

**WACHUSETT REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**1401 Main Street, Holden, MA 01520**  
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**Website: www.wrsd.net/wrhs**

## **2018-2019 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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.

**P6631 POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION** - The Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status, or other protected status in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies, and no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to its public schools, or in obtaining advantage and privileges in regards to courses of study and extracurricular programs of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status or other protected category.

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 Jeff Carlson, 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 Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670.

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

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Wachusett Regional High School is committed to an educational process that fosters independence and responsibility in our students. By offering diverse, challenging academic programs and rich co-curricular activities, Wachusett Regional High School strives to provide students with the skills and knowledge to achieve their potential as life-long learners.

### **CORE VALUES**

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving  
Creativity/Innovation  
Citizenship/Responsibility  
Communication  
Collaboration

### **STUDENT LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Students will . . .**

- Exercise responsible citizenship
- Communicate effectively
- Think critically and solve problems
- Think creatively
- Collaborate and learn actively
- Use technology effectively

## DAILY LIFE AT WRHS

**ATTENDANCE** – Students are expected to attend school regularly in order to obtain maximum benefits from their education and in order to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. There is a clear connection between good attendance, academic success and success after high school (see Attendance Policy pages 10-11).

**When a student is absent, a parent/guardian should call (508) 829-6771 before 8:00 a.m. to report the absence and the reason for it or, upon student's return to school, bring a note from the parent/guardian explaining the absence. A call will be made to each absent student's home if we do not hear from a parent or guardian.**

When a student misses 5 days during the school year due to unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be contacted and a meeting will be held with the Principal or Principal's designee to develop action steps to address the student's attendance.

**TARDY TO SCHOOL** – Students are expected to be in first-period class at 7:35 a.m. each school day and are not allowed to leave first-period class until after the pledge and/or announcements. Students arriving after 7:35 a.m. must sign in at the front door/main office and then report to their appropriate class. Students are allowed three tardies per quarter that must be verified by a note, phone call, or email to the student's administrator from a parent/guardian on that day or the day after. All tardies beyond the three allowed per quarter will result in disciplinary action (see Student Management Code). All students in the building or on school grounds prior to the 7:35 a.m. bell and who are late to period-one class will be sent to the Main Office to sign in and be considered tardy to school.

When a student misses 2 or more classes on 5 days during the school year due to unexcused tardies, the parent/guardian will be contacted and a meeting will be held with the Principal or Principal's designee to develop action steps to address the student's attendance.

**TARDY TO CLASS** – Two tardies to class (less than one-minute tardy) per quarter are tolerated. Each additional occurrence per quarter will be referred to administration and dealt with as defined by the Student Management Code.

**DISMISSALS/SCHOOL DAY** – Students who are dismissed must bring a note from their parent/guardian indicating their full name, grade, the date/time, phone number and reason for dismissal to the main office **before school**. Try to avoid dismissals during school hours. Phone dismissals are not allowed. Students leaving campus without proper dismissal from the Main Office or the Health Office, or leaving campus prior to the school receiving a legitimate phone call dismissing them, will be considered truant.

Students being dismissed during long block study must seek approval from their administrator. The only exception is that seniors may apply for "Early Dismissal" if they have no classes scheduled during long block and the following period.

**DISMISSAL PRIOR TO SCHOOL VACATION** – When family obligations or other long-range plans conflict with school closing dates, students must inform their assistant principal of their plans. Students must also make arrangements with their teachers to complete assignments missed during their absence. These absences are considered unexcused under the Attendance Policy.

**MAKING UP WORK MISSED WHEN ABSENT** – Students are allowed to make up work according to the following schedule when their absence from school is not the result of truancy:

**1-day absence:** 2 school days to make up the work

**2-day absence:** 4 days to make up the work

**3, 4, 5-day absence:** 1 school week to make up the work

More than one week's absence will be treated as a special case and arrangements must be made with each teacher. Students are responsible for making those arrangements. Students should make an effort to get work from their guidance counselors during their absence.

In case of an absence that occurs on the day an assignment is due, the aforementioned schedule for make-up does not apply. In this case, work must be turned in immediately upon return from the absence. If absence is due to suspension, all work must be submitted one day after returning to school. Special circumstances will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

If a student is present during any part of the day that a long-term assignment is due, it is expected that the student submit that assignment to their teacher on that day. Students are responsible for all class assignments missed due to field trip participation and should make up their work in a timely way. Students should work this out with the classroom teacher prior to the trip.

**WITHDRAWAL OR TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL** – In order to withdraw or transfer from school, students must complete the necessary forms provided by the Guidance Office and sign out formally. Failure to do so will result in incomplete school records. Students are financially responsible for all books and materials issued to them and they must be returned to faculty/staff before the student withdraws.

**VISITORS/VISITOR'S PASS** – All visitors (including parents) must sign in at the main office and wear a “Visitor’s Pass” that must be returned to the main office upon leaving.

**STUDENT PASSES** – Passes are required whenever students leave a classroom during a class period and can be checked by staff or administrators. Passes should have student name, date, time, destination, and the teacher signature. Students in the hall during a class period without a pass will result in disciplinary actions.

**STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS** – All students will be assigned to have their picture taken on August 29, 30 or 31, depending on their schedule. Picture retakes will occur on November 1 for those students that missed the original dates. Information to purchase pictures will be sent home in advance of these dates. In addition to allowing students/parents to order pictures from the photographer, each student will receive an ID card. Students should have their ID on their person at all times and show it to any WRHS staff member when asked. There is a \$5 replacement fee for lost IDs.

**CAFETERIA** – Students will be scheduled for one 30-minute lunch period during which time they must remain in the cafeteria. All other areas are off limits during lunch and students may not leave campus during lunch period. School lunches can only be charged using student's personal student identification card. Check prepayments for lunches are accepted, as well as cash. Make certain to include the student(s) name(s) and identification number(s) on the check. Students may make deposits during the school day, however, they are encouraged to do so **before school**. We also offer an online pre-payment system, for more information go to [www.wrsd.net/foodservices](http://www.wrsd.net/foodservices). Students are allowed two (2) IOUs or up to \$6.50 for meals unless there is an agreement made between the student and cafeteria manager for payment of the IOU. There are no IOUs for à la carte items. Students are not allowed to charge food for other students using their personal account. Students may apply for free/reduced lunch by completing and submitting the appropriate forms available online or in the Main Office. Remember that this is your school and your cafeteria. Be responsible with your food and beverage. Clean up after yourself or consequences may be assigned by administration. **All food and drinks must be consumed in the cafeteria or in a designated room during nutrition break.**

**FOOD AND BEVERAGES** – With the exception of the school cafeteria and in a designated room during nutrition break, the consumption of food and beverages anywhere in the building is prohibited during the school day upon entering the school building until dismissal at 2:10 p.m. Classroom functions approved in advance by the Administration and clear bottled water will be allowed. Travel coffee mugs, juice, vitamin water and snacks are not allowed outside of the cafeteria or the designated room during nutrition break. The consequences of not following this rule are outlined in the Student Management Code.

**BREAKFAST** – Wachusett offers a complete breakfast that meets the USDA guidelines and includes a hot meal and other items such as bagels, cereal, yogurt, fruit, and other healthy items, and will be open before school at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast. The breakfast price is \$1.50, reduced price is .30¢, and there is no charge for free-lunch students.

**LUNCH** – WRHS is committed to the District’s Nutrition and Wellness Policy. There are five lunch stations. Each station’s main entrée is served as a complete meal, which includes a choice of fruit, vegetable and milk. The daily lunch price is \$3.25 and reduced-price lunch is .40¢. Available at all serving lines are chips, cookies and drinks for an additional cost.

**NUTRITION BREAK** – Students are allowed time to have a small nutritious snack during the first five minutes of period 3, at which time morning announcements will be read. Students must bring the snack with them to class and will not be allowed to leave after the start of the period. The policy which states no food or drink (with the exception of clear water) outside of the cafeteria will not change other than this nutrition break. Abuse of this policy may result in a loss of privileges. Due to safety issues some classes may be excluded from this policy (i.e., science labs, gymnasium). Nutritious snacks are recommended such as fruit, breakfast bars, etc.

**FIRE DRILLS/ALARM** – Fire drills will take place throughout the year. Faculty and staff will direct students on how and where to exit the building when the fire alarm sounds. Directions for leaving each area are also posted. When the alarm sounds, follow the instructions given to you by faculty and staff members and leave the building quickly and quietly. Remain in the designated area until students have checked in with their teacher and are told to reenter the school. Upon reentering, all students must report directly back to the class they were in when the alarm sounded. The setting off of a false fire alarm is a criminal offense; offenders will be dealt with severely by school and local officials (see Student Management Code).

**FIELD TRIPS** – Field trips are designed to enrich the school curriculum and it is a privilege to participate in them. Administration may exclude students from participating in field trips due to behavior and/or academic reasons. Students are asked to contribute to the cost of field trips as well as complete and return a field trip permission form and health form, in order to participate. Students must notify their teachers of their upcoming absence from class as a result of their trip. Students are responsible for all class assignments missed due to field trip participation and should make up their work in a timely way. Plans to make up work should be discussed with the classroom teacher prior to the trip. During field trips, Wachusett Regional School District and Wachusett Regional High School rules are in effect at all times. In addition, the teacher in charge will have further instructions regarding student behavior.

## TRANSPORTATION

**AFTER SCHOOL** – Students should only remain after school for scheduled student activities. We ask that while waiting for a ride, students should wait in either the cafeteria or outside of the building near the gym entrance or main office entrance. Any students found loitering elsewhere will be asked to leave the building and further consequences may be issued by administration.

**BUS POLICIES** – Riding the school bus is a privilege. Students are expected not to interfere with the driver, other riders, or the safe operation of the bus. Failure to act responsibly may result in loss of this privilege, as well as discipline under the Student Management Code.

**STUDENT PARKING** – Eligible students in grade 12 may apply for a Student Parking Permit. As of the start of the 2018-19 school year Junior Parking Permits are not available. Rules associated with receiving a parking permit and reasons for losing it are included with the Parking Permit Application available on the school website. Students that have a pattern of disciplinary infractions may not be eligible for parking. All applications must be filled out completely and will be checked for accuracy and completeness.

A parking fee is charged and a sticker issued that **MUST** be visible on the student's car as outlined on the parking application. Parking on campus is a privilege that can be revoked due to disciplinary or academic problems, unpaid fines, unsafe driving, unauthorized transfer or sale of a parking sticker to another student, or any abuse of the parking privilege. **Students who park without authorization or who violate parking regulations will be fined and/or towed at the owner's expense.**

Limited parking spaces will be available for one-day emergency use at a cost of \$2 per day. A student may be issued up to five one-day passes per quarter. Students requesting these spaces are strongly recommended to make requests in the Main Office in advance. Parking spaces cannot be guaranteed on the day of request. Plan ahead if you need to bring a car to school.

**Administrators have the legal right to search students' cars given reasonable suspicion.**

**IDLING OF MOTOR VEHICLE** – Massachusetts law prohibits the unnecessary idling of motor vehicles on school grounds. **M.G.L. c.90, §16B prohibits operators of motor vehicles from allowing any motor vehicle to idle unnecessarily on school grounds except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles. Violators may be subject to a civil fine of up to \$100 may be imposed for a first offense and \$500 for second and subsequent offenses.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**ACADEMIC INFORMATION** – WRHS is a four-year comprehensive high school accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

A+ =	97-100	A = 93-96	A- = 90-92
B+ =	87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ =	77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D+ =	67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62
E =	50-59	(fail with make-up possible)	
F =	0-49	(no make-up possible)	

**COURSE LOAD** – All students are required to be full-time students. In order to be a full-time student, students are required to be enrolled in at least 5 courses that meet every day.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** – 110 total credits are needed for graduation. They include English (20), Social Studies (15), Mathematics (15), Science (15), Physical Education (7 1/2), Health (2 1/2), Fine Arts (5), Foreign Language (10) and other Electives (20). Please consult your guidance counselor and the *WRHS Educational Guide* for more information regarding academic programs and policies.

**MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAMS** – All students are required to take midyear and final exams (see senior final exam exemptions) in all of their major subjects. Exams are worth 20% of the semester (two-term) average. Exam schedules will be posted on the WRHS website ([www.wrsd.net/wrhs](http://www.wrsd.net/wrhs)).

Students may not be dismissed early from an exam. If a student leaves an exam early, he or she will receive a grade of 0. (Exception for SENIOR FINAL (SPRING) EXAMS – upon completion and submission of a final (SPRING) exam, seniors are allowed to leave the exam room and exit the building).

Make-up exams are allowed only with administrative approval. Upon receiving approval, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher and arrange a time for the make-up exam. It is expected that make-up exams will be completed during exam week and/or scheduled make-up period that takes place the week following exams.

**EXEMPTION FROM FINAL EXAMS** – Only seniors have the opportunity to be exempt from final exams at the end of the school year. In order to be eligible, they must have a quarter 3 and 4 (semester 2) average equal to or above 90%. Students will not receive an exemption if their attendance is in violation of the WRHS Attendance Policy.

**NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY** – Wachusett is a charter member of the National Honor Society. Please see NHS selection criteria on page 14.

**LOCKERS** – All students will be assigned a locker and a lock on the first day of school and should use only the locker assigned to them. Freshmen and new students will be assessed a \$5 locker fee should they choose to use a locker. Students are responsible for the condition of their locker and for its contents. Students will be assessed for any damage that is done to their locker. All belongings must be removed by the last day of school. If the lock is missing from the locker at any time, the student will be charged a \$10 replacement fee. Writing on lockers is strictly prohibited. Students are reminded that administrators have the legal right to search lockers and their contents, given reasonable suspicion (see Searches).

**SCHOOL FACILITIES AND MATERIALS** – We have beautiful facilities and equipment at WRHS. Please treat these facilities with respect. Students are responsible for damage incurred to school property. Students will receive textbooks and other materials for all of their courses at WRHS. Check any book or piece of equipment for damage when it is issued to you and report it to appropriate faculty or staff. Students should write their name and year of issue in the textbooks they receive.

Students should keep track of their books and materials and report any losses to an appropriate faculty or staff member. Check for lost books and materials at the Main Office. Students are responsible to pay the full replacement cost of any damaged or lost books, equipment or other school materials. Transcripts and graduation tickets will not be issued until these bills are paid.

**EVENTS CALENDAR** – Dances, plays, class activities, and other social events are held throughout the year. Applications for these events must be filed in the Main Office well in advance of the event. Final clearance for all events must be made through administration before they are included on the school's activity calendar.

**CLASS DUES** – Every student is responsible for class dues. Class dues fund some of the graduation expenses, as well as help defray the cost of other senior activities as well as future alumni events. Class dues are \$100 for all students present during their senior year. All students, whether participating in senior activities or not, are responsible for dues. It is recommended that students pay dues in yearly installments or in advance so as not to increase the financial burden at the end of senior year.

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES** – Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities at WRHS. There are a number of activities outside the traditional classroom and students are welcome to participate. If a student is absent during the day the student may not attend extra curricular activities without approval from administration. See the Wachusett homepage for an up-to-date list of activities.

**ATHLETICS** – There are many varsity, junior varsity, and freshman athletic teams at WRHS. Varsity teams are open to all and tryouts are held prior to each of the three sports seasons. Beyond the eligibility requirements for WRHS teams (see *Educational Guide*), our athletic organizations are under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). All coaches will review the Wachusett and MIAA rules on eligibility at the beginning of the season. These rules must be adhered to or student will be ineligible and/or contests forfeited. If a student is absent during the day the student may not attend athletic practices or competitions without approval from administration.

**ATHLETIC FEE** – The Wachusett Regional School District Committee has voted that each student on an athletic team must pay a fee of \$250 or \$350 per family for each season (fall, winter, spring) that they participate in a sport. The fee is due from each athlete prior to the first interscholastic athletic contest scheduled for that sport. The fee may be paid online or by check or money order, made payable to the Wachusett Regional School District. Students who do not pay the fee will be ineligible to participate. Students may apply for free or reduced fees based upon need.

**STUDENT ATHLETE CONCUSSION POLICY** – WRHS has established the following Concussion Protocol for all student-athletes competing in our interscholastic programs. All students, coaches, and parents are expected to be familiar with its contents.

Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

If it can be determined during a contest by the school's health care professional (this person must be a Medical Doctor, Doctor of Orthopedics, or Certified Athletic Trainer) that an athlete removed from play does not have a concussion and is cleared to play, then that student-athlete may be allowed to re-enter the competition. If the health care professional does not clear the athlete for return to the contest, then the athlete must adhere to the following ***Return-to-Play Protocol***.

1. Only a Medical Doctor or Doctor of Orthopedics, or a Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner working under a Medical Doctor or Doctor of Orthopedics, may clear the athlete for return to competition.
2. The clearance must be in writing.
3. The clearance may not be on the same date on which the athlete was removed from play.

**"AWAY" CONTEST PROTOCOL** – It is important to note that students, coaches, and parents are held to the same procedures and guidelines regarding concussion protocol when they compete on the road at "away" athletic events. In the event that the opposing school does not have an MD, OD, or Certified Athletic Trainer on staff, the student who sustains a possible concussion is "done for the day." They will not be cleared to re-enter the contest. Coaches and parents do not have the authority to clear a student-athlete for re-entry to a contest.

**MANDATED FREE ON-LINE CONCUSSION COURSE** – Massachusetts state law currently requires that parents and legal guardians take a free on-line course to familiarize themselves with the signs and symptoms of a concussion. The course will also discuss proper response to a suspected concussion, return to play protocols, and suggestions for the prevention of sports-related head injuries. The Wachusett Regional High School Athletic Department highly encourages student-athletes to take this course as well. The course may be accessed at [www.nfhslearn.com/course.aspx](http://www.nfhslearn.com/course.aspx).

**PHYSICAL EXAMS FOR ATHLETES** – According to MIAA guidelines, all students participating in interscholastic athletic contests must have had a physical examination within thirteen months prior to participation. Physical exams are only valid 13 months to the day of the exam and must be renewed to continue participation even if it is in the middle of a season. WRHS schedules two optional physical examination dates in the summer. The cost of these physicals is \$20 payable to Wachusett Regional School District at the time of the exam.

**SPECTATOR SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES FOR ATHLETIC EVENTS** – Athletics at Wachusett Regional High School are considered an extension of the classroom. As such, we strive to achieve a high degree of sportsmanship at our athletic contests. It is the responsibility of the district to teach and model good behavior and to maintain a safe and orderly environment at all times. Spectator conduct that is identified, at the discretion of the school administration (or designated supervisor) as profane, inappropriate or disorderly, or any behavior that interferes or threatens to interfere with the event, shall result in the following:

•**Warning:** a warning may be issued if the behavior is considered inappropriate. Warnings do not have to be given if the behavior is considered profane or if it has interfered with the operation of a game from an administrator/supervisor's, coaches' or officials' perspective.

•**Ejection:** spectators will be removed from the event should their behavior disrupt the operation of the game or is considered profane. Spectators that have been warned previously regarding inappropriate behavior shall be removed should the inappropriate behavior continue.

•**Suspension:** a spectator that has been removed from an event may have their privileges revoked for a period of time. This period of time will be determined by the school administration.

For behavior that is severe in nature or for failure to follow the directives of the administration or event supervisor, law enforcement officials will be contacted. Violation of sportsmanship guidelines may result in additional consequences by school administration.

**RELEASE OF HEALTH RECORDS TO GRADUATING SENIORS** – As per Massachusetts Department of Education Educational Law 603 CMR 23.06(3), each graduating student's complete health record will be released to him/her. At WRHS, we provide records to seniors on "Cap & Gown" day. **This is the only copy of his/her health record and should be securely filed at home.** This information will be needed for entrance into colleges and the work force. If the student does not pick up his/her health record on this day, it may be obtained in our Health Office for five (5) school days after graduation. Records remaining in the Health Office after the five days will be destroyed. Records may be picked up by the student, parent/guardian, or designee. A designee must be appointed in writing by the student or parent/guardian.

**POSTERS** – Permission to hang posters must be secured through an administrator who will review and initial all posters and notices before they are posted. All posters/notices must be in good taste and those who put them up must take them down immediately after the event. Approved posters should be posted on cinderblock walls, glass or cork strips.

**LOST AND FOUND** – All articles found should be taken to the Main Office where they may be claimed. Items are discarded periodically throughout the year.

**STOLEN PROPERTY** – Locks are issued for students to use on their school locker. In addition to securing these lockers, students are strongly recommended to obtain their own locks to secure their physical education locker. If a student does not have a lock for PE, they may give their valuables to their teacher. Occasionally items are stolen, and students should promptly report the theft to their administrator and/or PE teacher if this occurs. When personal items are stolen, students should also fill out a report with the Holden Police Department. Wachusett Regional High School assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

**STUDENT PUBLICATIONS** – Wachusett Regional High School supports student publications and generally maintains the free speech rights of students in such publications. However, final editorial control of such publications is in the hands of the school administration (WRSC Policy P6515).

**MEDICATION** – If a student requires medication, including over-the-counter medications, they must secure written orders from their doctor before medication may be given or taken in school. All medications must be brought to the nurse's office for storage and distribution. These written orders and medications must be kept on file in the Health Office. If a student carries medication on his/her person without school approval, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action potentially leading to expulsion from school.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION MEDICAL EXCUSES** – Students are expected to participate in physical education classes. Only students with a written note from his/her doctor may be excused from physical education classes. Students must file their doctor's note with the Health Office within two weeks of the restrictive impairment.

### **IMPORTANT LOCATIONS**

**MAIN OFFICE/ADMINISTRATION** – The Main Office and Guidance Department are located at the main entrance of the building.

**GUIDANCE SERVICES** – The Guidance Department is staffed by a Department Head, seven counselors, three school psychologists, and two full-time secretaries. Services include, but are not limited to, Naviance information, course selection, career advising, college application counseling, personal counseling, referral to outside resources, consultation to parents, teachers, and administrators, and testing. **Students should not take class time to visit the Guidance Office without an appointment with their counselor and/or a pass.**

**MEDIA CENTER** – The Media Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. It contains both print and electronic resources. Other computer laboratories throughout the school can access similar information through our network environment.

**HEALTH OFFICE** – The Health Office (Room H101) is located on the first floor near the stairs leading to the gym. Medical treatment consists of first aid for injuries and care for students who become ill during school hours. Parents/guardians of students who need to leave school during the day because of illness will be contacted in order to arrange transportation for the student. Students going to the Health Office must have a pass and sign in and out of the office with the Health Office secretary. Students should not visit the nurse's office during passing period except for emergencies. Please respect those who truly need services and go there only when necessary.

### **STUDENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

All members of the Wachusett community are expected to be good citizens by treating themselves and others with respect. Students are expected to use open and effective communication skills to address issues as they develop, using parents, peers, counselors, teachers, the resource officer and administrators as resources when appropriate. There are clear behavioral expectations and consequences for student violations. Please refer to the Student Management Code for a more detailed list.

**CHEMICAL VIOLATION** – Any use, consumption, possession, distribution, in the presence of illegal consumption or possession, or sale of any alcohol, drug, tobacco product, nicotine dispensing product or any controlled substance is in violation of school policy and students are subject to discipline outlined in the Student Management Code. These violations are also applicable to student athletes under M.I.A.A. Rule 62.1 and will result in team suspensions. These infractions will also be applicable to any student involved in extracurricular activities and will result in a suspension from those activities.

The WRHS Administration reserves the right to administer a breathalyzer test to any student suspected of consuming or possessing alcohol during the school day or at any school-sponsored event.

**SEARCHES** – Wachusett Regional School District authorities may exercise their rights to conduct a search of student cars, lockers, desks, or the student's person given reasonable suspicion. Lockers and desks remain, at all times, the property of the District.

A warrantless search (non-emergency) 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, tobacco and tobacco products, nicotine dispensing products, narcotics, hallucinogenics, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, unregistered drugs, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, or evidence of cheating or other academic misconduct.

**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT** – Wachusett Regional School District and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have strict regulations regarding bullying and harassment. Under no circumstances is this behavior tolerated.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with WRSD Policies #6437, #6438, and Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37o. Instances of bullying and harassment, which occur both in and out of school, may result in a criminal investigation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 §37o.

For more information refer to Policy #6437 and #6438 included in this handbook and as found on the district website at [www.wrsd.net](http://www.wrsd.net).

**HAZING** – See Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws on Hazing contained within the Wachusett Regional School District Policies in this handbook.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES** – Student use of personal electronic equipment (i.e., cell phones, iPods, tablets, personal computers, headphones/earbuds, wearable technology etc.) will be allowed with restrictions during the school day. Students will be allowed to use devices and/or make phone calls prior to the start of school at 7:27 a.m. **At 7:27 ALL devices need to be put away without exception. Additionally, at no point after the warning bell to start school will a student be permitted to make a phone call during the school day until the last bell at 2:10 p.m.** If a student has an emergency need to make a phone call, please report to an administrative or guidance office to gain permission to do so. The uses of electronic devices are permitted before the warning bell to start school at 7:27 a.m., after the last bell at 2:10 p.m., or during study halls (excluding phone calls). A teacher may seek approval from administration to allow the use of electronic devices in their classroom but students should assume that it is not allowed unless explicitly stated by the teacher. Use of any electronic device is also not permitted in the hallways during the school day or in detention hall. If devices are visible or being used during the times they are not permitted, it will result in the device being confiscated, requiring parent pick-up and consequences to be issued in accordance with the Student Management Code. Failure to turn over electronic devices when requested by a staff and/or faculty member will result in additional disciplinary action. Administration reserves the right to search electronic devices given reasonable suspicion of illicit activity. Wachusett Regional High School assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

**SCHOOL DRESS** – Use sound judgment when choosing clothes for school. Any manner of dress that is disruptive to the educational process (distracting to others in the school community), does not conform to Wachusett community standards of common decency and propriety, or violates state health laws (e.g., not wearing shoes, shirts, etc.) is prohibited at WRHS. Students will not be allowed to wear garments depicting drugs, alcohol, or any illegal activities, tops without straps or that reveal midriffs, backless shirts, and no visible underwear. Hooded sweatshirts are allowed but hoods and sunglasses may not be worn in the school building at any time.

**SOCIAL EVENTS** – WRHS students may be required to show their school IDs in order to enter event sites. Students wishing to bring a guest to a social event must obtain a visitor’s pass 24 hours in advance of that event. All student guests for dances must be pre-approved by administration. Wachusett students may be excluded from participating in social events based upon behavioral and academic performance. All students attending social events may be subjected to a breathalyzer test and must adhere to all school rules.

**SCHOOL DANCE POLICY** - The following dance conduct policy is designed to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment at WRHS dances.

**DANCE CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS** - Please note that these expectations apply both on and off the dance floor. Sexually suggestive dancing may result in: the student being removed from the event, the student not being allowed to attend the next dance, and parent notification.

The dance rules are as follows:

- No front to back touching/grinding
- No straddling legs
- No bending over
- No touching of the breasts, buttocks, or genitals
- Both feet must remain on the floor
- Hands between waist and shoulders only
- No “making out”(overt and/or prolonged public displays of affection)

**DUE PROCESS** – WRHS student management policies are based upon a firm belief that all students have a right to a quality education and that this right should not be infringed upon in any way. Administrators are here to help students if a problem arises. Under school rules, all students at WRHS are guaranteed due process.

### **Definitions**

**Expulsion:** the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

**In-School Suspension:** the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. *\*Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating cumulative days of suspension.*



**Long-Term Suspension:** the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

**Written Notice:** Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

**Principal:** The primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

**In-School Suspension:** Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent. On or before the day of the In-School Suspension, the principal will deliver written notice to the parent of the basis for and length of the in-school suspension and inviting the parent to meet to discuss the student's behavior if such a meeting has not already occurred.

**Emergency Removal under Section M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4:**

The principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and in the principal's judgment there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4

**Out-of School Suspension:** In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and shall inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the Principal, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term/interim suspension ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending formal disciplinary proceedings. Upon imposition of a short-term or interim suspension or an interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings\to consider the student's long-term suspension or expulsion.

**Principal's Hearing:**

Short-Term Suspension:

At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

Long-Term Suspension:

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not
- the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

### **Principal's Decision:**

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving possession of a controlled substance, a weapon, an assault on staff or felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the Principal decides to suspend or expel the student, written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension or expulsion, and the process for appeal. The Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

### **Appeals:**

Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. And for exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4, the Student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the Principal but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request.

### **Academic Progress:**

Any student who is serving an in-school or out-of-school short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan. M.G.L. c.76, §21.

**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 know might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary long-term suspension or 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 long-term suspension or 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 Director of Special Education.

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 provisions 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 principal (or his 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.
2. 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.

**APPEALS** – Students are also provided with an avenue of appeal in cases where they feel student management policies were not justly applied. A student charged by a teacher with an offense may appeal the decision to his/her administrator.

**CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS OF SCHOOL RULES** (see Management Code for details) – When school rules are violated, the following may be implemented.

• ***Academic Penalty*** – For every class that meets daily that a student cuts or is truant, two points will be deducted from the student's quarter average. For every class that meets every other day that a student cuts or misses because they are truant, two points will be deducted from the student's quarter average.

• ***Detentions*** – Detention hall is held after school from 2:20-3:20 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Students who arrive after 2:20 p.m. will not be allowed into detention. Only the administrator who originally assigned the detention may give students permission to reschedule a detention.

- **Extracurricular Penalty** – Students who violate school policy may be temporarily removed from participation in athletic events, extracurricular activities and/or school-sponsored events. Administration reserves the right to revoke grade appropriate privileges including but not limited to late entry/early dismissal, and parking.
- **School Service** – Students who violate school policies may be assigned to perform school service in place of other penalties. Such service may include projects that assist in the operation of the school community.
- **Saturday Detention** – Saturday detention will be held at Wachusett from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., from September through May. An administrator will be present while students make use of their time through academics and school service. Transportation is not provided.
- **In-School Suspension** – Students who violate the school policy, and at the discretion of the administrator, may be assigned in-school suspension in accordance with the due process procedures set forth above.
- **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 except to participate in alternative education services in accordance with the School’s Education Services Plan. At the conclusion of an out-of-school suspension, a student’s parent(s) or guardian must have a discussion with the student’s administrator and reach agreement on conditions for the student’s readmission to the Wachusett school community.
- **Juvenile Courts** – The administration will use the court system to work with students who are habitual school offenders or with students who have excessive absences from school.
- **Behavioral Contracts** – In order to address inappropriate behaviors on the part of individual students, some students and their parents will be required to sign contracts outlining specific behaviors expected of students and the consequences that will follow if these behavioral expectations are not met before the student may continue at WRHS.
- **Long-term Suspension or Exclusion/Expulsion** – will be used as a disciplinary measure in extreme and chronic behavioral situations. This may include situations such as possession/use of weapons; assault; possession, sale or use of an illegal substance; or other serious offenses.

### **VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students’ academic work must reflect their own honest efforts. Cheating and plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to copying homework, papers, lab reports, or quiz or test answers; acquiring or disseminating quizzes or tests before they are administered; or using information from the Internet or other outside sources without proper attribution.

Any student known to have cheated will be subjected to penalties, up to receiving “0” for the work. Possible penalties will be made known to each class by the teacher and will be included in the course syllabus.

Students who collaborate with others in cheating by allowing their papers to be copied or by other means will be subjected to penalties commensurate with their involvement, which may include the student receiving “0” for the work or suffering significant grade reduction.

In all cases, the principal or the class administrator along with the department head and teacher will be informed about both the incident and the penalty imposed, and the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified. The administration reserves the right to impose other penalties up to and including removal from the course, removal from honor societies, and loss of eligibility for scholarships with “honor” as criteria.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is of great importance that parents/guardians encourage their sons or daughters to attend school each and every day. Poor attendance habits, which are developed during these formative years, may be difficult to change. When students enter the workforce they will be expected to be reliable and dependable workers.

The law pertaining to school attendance is outlined in Chapter 76 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, and clearly prohibits unexcused school absence. Therefore, these absences shall be considered irresponsible student behavior.

It is the intent of this policy, within the spirit of The Education Reform Act and The Time on Learning Guidelines, to hold students accountable for their attendance. Because poor student attendance will affect credits earned, the Attendance Policy is included here for ready referral by parents, students and staff.

#### **I. ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- A. Students who are absent will not receive individual course credit as follows:
  1. Full-year courses (5 credits)-sixteen (16) classes missed.
  2. Semester courses (2.5 credits) - eight (8) classes missed.

3. Every other day semester courses (1.25 credits) - six (6) classes missed.
- B. Students who miss more than one half (1/2) of a class will be charged with one (1) full absence.
- C. Transfers
  1. Students who transfer into Wachusett Regional High School from another school system shall receive a prorated number of absences.
  2. Students who transfer into a class within the same department will carry over the number of classes missed.
  3. Students who transfer classes outside of a department will receive a prorated number of absences.

## **II. ABSENCES**

- A. **Excused Absences** are the only absences that do not impact loss of credit.
  1. Excused absences include: bereavement, religious holidays, documented chronic medical conditions, court dates, documented college visits, school-sponsored field trips/events (if all work assigned is completed upon the student's return to class).
  2. The Attendance Review Committee may request third party substantiation of the above circumstances (i.e., note on doctor's stationary, documentation from a court). These must be provided immediately upon the student's return to school.

### **B. Unexcused Absences**

All other absences will count towards a student's accumulated total and potential loss of credit (i.e., home sick, doctor visits, family vacations).

## **III. STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Students enrolled at Wachusett Regional High School are expected to be present each time their classes meet.
- B. Students absent from school must have a parent/guardian call to report the absence and reason for it on the day of the absence or submit a note to the attendance secretary immediately upon their return to school.
  1. The note must indicate the date(s) of absence, reason for absence, and must be signed by the student's parent or guardian.
  2. The note does not excuse the absence. The note verifies the absence.
  3. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for making and keeping copies of the above-mentioned documentation. (For absences to be considered excused, refer to Section II, A 1 & 2).
- C. Students with a diagnosed, chronic medical condition should have documentation from their physician on file with their class administrator **at the start of each school year**. Each absence related to a diagnosed, chronic medical condition may require documentation from a physician throughout the school year.

## **IV. FACULTY'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Teachers will record all absences and tardies on PowerSchool for each student.
- B. Teachers will report to the class administrator, in a timely manner, all students who have reached half of the allowed absences for a warning letter to be sent home. Then, when the maximum absence limit for a course is reached, they will report that to the class administrator for consideration of credit withdrawal.

## **V. ADMINISTRATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Upon teacher notification, a letter will be sent home to the parent if the child has four or more absences in a semester course or eight or more absences in a full-year course. Copies of the letter will be given to the student's teachers and also the student's administrator.
- B. Class administrators will issue parent notification letters when the halfway point has been reached.
- C. When a student misses 5 days during the school year due to unexcused absences or misses 2 or more classes on 5 school days due to unexcused tardies, the parent/guardian will be contacted and a meeting will be held with the student's administrator to develop action steps to address the student's attendance.
- D. When a student reaches the maximum limit, he/she will be informed in a meeting with the class administrator. An attendance hearing will be held with the student's administrator. Parents/guardians will be notified in the event of any loss of credit. Parents/guardians have five days to request a hearing.
- E. Class administrators will inform the student's teachers of the decisions made by the Attendance Review Board.

## **VI. REVIEW PROCESS**

- A. Students will receive written notification from their administrator to share with their parents when they reach the maximum absence limit.
- B. Parents/guardians must respond within five (5) school days from the date of the notification to request a hearing. In a case where there are fewer than five (5) school days remaining in a semester or school year, the hearings must be requested before the commencement of final exams and midterm exams.

C. Parents/guardians who request a hearing will go before an Attendance Review Committee consisting of the student's class administrator and the student's guidance counselor.

D. The Attendance Review Committee will evaluate the documentation and circumstances and decide upon maintaining loss of credit or restoring lost credit.

#### **VII. APPEALS PROCESS**

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the Attendance Review Committee's decision in writing to the Principal within five (5) school days. The decision of the Principal is final.

#### **VIII. Credit Loss/Restoration**

A. Courses are successfully completed and credit granted when the student:

1. Earns a passing grade
2. Fulfills the attendance requirement

B. Credit Loss

In a course where a student fails to receive credit because of excessive absences, the graduation credit requirement will not be considered fulfilled.

C. Credit Restoration

Credits lost due to absences may be restored by written agreement with the Attendance Review Committee. A student may successfully complete the same or similar course(s) at an evening school, summer school, or local college. Students cannot restore credit by taking a course the same school year (for a year-long course) or the same semester (for a semester-long course).

## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY FACULTY COUNCIL SELECTION CRITERIA

**Faculty Council Role:** Selection and dismissal of members.

- Selection for membership to the chapter is to be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council.
- Selection is based on a prerequisite GPA, Student Activity Forms, and may ask for teacher recommendations.
- Evaluations are expected to be used by the Faculty Council, and adviser, and the principal and should be considered confidential unless local or state policies dictate to the contrary.
- Selection Guidelines:
  - Candidates must have attended the school the equivalent of one semester;
  - A cumulative GPA is to be used to determine scholastic eligibility;
  - All four criteria must be considered in the selection process, though the local Faculty Council determines the weight that any individual criterion receives.

**Scholarship:** *average B or 85%*

### Leadership

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. Some Faculty Councils may wish to interpret leadership in terms of number of offices a student has held in school or community organizations, although it is important to recognize that leadership also exists outside elected positions including effective participation in other co-curricular activities offered on campus. Other Faculty Councils may define leadership in less objective terms. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered provided they can be verified.

The student who exercises leadership:

- Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Is able to delegate responsibilities
- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Inspires positive behavior in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Successfully holds school office or position of responsibility; conducts business effectively and efficiently; demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, and in other school or community activities
- Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
- Is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude.

### Service

Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student, which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service. In considering service, the contributions this candidate has made to school, classmates, and community, as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.

The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious groups, volunteer service for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged
- Mentors persons in the community or student at other schools
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students.

### Character

Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty Council should consider the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria should be free of speculation and rumor. A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

The student of character:

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Upholds principles of morality and ethics
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect of others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- Has powers of concentration, self-discipline, and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school or bad influences or environment

## WRHS 2018-2019 STUDENT HANDBOOK STUDENT MANAGEMENT CODE

Students are reminded that all staff members are empowered to enforce all school rules and regulations. The rules that follow are meant to foster a safe, nurturing educational environment (in accordance with WRSD Policy #6436). Violation of the Management Code is considered a disruption of the school community. For any violations of Massachusetts State Laws or of school policy, Holden police may be notified.

**Tardy to School** Three (3) tardies (parental notification to school) per quarter are tolerated. All additional tardies exceeding three per quarter will be handled as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 1 detention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 2 detentions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense Minimum 3 detentions
- 4+ offenses Saturday detention and loss of late entry/ early dismissal privilege with parent conference, or in-school suspension and extracurricular penalty. If there are medical conditions that require a student to be habitually tardy to school, it must be documented by a physician and approved by an assistant principal.

**Tardy to Class** Two tardies to class (less than one-minute tardy) per quarter are tolerated. Each additional occurrence per quarter will be referred to administration for the following consequences:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 1 detention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 2 detentions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense Minimum 3 detentions
- 4+ offenses Saturday detention, in-school suspension, or an extracurricular penalty with parent conference. A teacher tardy policy may supersede this school-wide tardy policy.

Any student with an unexcused tardy to class that exceeds one minute after the late bell will be referred to administration for further consequences.

**Failure to Identify Oneself** While attending school, school events, or on school grounds, any student failing to identify himself or herself (either verbally or with a student ID) to a staff member will be subject to the following:

Each offense Minimum 2 detentions

**Dress Code Violation** Any student referred to administration who is in violation of the WRHS dress code or wearing a hood at any time while in the school building will be subject to the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> office referral Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> office referral 1 detention
- 3<sup>rd</sup> office referral 2 detentions

**Misconduct** *Class, Study Hall, Assembly, Cafeteria, Corridors, or on WRHS Campus*

- 1<sup>st</sup> office referral Minimum 2 detentions
- 2<sup>nd</sup> office referral Minimum 3 detentions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> office referral Minimum 5 detentions with parent conference and contract or extracurricular penalty, overnight suspension, Saturday detention, or in-school suspension. Repeat offenders may be subject to long-term suspensions.

**Class Cut** *Class, Homeroom, Study Hall or Teacher Detention*

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 2 detentions and academic penalty (where appropriate)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 3 detentions and academic penalty (where appropriate)

3<sup>rd</sup> offense In-school suspension, extracurricular penalty, Saturday school or overnight suspension and parent conference with contract and academic penalty

***Truancy Cutting 3 or more classes per day or leaving campus before or during the school day***

1<sup>st</sup> offense Saturday detention with parent conference.  
2<sup>nd</sup> offense 3 detentions and Saturday detention.  
3<sup>rd</sup> offense One-day in-school suspension and a Saturday detention.

***Forgery Notes, Passes, Official School Documents***

Each offense Minimum 2 detentions and parent contact

***School Damage (unintentional)*** Clean up and repair or replace

***Loitering in Bathroom Areas***

1<sup>st</sup> offense 2 detentions  
2<sup>nd</sup> offense 3 detentions  
3<sup>rd</sup> offense 5 detentions

***Wandering the Building***

1<sup>st</sup> offense 1 detention  
2<sup>nd</sup> offense 2 detentions  
3+ offenses Minimum 3 detentions or one Saturday detention

***Consumption of food/drink*** With the exception of the school cafeteria, the consumption of food and drink anywhere in the building is prohibited during the school day. The exceptions are: designated snack time, classroom functions approved in advance by the Administration, and clear bottled water.

1<sup>st</sup> office referral Warning  
2<sup>nd</sup> office referral Minimum 1 detention  
3+ office referral Minimum 2 detentions

***Smoking, Tobacco Use, Possession and/or Use of Nicotine Dispensing Products, Possession or Distribution of Tobacco Products, Warning Potential Smokers, or Congregating where Use is Taking Place \****

**IN BUILDING, ON FIELD TRIPS, OR DURING OUTDOOR CLASS, ON CAMPUS OR AT SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

1<sup>st</sup> offense Parent conference with 1 day in-school suspension and may include a fine from the Holden Police Department.  
2+ offenses Minimum 2 day in-school suspension with a parent conference and may include a fine from the Holden Police Department.

***\* Students are reminded that the above infractions are also violations of the chemical-free contract for students/athletes under MIAA guidelines and will result in team suspensions.***

***Office Detention Cut***

1<sup>st</sup> offense Parent conference. **Detention(s) owed will be served.**  
2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 1 day Saturday school and parent conference. **Detention(s) owed will be served.**  
3<sup>rd</sup> offense One day in-school suspension and may result in out-of-school suspension pending parent conference and contract. **Detention(s) owed will be served.** May lead to long-term suspension.



## ***Electronic Devices***

*Any offense will result in the confiscation of the device requiring parental pickup from the main office.*

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 2 detentions
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 3 detentions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense Minimum Saturday detention

Further offenses Minimum overnight suspension or Saturday detention with parent conference, in-school suspension, or extracurricular penalty. Student must return to school the next day with parent. Failure to return with parent may result in a full day out-of-school suspension until parent comes in for conference.

## ***Electronic Devices - Failure to Surrender Device***

A student in violation of the Electronic Device rule is expected to immediately surrender the device to staff. Failure to do so will result in two additional detentions, in-school suspension, or extracurricular penalty and possible out-of-school suspension. Failure to surrender the device to administration will result in a minimum of one-day in-school suspension or extracurricular penalty and the possibility of out-of-school suspension.

## ***Gambling***

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 5 detentions and parent conference. May lead to long-term suspension or exclusion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 1 day out-of-school suspension. May lead to long-term suspension or exclusion.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense Minimum 3 days out-of-school suspension with parent conference and contract. May lead to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Vulgar Disrespect to Staff*** Minimum 2 days out-of-school suspension for each offense. This may also lead to a long-term suspension.

***Vandalism*** Intentional, Willful Destruction

Each offense Restitution and minimum in-school suspension, extracurricular penalty, parent conference and up to out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension or exclusion.

## ***Theft***

Each offense Minimum Saturday detention with restitution and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion. If necessary, the Holden Police Department will be contacted.

***Fireworks*** Possession, Use, or Sale

Each offense Minimum 5 detentions and parent conference up to out-of-school suspension or exclusion.

## ***Pulling Fire Alarms or Tampering with Fire Equipment (Alarm Covers, Extinguishers, etc.)***

Each offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension leading up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

## ***Setting Fires***

Each offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension leading up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

## ***Fighting***

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 3 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense Minimum 10 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Excessive horseplay/endangerment to others***

Each offense Minimum 1 day in-school suspension or extracurricular penalty and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Assault***

1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 10 days out-of-school suspension up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Assault On School Personnel, Verbal or Physical***

Each offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Weapons Possession of any object that could be used to injure another and has no school-related purpose***

Each offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Hazing Any activities viewed as initiation or rite of passage which are potentially dangerous or abusive will not be tolerated***

Each offense Minimum 1 day out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Discrimination Incidents against others for their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, etc.***

Each offense Minimum 1 day out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Harassment Refers to behavior that is not welcomed by a person (note WRSD Policy #6434), and is personally offensive to him/her and/or interferes with that person's ability to work effectively.***

Each offense Minimum 1 day in-school suspension or extracurricular penalty and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Bullying*** Violation of Wachusett's Bullying Policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with WRSD Policies #6437, #6438, and Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37o. Instances of bullying and harassment, which occur both in and out of school, may result in a criminal investigation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 §37o.

***Substance Abuse of Alcohol Possession, being under the influence, sale or distribution at school or at school-related activities***

Each offense Minimum 3 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension.

***Substance Abuse of Illegal Drugs Possession, being under the influence, sale or distribution at school or at school-related activities***

Each offense Minimum 3 days out-of-school suspension and parent conference up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

***Possession of Drug Paraphernalia***

1<sup>st</sup> offense Minimum 3 days out-of-school suspension

2<sup>nd</sup> offense Minimum 5 days out-of-school suspension

***Chemical Violation*** Any use, consumption, possession, distribution or sale of any alcohol, drug, tobacco product or any controlled substance is in violation of school policy and students are subject to discipline. These violations are also applicable to student athletes under M.I.A.A. Rule 62.1 and will result in team suspensions. These infractions will also be applicable to any student involved in extracurricular activities and will result in a suspension from those activities.

***General Disruption*** Any activity that disrupts school including, but not limited to, any verbal or written abuse of student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel, and is not listed on the Student Management Code may result in detentions, Saturday detention, out-of-school suspension up to long-term suspension or exclusion.

Any activity inside or outside the school that disrupts the school day or any school-sponsored event, the student(s) will be held accountable in school which may lead to detentions, Saturday detention, out-of-school detention up to long-term suspension or expulsion.

**Under Massachusetts state law, any student charged with a felony may be subject to suspension by the school principal. Any student pleading guilty or found guilty of a felony may be subject to exclusion by the school principal.**

# WRSD Student Handbook Addendum



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## **WRSD Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ELL status, housing status, or other protected status in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies, and no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to its public schools, or in obtaining advantage and privileges in regards to courses of study and extracurricular programs of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ELL status, housing status or other protected category.

# **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Updated December 2016

***You must be the change you wish to see in the world.***

Mohandas Gandhi

Evidence-based research gleaned from respected institutions, media reports, and the hallways of our nation's schools all point to the same truth: Bullying has devastating effects. Just a quick look at statistics reveals the depth of the problem:

- Analysis of high-profile school shootings such as Santana, Columbine, and Virginia Tech reveals that that up to 71 percent involved attacker(s) who felt bullied, persecuted, attacked, or injured.
- Around 160,000 school children stay home from school each day out of fear, often without telling their parents why.
- Children targeted by bullies experience higher than normal levels of insecurity, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and physical and mental symptoms.
- Adults who were bullies as children have higher rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, and other violent crimes.
- The percentage of students who report being bullied rose 50% from 1983 to 2003.
- Approximately 1 in 5 students experience bullying at school, and approximately 7% of students experience cyberbullying a school year.

In short, bullying is an act that cannot be ignored if we are to safeguard our nation's schools and young people.

## **WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT CORE VALUES**

### **Commitment to Excellence**

- Modeling effective teaching that engages and meets the needs of all students
- Providing a rigorous curriculum with expanding options and opportunities for all
- Recruiting and retaining excellent staff

### **Perseverance**

- Tenacity and hard work
- Persisting in the face of obstacles
- Focusing on goals

### **Critical Thinking**

- Analyzing, evaluating, and problem solving
- Thinking creatively
- Being adaptive

### **Collaboration**

- Listening and communicating effectively
- Maximizing strengths and respecting differences
- Cooperating to reach common ground

### **Global Citizenship and Responsibility**

- Celebrating diversity while recognizing commonalities
- Demonstrating civic respect by giving back to the communities
- Developing student's leadership skills for success in a global society

### **Creativity and Innovation**

- Respecting the diversity of thoughts and ideas
- Embedding the arts into content areas
- Thinking freely, not fearing mistakes

### **Acceptance and Respect of Others**

- Demonstrating tolerance
- Fostering a community of teamwork and collaboration
- Creating an atmosphere of safety and acceptance

## OUR BELIEFS

### THE WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT:

- seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment.
- is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation.
- recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics.
- expects every member of the extended school community to take all forms of bullying seriously, to work to prevent it, and to report it when it is thought to have occurred.
- in a manner consistent with laws and regulations, will investigate all reported incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation in a timely, fair and discreet manner while being respectful of individual rights.
- when resolving verified incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, will proceed in a manner that stresses education and skill building.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Bullying** -The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional 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.

**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, photoelectronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying 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 or 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 or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation.

**Local law enforcement agency:** local police department

**Principal:** The administrative leader of a school in the Wachusett Regional School District 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, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

## **LEADERSHIP:**

### **A. District Bullying and Cyberbullying Statement**

The WRSD Leadership is committed to implementing the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and in conjunction with community efforts, to promote and ensure a safe and positive teaching and learning environment. District leaders, community leaders, teachers, parents, guardians and student leaders, have a primary role in teaching students to regard one another in a respectful, civil, and dignified manner to create an environment that improves and sustains the behavioral health of all students. These stakeholders will promote understanding and respect for diversity and differences in all venues through modeling respectful behavior and promoting and sustaining a commitment to programs that are focused on supporting social-emotional development at all grade levels. The WRSD will provide age-appropriate anti-bullying educational experiences for all students in the district. As a school district, WRSD will enhance student achievement by creating and maintaining an educational environment where all students feel safe and in the unlikely event that a student feels uncomfortable, he or she will not be reluctant to communicate his/her concerns to teachers, staff, administrators, parents or guardians.

### **B. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the WRSD Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed by a committee consisting of district and building based administrators, teachers, and a school psychologist. Prior to the presentation of this plan to the School Committee, a final draft of the plan was made available on the WRSD website for Public Comment. A schedule will be set up to review the Plan by a committee on an annual basis. This will ensure that the plan is always updated and that behavioral health initiatives that support anti-bullying are instituted throughout the district in an effective, deliberate and sustaining manner.

### **C. Implementation**

Consistent with applicable laws and regulations, all Principals will be implementing (with the support of the Superintendent and/or the School

Committee), the following documents/ action plans:

- Create narrative and graphic documents showing end-to-end process and procedures for all types of bullying/cyberbullying incidents
- Receive and investigate reports on Bullying
- Plan intervention support strategies that meet the needs of the targets, aggressors and retaliators involved in the reported incidents
- Choose and implement a Bully Prevention Curricula that each school will use
- Review, and where necessary, update District student and staff handbooks, and code of conduct
- Lead parent, guardian and family engagement efforts by providing appropriate informational materials for this group
- Collect and analyze building and district-wide data on past bullying incidents to understand trends and patterns, define the present problem, and create a baseline from which to measure improved outcomes
- Create a Records Retention Plan for incidents

## **POLICY JURISDICTION**

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

1. on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, at a 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 bullying school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a 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 the 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. As stated in M.G.L. c.71 Sec.370 nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

WRSD will investigate bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation incidents in a fair, timely, and thorough manner while being mindful of personal privacy rights and the stigma that a student may occur from being labeled in some way or another. Verified incidents of bullying, in all of its forms will be dealt with firmly. Dispositions will begin with education and, when deemed necessary, will move to progressively sterner measures.

### **A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation Requirements:**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. When reporting in writing, administrators, teachers, parents, school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, playground monitors, and any and all other staff and community members can access the "Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Retaliation

Incident Referral Form” in the Main Office of the school, guidance/school psychologist’s office, the nurse’s office, the Wachusett Regional School District

### **1. Reporting by Staff:**

A staff member will promptly report to the principal or designee any instances of bullying or retaliation witnessed by the staff member or that is reported to the staff member by a student, parent, or other individual and then follow up with an Incident Referral Form. The requirement to notify the principal shall not, however, limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. (see Appendix A for reporting form)

### **2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others:**

In an effort to keep its students safe, the Wachusett Regional School District believes that it is the responsibility of students, parents, guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Any individual who wishes to file such a complaint may request, and shall be provided with, assistance from a school staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The filing of a false or fabricated complaint of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is strictly prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action. (see Appendix A for reporting forms)

## **B. Responding to Report of Bullying, Cyberbullying or Retaliation- Allegations of Bullying by a Student**

### **1. Safety**

Once an initial report of bullying or retaliation has been brought to the attention of school personnel, the designated school personnel will take appropriate action(s) to maintain a sense of safety for all parties involved in the report, including the target, the aggressor and the reporting party (if it is a student). Once designated school personnel have made a determination regarding the validity of the report, additional steps and modifications will be made to keep students safe. In creating a safety plan appropriate accommodations may be indicated to limit the interaction between the target and the aggressor throughout the course of the school day. This would include but is not limited to, the classroom setting, the cafeteria, recess and school bus seating assignment. The Principal or his/her designee will implement safeguards to ensure that all students involved in the incident are protected during the course of the investigation process. All students will be reminded by the Principal or his/her designee that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

### **2. Investigation**

- The Principal or his/her designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all

available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

- The Principal or his/her designee will determine if police interaction is deemed necessary.
- During the investigation, the Principal or his/her designee will interview students, staff, witnesses and parents or guardians.
- The Principal or his/her designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.
- Interviews will be conducted by the Principal or his/her designee, in consultation with the school counselor as necessary.
- To the extent practicable, the Principal or his/her designee will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigative process and will maintain a written record of the investigation.
- Procedures for investigating reports of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Principal or his/her designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

### **3. Determinations**

If the incident is verified to be bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation, a meeting will be arranged by the school official with the aggressor and the aggressor's parents or guardians. In the meeting, it will be made clear to both the aggressor and the parents or guardians that bullying, cyberbullying and/or retaliation will not be tolerated in the Wachusett Regional School District. A meeting may also take with the target and the target's parents or guardians. Depending on the level of the incident, local authorities may be informed of such incident(s) and the school will follow the recommendation from local authorities in resolving the continued behavior of the aggressor.

### **4. Responses to Bullying / Consequences from Findings**

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in its level of seriousness and what impact it has on the target and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying," as defined in this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, will generally warrant disciplinary action against the aggressor, whether and to what extent disciplinary actions are imposed (e.g., detention, suspension, etc.) is a matter for the professional discretion of the building Principal or his/her designee. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint. District administrators will integrate a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The needs and safety of the target will also be considered as part of restoring resolution to the bullying matter. Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the building Principal or his/her designee and will address the acts of the aggressor and the needs of the target, and assure the sanction against bullying behavior is enforced with the goal that the bullying behavior will cease and desist.

Consequences should consider these specific issues:

- a. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the target
- b. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the target
- c. Student's age, development and degree of maturity
- d. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- e. Prior disciplinary history and continuing patterns of behavior
- f. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- g. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- h. The need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.

The appropriate range of consequences, subject to due process where appropriate, may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Report to law enforcement
- b. Expulsion
- c. Referral to outside agency
- d. Reassignment of classes
- e. Reassignment of seats in lunch, bus, class, etc.
- f. Out-of-school suspension
- g. In-school suspension
- h. Detention
- i. Loss of privileges (including before and after school activities)
- j. Temporary removal from the classroom
- k. Verbal reprimand

In addition, instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying and/or retaliatory behaviors will be given, which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Reparation to the target
- b. Completion of curricular based assignment(s)
- c. Meeting with Civil Rights Coordinator
- d. Completion of community service designed to help the aggressor understand and respect differences; written report required by the aggressor
- e. Therapeutic support for both aggressor and targets

### **5. Notification Obligation**

- **Notice to Parents or Guardians**  
Once an assessment of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation has been made and been deemed valid, the Principal or his/her designee will immediately inform the parent(s) or guardian of the target and the aggressor of the incident. At this time, parents/guardians will also be informed of the investigation and disciplinary procedures that may follow. There may be incidents where parents are notified prior to the Investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- **Notice to Another School or District**  
If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special

education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Principal or his/her designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

- **Notice to Law Enforcement**

At any point after receiving and/or investigating a report of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation, if the Principal or his/her designee has determined that the incident has elevated to a level that is believed to be criminal in nature, charges may be pursued against the aggressor. The Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency of said incident. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Principal or his/her designee will contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has reasonable evidence to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the Principal will, (consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures), consult with the School Resource officer, or other individuals he/she deems appropriate.

### **ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

Wachusett Regional School District seeks to create a safe, respectful and caring school and classroom environment for all students regardless of their race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender or gender identity, sex or sexual orientation, age, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, family situation or disability. WRSD will lay the foundation for a positive school climate in pre-school and will continue to teach, nurture, and positively reinforce pro-social behavior throughout students' academic experiences.

- Each grade level will be provided developmentally appropriate and evidenced-based curriculum and instruction to teach pro-social skills such as conflict resolution, cooperation, assertiveness, communication, expressing feelings, problem solving, cyber safety, and appreciation for diversity.
- The entire school community (e.g. students, teachers, parents, bus drivers, lunchroom staff, janitorial staff, etc.) will work collaboratively to promote a caring and supportive school environment among all of its staff and students.

### **Non-Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:**

- Administration will review student behavioral expectations during grade level assemblies during the first week of school.
- The definition of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation and the protocol for handling incidents of bullying will be emphasized.
- Staff presence will be increased in areas where bullying is most likely to occur; (i.e.) bus arrival and departure locations, hallways, lunchrooms, recess, and near restrooms.
- A variety of evidence - based prevention programs to promote diversity awareness and respect for self and others will be explored and offered. District schools currently use the following programs: Second

Step, Responsive Classroom, MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center), and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) (See Appendix B for full descriptions of these programs)

- Schools will encourage student involvement in school events and extra-curricular activities to reduce isolation and the likelihood of becoming a target of bullying (i.e. Student Council)

#### **Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:**

- Educating students on the life skills and competences for Social and Emotional Learning (Domain 5, Wachusett Regional School District Strategic Plan)
- Meaningful relationships between staff and students will be fostered so that every student will have at least one supportive adult to share concerns with, enhancing their feeling of safety in the school.

### **ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

*A key aspect of promoting a positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. Below is a summary of strategies aimed to provide supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation, these services will be available to reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and to provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors. School-based counselors are available to all students for counseling. The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services will regularly update a list of mental health resources available in the community and provide this list to all schools. School administrators, staff, and parents will collaborate in determining appropriate referral services.*

#### **A. Identifying resources.**

WRSD will annually review its capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. This will include a review of current staffing and programs that foster positive school culture as well as identifying any gaps in services and resources that need to be addressed. Principals will respond to the needs of their individual schools in order to assess existing and needed resources.

#### **B. Counseling and other services**

The District will work collaboratively with school mental health staff and outside agencies to maintain a list of providers that will support schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Schools may consider current tools including, but not limited to, behavioral intervention plans, restorative justice practices, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

#### **C. Students with disabilities**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that he/she may be vulnerable to bullying or harassment because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

#### **D. Referral to outside services**

Clear protocols that are part of the the WRSD Wellness Plan will help students and families access appropriate and timely services.

### **COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

Wachusett Regional School District recognizes the importance of collaboration with families in order to optimize the school's ability to prevent and respond to bullying. Our goal is to provide useful information and resources to parents/guardians of students, and to ensure sufficient channels of communication between the families and schools.

- Parent education and resources
- Notification requirements At the beginning of each school year, WRSD will inform parents/guardians of enrolled students of the policies and procedures for prevention and intervention of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation in its annual publication of the Student/Parent Handbook.
- Each school will inform parents and guardians about the anti-bullying curricula being used.
- In order to continually gain feedback from parents/guardians, a survey will be administered on an annual basis. This information will be very important to us as we continue to assess the effectiveness of our bullying policies/procedures.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF TRAINING**

Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O the Wachusett Regional School District must provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals as well as providing opportunities for parent, guardians, and community members to participate in this anti-bullying/ cyber-bullying initiative.

All stakeholders in the Wachusett Regional School District must be made aware of the new state anti-bullying law and how it changes the definitions, reporting, investigation and punishment of bullying incidents. Our School Committee, administrators, and faculty will be responsible for disseminating this information and for projecting how these changes will reflect on cultural changes in our schools as the implementation of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O moves forward.

Through training and professional development, the WRSD will seek to raise the overall level of mental health services in our district schools to decrease the number of bullying incidents that may take place. The district will focus on training and development programs that give staff the skills and understanding to create safer schools, not only to respond to the state mandate under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, but also to benefit our children and our community.

#### **A. Annual staff training on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.**

School- based annual training for all school staff by the building Principal or designee will include:

- Staff responsibilities under the new law
- An overview of the steps that the Principal or his/her designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation
- An overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grade levels throughout the district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be required to participate in this school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.



## **B. Ongoing district- wide professional development.**

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools available for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build upon the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying incidents. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development, will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Effective and developmentally or age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally or age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to bullying;
- Current research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Current information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- Internet safety curriculum with reference to cyber-bullying as “unacceptable” behavior.

Professional development will also continue to address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects their social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the Wachusett Regional School District for professional development may include:

- Increasing the overall level of mental health services in our schools so that all students will experience kindness and compassion
- Making sure our classrooms and schools are psychologically safe for all students and staff
- Promoting a deeper understanding of respect so that our language and behavior reflects respect for everyone (modeling)
- Teaching tolerance and respect for the diversity and differences that exists in people
- Building rapport with the families of our community so that we all see the value of safe schools and are willing to support this new anti-bullying initiative
- Managing classroom behaviors so that we can break the cycle of nonproductive behavior
- Using intervention strategies which will allow all participants to refrain from aggressive behavior and see the real benefits of tolerance and respect
- Proactively teaching our students that actions come from the contents of our thoughts and that a big part of growing up is learning that we don’t have to act on all of our thoughts

## **C. Written notice to staff.**

The school district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Sections related to staff

responsibilities will be included in the district employee handbook.

### **PROBLEM RESOLUTION**

Under Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws, any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

## **School Committee Policies**

### **POLICY RELATING TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATION**

#### ***Policy 1523 DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLICATIONS***

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.

### **POLICY RELATING TO EDUCATION**

#### ***Policy 3611.4 ENRICHMENT***

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 participation.

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.

## **POLICY RELATING TO PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

### ***Policy 5252 PHYSICAL RESTRAINT***

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members in the Wachusett Regional School District. While ensuring safety in District schools, staff must recognize that students are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint is an emergency measure of last resort and should be utilized only when necessary to protect a student and/or school community member from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. Restraint, including mechanical restraint, medication restraint, physical escort, physical restraint, prone restraint, seclusion and time-out are defined under 603 CMR 46.00. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) defined inclusionary and exclusionary time-out in its Technical Assistance Advisory, SPED 2016-1, on 31 July 2015.

Chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion are prohibited in all public school education programs. The District will follow the requirements for restraint outlined in 603 CMR 46.00, including requirements for safety, duration, follow-up, prone/floor restraints, reporting, administrative review and training. The District will adhere to the guidelines for time-out as outlined the DESE Technical Assistance Advisory, SPED 2016-1.

Neither 603 C.M.R. 46.00 nor this policy prohibits: (1) any teacher, employee or agent of the District from using reasonable force to protect students, others or themselves from imminent, serious, physical harm; (2) any individual from reporting to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (3) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (4) an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A.

The District will develop and implement specific written procedures that include: appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention, including methods to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide; alternatives to physical restraint; description of physical restraints used in emergency situations; restraint complaint procedure; restraint training and reporting requirements; restraint follow-up procedures; periodic review of restraint data procedures; procedures on the use of time-out as a behavioral support strategy; and methods to engage parents in discussion about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency measure.

The District will annually review its Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, provide it to all District staff, and make it available to parents of enrolled students.

## **POLICIES RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES**

### ***Policy 6312 REGULAR ATTENDANCE***

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to the achievement of students in the Wachusett Regional School District. In accordance with Massachusetts State Law (MGL), parent/guardian has the responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

If the school does not receive a message from the parent/guardian by the designated time established by the school, then the school shall call to inquire about the student's absence. Parents will be contacted within three (3) days of the student's absence if the parent/guardian has not contacted the school regarding the absence.

The parent/guardian will also be notified when a student has at least five days in which the student has missed two or more classes/periods (unexcused) or who has five or more unexcused absences in the school year. A meeting will be scheduled with the building principal (or his/her designee), the parent/guardian and the student to develop an action plan to improve the student's attendance.

Legal Refs: Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012, Chapter 76, Section 1B

### ***Policy 6400 BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE***

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 following:

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 be reviewed annually 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 warrant-less search (non-emergency) 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 6433 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. Students may be required to submit to a Breathalyzer test prior to participation in school-sponsored events. Any staff member with knowledge of alcohol or harmful drug use or the carrying of harmful substances on school grounds or at school-related events shall notify the principal or the superintendent and the appropriate legal authorities.

The District shall provide full cooperation with legal authorities.

***Policy 6434 SEXUAL HARASSMENT***

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.<sup>1</sup> 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:

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<sup>1</sup> Even if the principal/superintendent thinks that the informal procedure is acceptable, you or the respondent may ask that the formal procedure be used, rather than, or after, the informal procedure.

- a. You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent ask 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 parties request, within five (5) school days, that the formal procedure be 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/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.

Reference to this policy shall be included in all student handbooks.

***Policy 6435 WEAPONS***

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.

***Policy 6437 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 6438 – ANTI-BULLYING POLICY***

The Wachusett Regional School District fosters and strives to maintain educational environments that are free from bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. No student or school staff member, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals in the Wachusett Regional School District shall be permitted to bully a student through conduct or communication or to retaliate against any individual for reporting bullying or cooperating with an investigation of bullying. A student or school staff member, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors, to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals, 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 administration. In addition to being subject to school or employment related disciplinary sanctions, individuals who engage in bullying and/or retaliation shall be required to participate in instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying and/or retaliatory behavior(s).

The Wachusett Regional School District has established separate discrimination and harassment policies that provide protections 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 and/or federal law.

#### **A. Definitions**

***Bullying:*** *The repeated use by one or more students or by 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, 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.*

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying or cyber-bullying.

**Aggressor/Perpetrator:** A student or school staff member including but not limited to who engaged, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

**Hostile Environment:** 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 target's education.

**Local law enforcement agency:** Local police department(s).

**Principal:** The administrative leader of a school in the Wachusett Regional School District 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.

**Target/Victim:** A student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## B. Policy Jurisdiction

For purposes of this policy, bullying is prohibited:

1) *on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, at a 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 the school district or a 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 the 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 or their designee any instance of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation that the staff member has witnessed or has become aware of.

#### D. Investigation / Procedures

##### 1. Investigative Procedures for Potential Bullying or Retaliation:

Each school is required to investigate in a timely manner and determine whether or not bullying and /or retaliation has occurred. This requires a determination as to the nature of the incident (bullying v. peer conflict). Once determined, outreach to the target and family shall occur concurrently with a commitment to addressing the needs of the target, identifying and educating bystanders, and providing consequences for aggressors.

Steps to be taken will include:

- a. Determine the nature, chronicity, and severity of the presenting situation.
- b. Identify aggressor(s), target(s), and bystanders
- c. Provide a safety and comfort plan for the target(s)
- d. Identify whether or not the bullying has occurred on or off campus
- e. Immediately remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action
- f. Have timely conversations with all individuals involved
- g. Establish a timetable for following up with parents, especially parents of target(s)
- h. Inform parents, guardians and all relevant adults of initial investigation following confidentiality requirements
- i. Collect and document data

#### E. Consequences from Findings:

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior M.G.L. c. 71 § 370(d)(v). Skill building approaches include offering individualized skill-building sessions based on our district's anti-bullying curricula, providing relevant educational

activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with our counselors and psychologists, implementing a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral support to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals, meeting with parents and guardians to engage parent support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home, adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills, and making a referral for evaluation. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance the plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504, which should be read in cooperation with the state laws regarding student discipline, govern discipline procedures for eligible students with disabilities protected by these laws.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, the student shall be subject to disciplinary action. Consequences for bullying or retaliation should be immediately and consistently applied and must be delivered in a non-hostile manner. Consequences may be disagreeable or uncomfortable but should not involve revenge or hostile punishment.

Consequences should consider these specific issues:

- a. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the target
- b. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the target
- c. Student's age, development and degree of maturity
- d. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- e. Prior disciplinary history and continuing patterns of behavior
- f. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- g. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- h. The need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.

The appropriate range of consequences, subject to due process where appropriate, may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Report to law enforcement
- b. Expulsion
- c. Referral to outside agency
- d. Reassignment of classes
- e. Reassignment of seats in lunch, bus, class, etc.
- f. Out-of-school suspension
- g. In-school suspension
- h. Detention
- i. Loss of privileges (including before and after school activities)
- j. Temporary removal from the classroom
- k. Verbal reprimand

In addition, instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying and/or retaliatory behaviors will be given, which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Reparation to the target
- b. Completion of curricular based assignment(s)
- c. Meeting with Civil Rights Coordinator
- d. Completion of community service designed to help the aggressor understand and respect differences; written report required by the aggressor
- e. Therapeutic support for both aggressor and targets

F. Notification Obligations:

Notice to another school or district: If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, commonwealth charter school, or non-public school, a school administrator shall promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school or district so that both may take appropriate action.

Notice to parents or guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations of 603 CMR 49.00, including 49.05 paragraph 4:

“A principal's notification to a parent about an incident or a report of bullying or retaliation must comply with confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations, 34 CFR Part 99, as set forth in 603 CMR 49.07.”

The principal or designees will notify the parents/guardians of the acts the district has taken to prevent further acts of bullying and retaliation through consequences and instructional activities, as discussed above. Moreover, the school will notify the parents/guardians about the range of services, including, but not limited to, counseling both individually and in group settings, that are specifically designed to address issues of bullying and retaliation.

Notice to law enforcement: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirement of 603 CMR 49.00.

G. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The superintendent will be responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in district schools.

(i) Development of the Plan

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

The plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have any one (1) of the above characteristics.

The plan shall be reviewed and updated biennially.

School-wide Bullying Prevention and Intervention Program

All Wachusett Regional schools will include a District-wide bullying prevention and intervention plan that is proactive and educational, in keeping with the guidelines published by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district is committed to supporting each school in their adoption of a district-wide bullying prevention and intervention program.

(ii) 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 any 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) procedures for collecting, maintaining and reporting bullying incident data;
- (g) the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.
- (h) clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection
- (i) strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets and appropriate family members;
- (j) procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation

- (k) provision for the notification of local law enforcement agencies if the principal reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor;
- (l) 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;
- (m) provision for the implementation of a research-based anti-bullying curriculum in grades PK-12 and for informing parents regarding the curriculum contents, the dynamics of bullying, and online safety and cyber-bullying and strategies for reinforcing the curriculum at home; and
- (n) the specific steps that the District shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

(iii) Implementation of the Plan

The school principal shall be responsible for implementing and oversight of the District’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan within his/her school.

(iv) Public Notice

The Wachusett Regional School District shall provide to all school staff annual written notice of the plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in a school district or school employee handbook. The plan shall be posted on the website of each school in the District.

Legal Refs: M.G.L. c.71, §37O; 603 CMR 49.00

***Policy 6515 STUDENT PUBLICATIONS***

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

## ***Policy 6531.1 SOCIAL MEDIA***

### **Section I: Introduction**

The Wachusett Regional School District recognizes that our students must learn to utilize modern online tools for social and educational collaboration. These tools, include, but are not limited to:

- Social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Email, chat, and other messaging technologies
- Message boards and forums
- Blogs and collaborative websites

### **Section II: Goals of the Policy**

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee permits the use of social media platforms that support instructional opportunities and the social/emotional development of students. The District promotes educational uses of technology, including social media tools, along with appropriate training for students and staff on safety, proper use, and management of innovative learning tools.

Social media platforms will be used in District schools to achieve the following goals:

- Educate students, staff, and parents/guardians about the concerns and benefits of social media
- Access social media during and beyond the school day for educational purposes, social/emotional development, and other acceptable school-related uses
- Explore ways to integrate social media with classroom teaching and learning
- Integrate student publication with authentic social media environments
- Encourage the use of technology-based interventions to support student learning
- Allow for ongoing interaction between students and teachers for appropriate school-related use
- Promote student interaction with peers, outside organizations, and professionals in a global community
- Offer and encourage student use of online resources to communicate and seek support for bullying and safety concerns
- Encourage parent/guardian interaction with teachers and schools through the use of digital communications and social media environments

### **Section III: Guidelines for Use of Social Media Platforms**

Any use of social media platforms, whether in District schools or related to District programming, will adhere to the following guidelines:

- All use of social media tools must comply with District acceptable use policies, inclusive of but not limited to Policy 6532 Videotaping and Photographing of District Students and Policy 6531.2 BYOD (Bring Your Own Device).
- All staff and student online communication is subject to state and federal laws, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and District policies governing communication

- All staff and student online communication is subject to policies ensuring safe environments for students and staff free from bullying, harassment, and other forms of unwanted communication that threaten well-being and productivity
- Staff and District administration are encouraged to collaborate in developing social media tools
- Staff social media accounts used to communicate with current WRSD students will be established using District email accounts and will remain separate from any personal staff social media accounts
- Educational social media accounts maintained by staff members shall not contain personal information
- District staff shall not subscribe to students' personal postings in social media platforms not controlled or monitored by District staff

***Policy 6531.2 BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)***

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing opportunities for students to utilize technology in order to:

- Gather and evaluate internet resources
- Create and share digital content
- Develop digital literacy
- Participate in a productive and respectful online environment

As part of this commitment, school administrators and teachers may allow students to use personally-owned devices and access school wireless networks to enhance instruction and learning. Permission to use such devices will be granted only when sufficient network resources are present. School administrators and teachers shall determine the extent to which the use of personal devices is permitted. However, such personal devices shall not be required by the District. Should students not have access to personal devices, or should they choose not to bring in their own devices, access will be made available by the District to complete assignments.

Access to District networks is a privilege which may be revoked at any time. Students must have explicit permission to use personal devices each time they are used. Students should assume that personal devices may not be used unless told otherwise. When explicit approval has NOT been granted, all devices must be turned off and put away. Recording audio, video or photographic images without the subjects' permission is not allowed in school at any time. (reference Policy 6532 *Videotaping and Photographing of District Students*). The use of personal devices in school is subject to the District's acceptable use policy regarding computers. This policy is outlined in each school's student handbook. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the District will filter all internet content available to students. Any attempt to access inappropriate material will result in disciplinary action.

**Student Responsibilities**

- Device Security - As with any personal property, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that any personally-owned device is safe and secure. The District is not liable or responsible for damage, theft, or loss of any student-owned device or any information stored on a student-owned device.
- Network Security – Student devices shall have up-to-date antivirus protection. Computers or



other devices infected with malicious software or lacking proper virus protection will not be allowed on school networks.

- Technical Support - The District does not have the resources to provide technical support for privately owned devices. Accordingly, District technology personnel will NOT attempt to troubleshoot or repair student-owned computers or other devices.
- Cellular Data Charges - Cellular devices may incur usage fees from cellular providers for texting or when accessing the internet without being properly connected to the school's internal wireless network. The District is not responsible for any charges related to texting or internet usage on student-owned devices.

Legal Refs: Title XVII – Children's Internet Protection Act

### ***Policy 6562 ALTERNATE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION***

It shall be expected that bus 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 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.

### ***Policy 6611 STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS***

The Wachusett Regional School District is required, pursuant to MGL c.76 section 15 and its associated regulations, 105 CMR 220.000, to keep an immunization record on file for each student enrolled in the school or system. The record must contain, at a minimum, the month and year of each immunization, and be signed by the healthcare provider. Immunization histories must be up to date for each child according to Immunization Guidelines published by the Commonwealth.

The Massachusetts School Immunization Law, M.G.L. c. 76 Section 15 provides that: *“no child shall, except as hereinafter provided, be admitted to school except upon presentation of a physician's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and poliomyelitis and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health.”*

*Pursuant to the Massachusetts School Immunization Law quoted immediately above:*

No unimmunized student shall be admitted to, or be allowed to remain in school, unless they can satisfy these requirements:

- A. A medical exemption is allowed if a healthcare provider submits documentation to school that an immunization is medically contraindicated; or
- B. A religious exception is allowed if a parent submits a signed statement to the school stating immunizations are contrary to his/her sincere religious beliefs.
- C. Students who fall under McKenney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001.

Do note: Unimmunized students (including those with medical, religious exemptions, and those who fall under McKenney-Vento) who are otherwise exempt from the immunization law may be subject to exclusion from school if there is exposure to certain communicable childhood diseases, as specified in 105 CMR 300.200.

Do note: Philosophical exemptions are not allowed in Massachusetts *even if* signed by a physician. The documentation regarding the above qualified exemptions will be kept in the students' files at school.

### ***Policy 6613.2 ATHLETIC HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION POLICY***

The safety of students is a high priority for the Wachusett Regional School District. Students who sustain head injuries while in extracurricular athletic activities and those involved in their treatment must follow the protocol based on 105 C.M.R 201.000 (<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/105-cmr-201.pdf>) found online on the high school and middle schools' websites as well as in the student handbooks.

Students who have sustained a head injury must be appropriately evaluated according to the protocol. In order to resume athletic activity, a medical clearance and authorization form must be submitted indicating that the student has recovered. Return to academics will be consistent with the protocol.

District administration, athletic staff, and nursing staff will review the protocol annually to ensure that it is current and reflects best practice. The School Committee will review and revise this policy as needed, but at least bi-annually.

### ***Policy 6616 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.

### ***Policy 6619 LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES***

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy school environment for all students that is inclusive of school-wide practices that will minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students while participating in all elements of the school day.

School-wide practices along with identified accommodations, as deemed necessary by school personnel, parents/guardians and/or the student's physician, will provide all students the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities. The successful management of this policy will require a partnership among the parents/guardians, the student, and all school personnel involved with the education, extra-curricular activities and the transportation of the student.

When it is determined by a physician that a student from the Wachusett Regional School District has a life threatening allergy and must have an Epinephrine Auto Injector, a 504 meeting will be convened to determine eligibility and the student's ability to successfully access all facets of the curriculum including extra-curricular activities. In the event that eligibility is determined, the 504 Plan will be communicated to professional staff of the building and all other school personnel who will have responsibility for the student throughout the course of the school day including but not limited to: teachers, bus drivers, playground monitors, cafeteria workers, substitute teachers and/or substitute nurse, and before and after school program monitors. In keeping with the 504 guidelines, this plan will be reviewed and revised annually.

At the start of every school year, the District health offices will provide allergy awareness training to staff in each building. All staff will learn how to minimize exposure to food and environmental allergens and to recognize the symptoms of anaphylaxis, the life threatening reaction that may occur with allergen exposure. Whenever it is possible to do so safely, the administration of the Epinephrine Auto Injector will be done by the certified school nursing staff or health care staff. Because a certified nurse or health care person may not be available to respond, staff will be trained on the administration of an Epinephrine Auto Injector. Whenever a new teacher or staff member is hired, the school nurse at his or her assigned school will provide that individual with Epinephrine training within five (5) days of beginning work. All staff and teachers must timely complete the Epinephrine administration training. The Superintendent will ensure that the District physician provides each school health office with the medical orders necessary to maintain a supply of all medications, including epinephrine as well as the ability to administer the epinephrine as necessary.

At the start of each school year, the health office will provide a list of all students who have life-threatening allergies to building administration, the main office secretary, the teachers, coaches, cafeteria staff, playground monitors, before and after school monitors, and the bus company. In an ongoing basis, the health office will maintain, update, and distribute a revised list of students with life threatening allergies. All coaches and paid co-curricular personnel must provide evidence that they have received their yearly training to administer an Epinephrine Auto Injector immediately upon the start of their employment or when requested by the District. If such personnel have not been trained to administer an Epinephrine Auto Injector, they must immediately request training through the District health offices. Volunteers leading co-curricular activities are encouraged to receive training.

In response to the presence of food-based allergies, parents/guardians may not send outside food/candy/drink to share in the classroom. As part of a District-wide initiative to discourage the use of food as a reward, both teachers and parents/guardians are encouraged to recognize and celebrate students by methods that do not involve food. For this same reason, any projects or classroom activities should also avoid the use of food items. Traditional school-based celebrations (i.e. the 8th grade cookout, etc) may be permitted with the permission of the Superintendent's office. Precautions will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

The District's Policy for Bullying Prevention and Intervention, as well as all Student Handbook policies pertaining to the support of a safe and healthy school environment, should make reference to the safety and well being of those students with food and life threatening allergies.

***Policy 6621 TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY PROCEDURES***

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 6631 NON-DISCRIMINATION***

The Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status, or other protected status in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies, and no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to its public schools, or in obtaining advantage and privileges in regards to courses of study and extracurricular programs of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status or other protected category.

***Policy 6910 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 of incoming freshmen and parents of students new to Wachusett Regional High School 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.