior will end;
- Disciplinary action.

The informal procedure will be completed within five (5) school days from the date the principal/superintendent receives the complaint. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee will notify you, your parent/guardian, and the respondent of the results of the informal procedure. Resolution of the situation may or may not occur as a result of the informal procedure. If all the parties involved in this informal procedure feel that a resolution has been achieved, this discussion will remain confidential and no further action will be taken. If any of the parties feel that resolution has not been achieved, the following formal procedure will be used.

Investigative deadlines may be extended under extenuating circumstances such as illness.

Formal Procedure:

1. The formal procedure is used when any one of the following occurs:

- a. You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent asks that the formal procedure be used;
- b. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee decides that the formal procedure should be used; or
- c. You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent feels that the informal procedure was not helpful or adequate and one of the party's requests, within five (5) school days that the formal procedure is used.

2. The formal procedure will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the complaint being filed with the principal/superintendent, or if the informal procedure was used, within twenty (20) school days of the request to start the formal procedure.

3. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee shall investigate the complaint and complete a written report, which will include:

- All facts and circumstances of the incident;
- A summary of the investigation, which will include interviews with anyone reasonably believed to have relevant information, namely, the individual filing the complaint, the

respondent, and, if either party is under the age of 18, their parents (if appropriate), witnesses, and anyone else who may have experienced similar conduct;

- A description of any actions already taken and/or proposed by the principal/superintendent or his/her designee.

Copies of the written report, including the principal's/superintendent's findings, and the rationale and documentation of it will be forwarded to each of the parties involved within five (5) school days of completion of the investigation. All documentation of sexual harassment will be kept on file at the office of the superintendent.

If the principal/superintendent or his/her designee finds that sexually harassing conduct has occurred, then he/she may discipline the respondent, require the respondent to apologize to the complainant, suggest that the respondent go to counseling, or require the respondent to attend training, refer the matter for review by state or local law enforcement authorities, or any combination of the above.

Either party may appeal the decision of the principal in writing to the superintendent, within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the findings of the formal procedure. The decision will be reviewed to ensure adequacy of the investigation and conclusions. Parties will be given an opportunity to submit additional information. The superintendent or his/her designee will make a decision and provide it in writing to both parties within thirty (30) days. The decision of the superintendent shall be final.

Other Resources:

Individuals also have the right to seek a remedy from the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 727-3990, and/or the Regional Office of Civil Rights for the United States Department of Education, 222 John W. McCormack Building, Boston, MA 02109, (617) 223-9662.

Retaliation:

No one may retaliate against you for filing a complaint. Further, no one may retaliate against any student, employee, or any other person because they provided information or helped in the investigation. If any person feels that he/she has been subjected to retaliation, he/she should file a complaint with the principal/superintendent.

Considerations to Remember:

A. A man/boy, as well as a woman/girl, may be the victim of sexual harassment, and a woman/girl, as well as a man/boy, may be the harasser.

B. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.

C. The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may also be someone who is affected by such conduct when it is directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts at humor or the sexual harassment of one girl (or boy) may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for another girl (or boy) or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's educational performance

Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying Discrimination and Hate Crimes P6437

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment free from harassment, bullying, discrimination and hate crimes. The District will not tolerate unlawful or disruptive behaviors at school or school-related activities including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parent involvement. The District will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination and hate crimes and will take prompt, effective action to end such behaviors including, when appropriate, referral to law enforcement agencies.

The Wachusett Regional School District prohibits all forms of harassment, bullying, discrimination and hate crimes related or unrelated to race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. The District will not tolerate retaliation against those taking action consistent with this Policy. Threats or acts of retaliation, regardless of how they are expressed, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary or other corrective actions.

Harassment:

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct on school property or at school-related activities relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive education or work environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct that, if it persists, will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. A single incident may, depending upon its severity, create a hostile environment.

Bullying:

Bullying is defined as a form of aggression involving a power imbalance between the bully and victim, where the bully has perceived or actual physical, social and/or psychological power over his/her target(s). Although bullying generally involves a pattern of conduct directed at a victim, depending on the severity of the incident, a single instance of such misconduct may constitute a violation of this Policy.

Student and Staff Responsibilities

All students and staff members, as members of the WRSD community, are responsible for complying with this policy and ensuring that he/she does not harass, bully, discriminate or perpetuate a hate crime against another person on school grounds or at a school-related activity. Further, each student and staff member is responsible to make sure that s/he does not retaliate against any person who reports or files a complaint, or who helps someone report or file a complaint, or for cooperating in the investigation of a report of complaint.

Reporting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination or Hate Crimes

Students can report any case of harassment, bullying, discrimination or hate crimes to any adult in the school who is then responsible to inform the building principal or designee. The school principal or designee is responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations at the school level. At the District level, the District Equity Coordinator is responsible for receiving and addressing reports or complaints of violations of this Policy.

Any member of the school community who is informed of or believes that harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation or a hate crime has occurred or may have occurred at school or in a school-related activity must promptly report the incidents to the building principal or designee, or the Title VI Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Equity Coordinator or Superintendent. In situations where a student or other person is uncomfortable reporting the incident to a designated official, s/he may report it to a trusted school employee who must promptly inform a designated official.

Upon receipt of a written or oral report or complaint, the principal (or designee) and the Equity Coordinator will promptly notify each other of the facts alleged and any initial action taken. If and when a report or complaint involves physical injury, the principal or designee will promptly report the incident to the Superintendent. All complaints or reports must be documented on the District's "Reporting/Complaint Form". If the complainant or reporter is unwilling or unable to complete the form, the designated official who receives the oral complaint or report will promptly prepare the written report using the reporter's or complainant's own words. The designated official will also summarize any initial action taken. If the complaint occurs at the school level, the designated official will promptly provide the principal with the completed Reporting/Complaint Form with a copy to the District Equity Coordinator.

A report or complaint involving a Principal should be filed with the District Equity Coordinator or Superintendent. A report or complaint involving the Equity Coordinator should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint involving the Superintendent should be filed with the School Committee.

Reporting Other Incidences

Under General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A for purposes of reporting child abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services. Under MGL119, Sec. 51A, a school staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a student under the age of 18 is suffering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, school staff member or other caretaker must immediately report the abuse or neglect either directly to the Department of Social Services (DSS) or to the person designated by the school to accept those reports, who then promptly reports to DSS.

The principal and/or Superintendent will report to local police certain forms of sexual harassment and conduct that may constitute a crime.

The principal and/or Superintendent may report physical injury, destruction of public property, potential hate crimes and other acts of a serious criminal nature to local police for investigation.

Protection Against Retaliation

The District will take appropriate steps to protect from retaliation persons who take action consistent with this Policy, or who report, file a complaint of, or cooperate in an investigation of a violation of this Policy. Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action.

Ensuring Safety During Investigation

The designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will take any step he/she determines is necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation.

Determination of Proceedings

Upon receipt of a complaint or report, the District must determine whether to undertake formal or informal proceedings to resolve the complaint or report. Upon receipt of a complaint or report, a designated official will attempt to identify and obtain cooperation from the victim(s). Where the designated official does not obtain the identity or cooperation of the alleged victim(s), the District will proceed with an investigation and then proceed to formal or informal proceedings to the extent possible.

Informal proceedings will commence when criteria for Formal Proceedings are not met. In these cases, a designated official, in consultation with the Equity Coordinator, may apply either the Student Code of Conduct or initiate an Informal Proceeding, which strives to resolve the report or complaint through non-disciplinary corrective action, although the designated official may also determine that discipline action is appropriate and necessary.

Formal proceedings will commence when the designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator determines that:

- the allegation is serious enough that it appears to place the complainant or any other person at physical risk;
- the incident has resulted in a criminal charge;
- the incident involves a referral to the Department of Social Services;
- the allegation involves a serious form of harassment, discrimination or retaliation;
- the allegation involves bullying, where the District has intervened with the alleged student offender under the Code of Conduct for bullying on two prior occasions;
- there is a pending Formal Proceeding against the subject of the complaint;
- the subject of the complaint has previously been found to have violated this Policy after Formal Proceedings, or
- that a formal proceeding is otherwise appropriate under the circumstances, the designated official must then commence a Formal Proceeding.

Formal Proceedings-Investigation

The designated official will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and if a student, with their parent(s) or guardian(s), to tell them about the formal process, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the remedy the complainant seeks. The designated official will also explain that the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible, but that the District cannot promise absolute confidentiality, and may not be able to withhold the complainant's identity from the subject of the complaint, since such a promise could interfere with the District's ability to enforce its Policy, conduct a fair and thorough investigation, or impose disciplinary or corrective action.

Following a prompt and thorough investigation, the designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will determine whether the allegations have been substantiated, and whether the Policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. The designated official, in consultation with the District Equity Coordinator, will prepare a written report that includes the investigative findings, the investigative steps taken, and the reasons for those findings. These findings will specify whether the allegations have been substantiated, whether the Policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct, has been violated, and any decision or recommendation for disciplinary and corrective action.

The designated official will promptly notify the complainant and the subject of the complaint in writing to let them know whether the complaint has been substantiated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official will also promptly notify the complainant of any non-disciplinary corrective action imposed to protect him/her from future Policy violations. If the complaint is substantiated and the offender remains a student in the school, the designated official will meet with the offender and his/her parent or guardian, to describe the disciplinary and/or corrective action imposed, the school's expectations for future behavior and the potential consequences for retaliation or future violation of the Policy. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the investigation or outcome thereof, the designated official shall inform the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Education and/or the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

If the District's investigation results from a third party report, the designated official will inform that person that the District has taken steps consistent with the Policy, while not providing information about any disciplinary action imposed or any other information that would violate applicable state and federal confidentiality laws or student record regulations.

Violations

Where a violation of the Policy has been reported by a third party, and an alleged victim fails to cooperate with the investigation, or denies the incident occurred, disciplinary and corrective action may be precluded or limited, depending upon circumstances and availability of information from other sources.

False Reports

Any person making false charges of harassment, bullying, discrimination or the occurrence of a hate crime is subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline

If a student has been found in violation of this policy, the District will impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action to end and prevent further occurrences of the complained of action(s). The District will take into account harm suffered by the victim(s) as well as any damage to school or District property. The nature of any action taken must comply with District and school disciplinary policies. Any disciplinary or corrective action shall conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law.

Action concerning students may include a written warning; classroom or school transfer; suspension (short- or long-term); exclusion from school-sponsored functions, after-school programs and/or extra-curricular activities; limited or denied access to parts or areas of the building; exclusion, expulsion or discharge from school; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; an apology to the victim; awareness training; empathy development awareness programs; counseling or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and/or school disciplinary code. The District complies with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities.

Oversight

The District has designated the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services as the District Equity Coordinator. The Equity Coordinator will, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools, ensure the successful administration of and compliance with this Policy. Information including the name of the Equity Coordinator, his/her mailing address, telephone number and email address will be posted prominently in the District office as well as all school buildings within the District.

WRSDC Policy 6437

Pupil Services, Tolerance (WRSDC P6436) The Wachusett Regional School Committee shall provide a learning environment that promotes and encourages an appreciation of diversity. Individual differences of students are to be appreciated and respected within district policies and regulations. All students can expect to grow and learn without encountering harassment about individual differences.

Intolerable activities include but are not limited to harassment about race, gender, sexual orientation, handicap, religion, ethnic group, appearance, dress, learning style, interests, or behaviors.

Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying behaviors include but are not limited to teasing, verbal harassment, unwanted touches, physical attacks, and/or ostracism.

Reports of such conduct will be investigated and action will be taken under the guidelines of an individual school's disciplinary code.

Reference to this policy will be placed in all student handbooks.

Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel (WRSDC P3321.1)

The Wachusett Regional School District encourages field trips, which enhance the students' educational experience. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37N, if field trips involve late night or overnight travel, the following must be met:

- A. Trip Approval Process:
 1. Advance approval by the Superintendent and/or designee will be required for any student trip involving late night or overnight travel (in concurrence with P3321 **Policy Relating to Education Field Trips**).
 2. The approval process will be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip.

3. Overnight trips must offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips must be appropriate for the grade level and must meet Time on Learning requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Education.
 4. Teachers and other school staff will be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process applies only to school-sanctioned trips; trips will not be approved that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.
 5. Policies and procedures for trip approval will take into account all logistical details involving security arrangements, emergency management and communications protocols, transportation, accommodations, itinerary, fundraising required of students, the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs, and recommendation of the principal.
- B. Transportation
1. The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should generally be avoided. Should the use of vans be necessary for overnight travel, prior written authorization from the Superintendent and subsequent approval by the School Committee must be obtained. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches. No student drivers will be allowed at any time.
 2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will involve pre-trip checks for companies, drivers, and vehicles. Companies must have liability insurance on drivers.
 3. School officials will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The District should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of “conditional” or “unsatisfactory”.
 4. The contract with the carrier must prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the District to allow for verification of the subcontractor’s qualifications.
- C. Trip Scheduling
1. Overnight accommodations will be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Hiring independent security is recommended when appropriate.
 2. Field trips during school time must meet the Massachusetts Department of Education Time on Learning requirements.
 3. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense. Student vehicular (bus and auto) travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 AM is prohibited.
 4. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a field trip, the school will provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.
- D. Fundraising
1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students’ obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
 2. Group fundraising activities are preferred.
- E. Student Supervision
1. Students shall be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account the trip scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a CORI/criminal record check. Faculty and staff of the school will serve as chaperones whenever possible.
 2. A chaperone must always be present whenever students are on the bus.
 3. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form. Such forms shall include eligibility requirements and appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication.
 4. When away from school, all school rules will apply to the trip.
 5. Infringement of rules may result in a student’s immediate expulsion from the trip. In such cases, parents will be financially responsible for transportation home.

- NOTES -

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND CONSEQUENCES

The code below classifies unacceptable behavior into three levels. The examples are not exhaustive but illustrative. Additionally, all consequences are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the misbehavior. The administration reserves the right to consider extenuating circumstances in determining disciplinary action.

LEVEL 1

<p><u>Misbehaviors</u> Misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking too loudly • Failure to stay seated • Littering on the bus • Tampering with the possessions of other passengers 	<p><u>Consequences</u> The bus driver may address the misbehavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning issued to student • Assign seats
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LEVEL 2

<p><u>Misbehaviors</u> More severe misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated occurrences of Level 1 behaviors • Annoying and/or bullying other passengers • Use of profanity • Damage to the bus 	<p><u>Consequences</u> The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. This action may include any or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference with principal or designee • Contact with parents • Assigned seats • Loss of bus privileges for up to five days • Suspension from school for up to five days
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LEVEL 3

<p><u>Misbehaviors</u> Behavior that endangers the safety of the driver or students and which impairs the driver's ability to drive safely. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated occurrences of Level 1 or 2 behaviors • Refusal to remain in seats • Throwing objects, spitting, or spit balls • Distracting the driver • Refusal to obey driver • Fighting, including pushing and/or wrestling • Lighting matches/lighters • Possession of knives or other dangerous objects • Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances 	<p><u>Consequences</u> The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. At more severe levels, the superintendent or designee may be involved. This action may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of bus privileges for six to ten days • Suspension for 6 or more days or exclusion from school • Repeated incidents of Level 2 behavior or egregious acts may result in a child being permanently suspended from bus privileges • Illegal activity will be referred to the Police Department
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Procedures for reporting passenger misconduct

1. The bus driver will report misconduct occurring on the school bus to the school administration. If a student shares information pertaining to student misconduct on the bus with a teacher or other staff member, the administration will be notified and speak with the bus driver.

2. A School Bus Conduct Report will be completed and submitted to the school administration and the bus company.