



Family/Student Handbook 2021-2022

Buker School

1 School Street
Wenham, MA
Telephone: 978-468-5324
Fax: 978-468-5329

Cutler School

237 Asbury Street
South Hamilton, MA
Telephone: 978-468-5330
Fax: 978-468-5314

Winthrop School

325 Bay Road
South Hamilton, MA
Telephone: 978-468-5340
Fax: 978-468-5315

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971.

Table of Contents

[Family Letter](#)

[Staff Lists](#)

[HWRSD Core Beliefs](#)

[Covid-related Information](#)

[Academic](#)

[Parent Concerns](#)

[Respectful Community](#)

[Expectations of Conduct](#)

[Bullying](#)

[Playground Rules](#)

[State Policy: Discipline](#)

[Special Education State Policy: Discipline](#)

[General Building Information](#)

[Absences, Tardiness, Dismissals](#)

[Arrival and Dismissal](#)

[School Lunch Program](#)

[Family Communication](#)

[Lost and Found](#)

[Library Books](#)

[Video Taping](#)

[School Council](#)

[Friends Groups](#)

[School Safety](#)

[Crisis Plan](#)

[Delayed Openings](#)

[Emergency Dismissal](#)

[No School Announcement](#)

[Emergency Drills](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Bus Rules](#)

[Bicycle Permissions](#)

[Health Services](#)

[Medication](#)

[Counseling Services](#)

[Special Education](#)

[Observation of students](#)

[Title VI/Section 504](#)

[Records Request](#)

[Student Use of Personal Device Technology](#)

[APPENDIX](#)

Selected HWRSD Policies

[HWRSD Bullying Policy](#)

[HWRSD Harassment Prevention and Response Policy](#)

[HWRSD Acceptable Use Technology Policy](#)

[HWRSD Religious Observance Policy](#)

[Student Conduct](#)

[Student Discipline](#)

[Student Complaints and Grievances](#)

[Student Absences and Excuses](#)

[Guidelines for Confidentiality and Ethics](#)

[Gender Identity](#)

[Playground Guidelines Concerning Pets and Other Animals](#)

Family Letter

Dear Hamilton-Wenham elementary families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year. We are excited to welcome everyone back. We had all hoped to be past COVID by now, but we're making steps in the right direction. This year is going to feel much better.

We have some new support structures in place this year. All three buildings have instructional coaches. The coaches will work with teachers examining student data to increase student learning. This will be especially important coming off the rockiness of the past year and a half.

Our professional development days will have a focus on reading this year. This is an area we identified pre-COVID and had to put it on hold as we pivoted to pandemic learning. We are excited to get back on track with this.

We are all looking forward to a great school year!

Ben Schersten, Buker Principal
Rebecca Butler, Cutler Co-Principal
Ed Kaufman, Cutler Co-Principal
Carolyn Shediak, Winthrop Principal

Staff Lists

[Buker Staff List](#)

[Cutler Staff List](#)

[Winthrop Staff List](#)

HWRSD Core Beliefs

Core beliefs: are the values that professionals in an organization draw from. Unlike the vision, which may change every few years, core beliefs are the philosophies that guide our day-to-day work.

HWRSD Statement of Core Beliefs

1. We believe in high standards for all students.
2. We believe successful members of our global economy and engaged citizens of the 21st Century are effective communicators, collaborative, critical thinkers, and problem-solvers.

3. We believe engaged citizens of the 21st Century demonstrate respect for themselves, other people and their cultures, and our environment.
4. We believe in our shared responsibility to develop the whole child, including academic abilities and physical and emotional well being.
5. We believe students can demonstrate success in a variety of ways.
6. We believe all students learn resilience and confidence through learning in an environment that provides a balance of support and challenge.
7. We believe learning is a life-long pursuit that neither begins nor ends with one's formal education.
8. We believe education is the key to continuing the democratic ideals of our Nation.

Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs

Mission: is a statement of purpose and defines the fundamental charge of the system. It is more general in nature and may, in fact, apply to other similar institutions. For example, all public schools have the same fundamental responsibilities. Therefore, they may share similar missions.

HWRSD Mission Statement

The Mission of the HWRSD is to educate our children to become young adults who are of good character and demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills needed to be successful members of our global economy and engaged citizens of the 21st Century.

Vision statement: describes the desired state of the system in the next five years. It is more specific in nature. It is an expression of possibility, yet based enough in reality to be achievable. Its purpose is to inspire those involved and interested individuals to help it become a reality. It provides the basis from which the school system determines the priorities and establishes targets for performance in the next five years; that is, yearly district and School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals result directly from the vision.

Vision Statement for the HWRSD

Through development of an integrated, data-responsive system of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development, the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District will be a world-class learning organization that graduates students who are well prepared to meet the post-secondary challenges of the 21st Century economy and are engaged members of our global society.

Motto of the HWRSD :

Knowledge * Respect * Responsibility * Excellence

Additional COVID-related Information

Masks

In alignment with School Committee policy, universal masking will be required in all district buildings regardless of vaccination status. The updated HWRSD Mask Policy can be found [here](#).

If a Student Refuses to Wear a Mask in School

1. The teacher will request the student to wear a mask and offer the student a mask. If the student refuses, the student will be sent to the office. The teacher will notify the office that the student will be arriving.
2. The main office secretary will offer the student a mask. If the student refuses, they will meet with the principal.
3. The student will meet with the principal. The principal will offer the student a mask. If the student still refuses to wear a mask, the parents will be notified.
4. The parent will be notified and will be asked to encourage their child to wear a mask. If the student refuses, he/she will be required to leave school for the day and continue their learning with work provided. The student will be required to make up any missed work.

If a Student Refuses to Wear a Mask on the Bus

1. The bus driver will request the student to wear a mask and offer the student a mask. If the student refuses, the student will be reported by the bus driver to the principal as soon as possible.
2. Upon arrival at school, the student will meet with the principal. The principal will discuss the issue with the student and reinforce the requirement for wearing a face covering and parents will be notified.
3. If the student still refuses to wear a mask on the bus, the parents will be notified and the student will not be allowed to use the bus until they are able to comply and wear a mask appropriately while on the bus.

Visitors

If visitors do not have a mask or their mask malfunctions/breaks during their visit, an alternative mask will be provided. If visitors refuse to wear a mask, the principal will seek a resolution to the situation. If visitors continue to refuse to wear a mask, they will not be allowed to enter/remain at the school, per School Committee policy.

Academic

What should parents do when they have a concern regarding a child?

If it is an academic or social concern, parents should initiate school contact with the classroom teacher. This can be accomplished by a note, phone call, or email communication. Teachers will respond as soon as they are able. However, if you attempt to contact the teacher during the school day, the response may be delayed until students have gone home for the day.

The classroom teacher should be able to address your concern or seek assistance from other staff resources such as the Instructional Support Team, adjustment counselor, or building principal. If you continue to have a student concern after discussing it with the classroom teacher, contact the building principal for support.

The Instructional Support Team (IST) is made up of classroom teachers and specialists. The team reviews the student concerns and develops short-term interventions for improvement. Progress from the intervention is monitored and the team reconvenes to analyze the available performance data. Additional decisions regarding intervention will be determined as a result of this process.

Respectful Community

Expectations of Conduct

Our school is an extension of the Hamilton-Wenham community. Students as well as adults are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times.

One of the primary goals of the Hamilton-Wenham School Community is to create a positive interdependence of students through sensitivity, respect, open communication and consistent standards of behavior. It is our expectation that students will be able to conduct themselves in a safe, orderly, considerate manner throughout our school community. Please read and talk about our school code of conduct published inside the front cover of this guide.

In the beginning of every school year, your child's teacher spends a considerable amount of time discussing and drawing up classroom rules and reviewing school-wide expectations of conduct. These rules and expectations are posted in each classroom. The faculty works with students to help them develop problem solving, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills. We continually reinforce the strategy of seeking adult assistance when students cannot reconcile differences.

Serious incidents of misbehavior shall be termed "Unacceptable". These include: stealing, obscene language or gestures, dangerous fighting, vandalism, destruction of property, and physical or verbal

assault on another child or adult. These incidents will be brought to the immediate attention of the principal. The student will be brought or sent to the office.

Consequence: These may include in-school suspension, detention, conference with the child, parent, principal and/or teacher. In some cases, the child may be suspended from school for the following day and/or a specific behavior management plan will be developed with the child, teacher, parent and principal to assist the child in gaining control of his/her behavior. These cases will include repeated offenses of the above incidents.

Bullying

Massachusetts state law prohibits bullying in schools. School districts are required to develop an anti-bullying policy. Please refer to the HWRSD Bullying Prevention Policy included in the appendix of this document.

Anti-Bullying Rules:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help students who are bullied.
3. We will try to include students who are left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

When bullying behavior is identified, progressive disciplinary steps will be taken to correct the problem. Typically this will begin with a warning from the classroom teacher and progress to a First Bullying Offense, a Second Bullying Offense and a Third Bullying Offense. Anything above a warning will involve the school counselor and/or the principal. Parents will be notified any time bullying behavior has been identified.

- Being a bully is not permitted in school.
- Sometimes bullies say mean things like teasing too much or calling kids or their friends and family nasty names.
- Sometimes bullies do mean things like hitting kids, pushing them, making rude gestures or touch kids in a way that they don't want.
- If you think someone is being a bully to you or to one of your friends, tell them to stop and then walk away.
- If the bully won't stop, tell one of the adults in school.
- You can tell any adult in school you like.
- When the adult hears about your concern, the adult will try to solve the problem.
- If the adult cannot solve the problem right away the adult will talk with the Principal.
- Many concerns can be resolved by an adult or the Principal pretty easily.
- Sometimes, however, concerns are more serious. There may be some discipline for the bully and parents may be called.
- The bully is not allowed, however, to try to get back at you for telling your concerns to an adult; if that happens, tell an adult again right away.

- It is important to us that our elementary schools are safe and caring places for all our students and that both students and the adults behave in a courteous and respectful way with each other

Playground Rules

- Be kind and considerate of others when on the playground.
- Share space with others.
- Respect Recess Supervisors and follow their directions.
- No kicking, pushing or shoving.
- No fighting -- anywhere at school!!!
- Touch football only -- no tackles.
- No slide tackles in soccer.
- Return all playground equipment to the classroom's recess bag.
- Share equipment with as many students as possible.
- Only one person on the slide at a time; sliding down in seated position.
- Balls cannot be kicked or thrown against the building.
- Climbing structures used at recess only, not before school.
- Note: each school may have specific guidelines for unique spaces or pieces of equipment

Student Discipline

Suspension

A suspension is a short term or long-term removal from regular classroom activities.

Short term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive days or less.

Long term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

A suspended student is restricted from entering the school buildings, or coming onto school grounds; and a suspended student may not participate in any school sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period. It is also recommended that parents restrict the activities of a student during the suspension period to reinforce the importance of the disciplinary consequence and to demonstrate cooperation between the school and family.

The Principal or his/her designee has the sole responsibility for determining who is suspended. The suspended student may not be permitted to return to school until a parental conference has been held.

In school suspension

At the discretion of the Principal, in-school suspension may also be imposed where a student is determined to have committed a suspendable offense. In-school suspension means the student is removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than 10

consecutive school days. Students will be subject to limitations on their movements and activities as determined by the Principal. In-school suspension for less than 10 days shall not be considered a short-term suspension. An in-school suspension of more than 10 days shall be deemed a long-term suspension.

For an in-school suspension, the principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Removal from Extracurricular Activities and Attendance at school sponsored events

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ or 603 CMR 53.00.

Opportunity for Academic Progress During Suspension/Expulsion

Any student receiving in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension shall have the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days shall have an opportunity to receive educational services that will enable the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school-wide educational services plan.

Student due process rights

In administering discipline, school officials will be careful to observe the right to due process under the law for each student. The nature of the violation determines the due process that school officials follow.

1. 1. DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF A DANGEROUS WEAPON, POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE, ASSAULT ON SCHOOL STAFF AND/OR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF A FELONY (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½).

Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the Principal or designee determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.

Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parents/guardians will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, a written decision will be issued. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long term suspension or expulsion from school to the Superintendent. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76, §17, M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½.

2. DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH OTHER VIOLATIONS (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾)

Notice and principal's meeting:

For any suspension under this section, the principal or a designee shall provide notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. The student shall receive written notice of the charges and the opportunity to meet with the principal or designee to discuss charges and reasons for the suspension and/or exclusion prior to suspension/exclusion taking effect.

The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the

opportunity to attend the hearing. The meeting may take place without the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) so long as if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

The purpose of the principal's hearing is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense.

a. Short-term Suspension

The principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

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

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

b. Long Term Suspension

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall also have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio

recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

If present, the Parent shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent 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.

If the student is suspended for more than 10 days for a single infraction or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the Superintendent and the process for appealing in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. No student will be suspended for greater than 90 days, beginning on the first day the student is removed from the building.

Emergency Removal:

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. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal.

In the event of an emergency removal, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal. The principal shall provide written notice to the student and parent as provided above, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal as provided above, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

The principal shall render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements as described above.

In the event of an emergency removal from school, the principal will not release the student until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Superintendent's hearing:

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion to submit a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to 7 calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 3 school days or the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to 7 calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Superintendent's hearing may proceed without the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

At the hearing, the superintendent shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal's hearing for long-terms suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 5 calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The Superintendent's decision is the final decision of the district.

Discipline and Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation

Determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.

3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP team or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardians consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

General Building Information

Absences, Tardiness And Dismissal - In-Person Days

The Hamilton-Wenham Elementary Schools maintains a Safe Arrival Program. We ask parents to call their school's Safe Arrival Line if you know your child is going to be absent or tardy.

Buker Safe Arrival 978-468-8400	Cutler Safe Arrival 978-368-8472	Winthrop Safe Arrival 978-468-5344
------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

This phone number is connected to an answering machine with a message asking that you leave your child's name and teacher name. If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will call you

to check on the safety of your child. If there is no answer at the home phone, the child's emergency card will be used to contact a working parent. Please keep the office updated with cellular telephone numbers and the like.

A student arriving at school after the start of the day (8:25 a.m.) reports to the front door upon arrival. The secretary will make note of the arrival and give the child a "pass" to enter the classroom. The "pass" is a signal to the classroom teacher that the student has been signed in at the office. PreK & K students will be escorted to their classrooms. Students who do not arrive at school until after 11:15 a.m. will be considered absent for the day. Students who are absent for 5 consecutive days due to illness will require a doctor's note before returning to school.

For your child's safety, anytime a child's dismissal plans change from the regular routine, parents must send in a note to the classroom teacher informing them of the student's dismissal, whether it be a bus or walking plan change.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law, students are expected to be in attendance every day that school is in session. The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District maintains procedures to systematically address the needs of students with ongoing attendance issues. Given the history of poor academic outcomes for students who miss school on a frequent basis, as well as the tendency of attendance problems to escalate, as a student grows older, there is a critical need for parents and school to work collaboratively and respond in a proactive manner.

Attendance letters will be sent to parents at regular intervals when a student is absent from school. The letter will request notification if the absences are due to a chronic medical condition. If the parent does not provide verification of a medical condition after receiving letters from the school and a student is absent for ten (10) days (consecutive or cumulative), the principal will contact parent(s) directly to discuss the reason for the absences and collaboratively develop a plan to support improved school attendance.

If a student's physician provides a written order verifying that the student has a medical condition precluding daily school attendance, an administrator will make the parent aware of rights and requirements with regard to home/hospital tutoring when absences exceed fourteen (14) days.

Please note that the practice of taking vacations when school is in session is strongly discouraged. Students who are absent miss vital classroom instruction and opportunities to practice developing skills. As a result, family vacations need to be scheduled during the December, February, and April school vacations only.

Early Dismissal

Any student dismissed during school hours must be picked up by their parents or parent designee at the school's front door. Parents picking up students during school hours may park in the designated areas and call the office to let us know you have arrived. Please do not park in the fire lanes. Please

send a note to your child's teacher indicating early dismissal. Students will be considered absent for the day if they are dismissed before 11:15 a.m.

Arrival and Dismissal

Buker

Parents picking up students at dismissal are asked to make sure they meet their child/children outside the front door of the building. Staff members will be present during dismissal to ensure students who walk and students who are picked up in cars, meet parents safely. Parents who are picking up in cars are asked to form a line along School Street. Staff members will assist getting students in cars.

Please make sure parent notes contain the date, student's name and specifics for transportation plans. If someone other than legal guardians will be picking up your child, they should be prepared with identification to ensure the safety of all students. If the teacher does not receive a note, the child will be instructed to take their usual transportation home.

We appreciate your cooperation by respecting these guidelines and helping us maintain a safe and orderly pickup at all times.

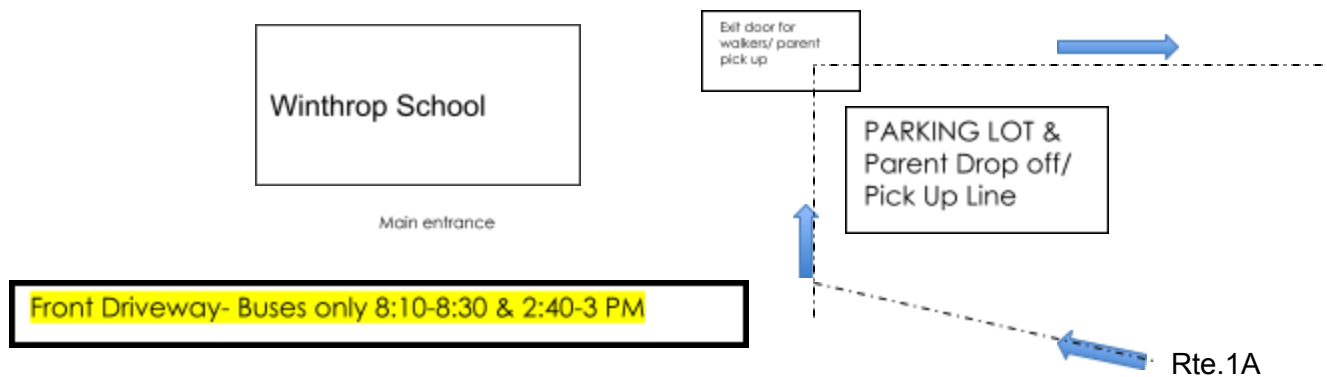
Buker arrival and dismissal maps can be found [here](#).

Cutler

For morning drop off, parents are asked to maintain a moving line in the parking lot on the side closest to the playground. No car should be parked or stopped for any length of time in this lane as this is a moving drop off line. Parents are asked not to drop children off on the far side of the parking lot; having children cross the lot by themselves. For afternoon dismissal, if you want to get out of your car to meet your child, please make sure you are parked in a marked spot. In the afternoon, we have two moving queuing lines. Staff will assist children/parents, loading only the first 4 cars. Please do not wave to your child to either cross the parking lot on their own or to come to your car if you are not one of the first 4 cars in the queuing line.

Winthrop

Parents dropping off or picking up in cars should form two lines in the pick up area, and are asked to remain in their cars. At drop off, students will unload independently, only when indicated by the Car Line monitors. At pickup, place the name sign in the front window. Students will be called to the loading area and loaded into cars in groups. Please refrain from using cell phones in the car line and put your car in park while students are loading and unloading. Parents picking up walkers or bikers at dismissal are asked to meet their child/children outside the designated pick up room on the parking lot side of the building. Please make sure parent notes contain the date, student's name and specifics for transportation plans. If someone other than legal guardians will be picking up your child, they should be prepared with identification to ensure the safety of all students. If the teacher does not receive a note, the child will be instructed to take their usual transportation home.



We appreciate your cooperation by respecting these guidelines and helping us maintain a safe and orderly pickup at all times.

School Lunch Program

Information regarding the School Lunch Program can be found on the district [website](#).

Family Communication

Hamilton-Wenham Elementary Schools send out regular communication via emails through Aspen. School websites are updated regularly. For information, visit www.hwschools.net and look for the school tabs at the top.

Lost And Found

A "Lost and Found" area is maintained in each school, where articles are kept for a reasonable period of time before being donated to charity. We suggest that you label all of your children's clothing and items being brought to school. Unclaimed items will be donated to shelters at each school vacation. Items left on the bus are kept on the bus and not brought into the school.

Classroom And Library Books And Property

Books are loaned to students with the understanding that if they are lost or damaged it is their responsibility to replace or pay for them. Persons who mark or destroy school property must pay for the cost of any repairs.

Photographs And Videos

Throughout the school year, classroom teachers and others take pictures and videos of the students participating in a wide variety of activities. These pictures will be displayed around the school, in the

Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle, local cable channel, and perhaps other local publications. A general permission form will be distributed at the start of each school year. Please indicate your permission on the contact verification form each family completes at the beginning of each year.

School Council

The School Council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers and a community member. The School Council adopts educational goals that are consistent with our District policies. It also identifies needs for our school and reviews the annual school budget. The council formulates a school improvement plan that is submitted to the school committee. All meetings are open to the public.

Friends Groups

Each school has a Friends Group, which is our parent volunteer service organization. The purpose of the Friends is to supplement the educational process with additional resources such as sponsorship of volunteer programs, materials and direct financial support. Activities of the organization are intended to facilitate closer communication between home and school. The Friends, through hard work and interest, provide our school with funds and added programs. Each school's Friends group has a strong volunteer program and always welcome new members!

School Safety

Crisis Plan

As adults in a school and community setting, we help young people cope with painful losses and events that are a part of life. We help students heal and guide them through difficult times. We also must be prepared to deal with emergency situations.

When a crisis occurs, it can have devastating consequences for individuals, families, neighborhoods, schools and the community at large. The best response to a crisis is to be prepared before the crisis strikes with a well thought out plan of action and in integrated response. As schools are often the "hub" of communities, the school's response to a crisis may set the tone for the community's response as a whole. If handled calmly, responsively, and thoroughly, the crisis may even serve as a unifying force. Each school in the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District has a "Crisis Action Plan" in place in the case of an emergency or other crisis.

Delayed Opening Procedures

Based on weather and road conditions in both communities of Hamilton and Wenham, the Superintendent of Schools will determine by 6:00am whether to declare a delayed opening for that school day. The Superintendent will use ConnectEd to make phone calls to staff and parents regarding a delayed opening of school. A delayed opening means that school will start 2 hours later than usual.

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 10:30am, they will follow the schedule of the day and be dismissed at the regular time.

Emergency Dismissal

If it is necessary to dismiss school earlier than scheduled due to unusual weather conditions or other unforeseen emergencies, students will be sent home. As a precaution, parents are encouraged to work out an emergency plan with their children. No child will be allowed to go home to an empty house. The principal will contact parents with a ConnectEd phone call and email.

ConnectEd is an effective procedure to inform parents of an emergency dismissal. Please do your part and follow through so that all children will be safe. If there is ever a change in a home, work or cell phone number, be sure to contact the school office so the appropriate changes can be made.

No School Announcements

It is the policy of the Hamilton-Wenham schools to cancel classes only in case of extreme weather conditions or emergencies. Parents are urged to use their own judgment concerning their child's attendance at school on storm days.

Cancellation of the school day will be announced as follows:

ConnectEd	The Superintendent will use ConnectEd to make phone calls to staff and parents regarding school cancellation.
Radio	Announcements of school cancellation will be broadcast on radio stations WESX (1230), and WBZ (1030) between 7:15am and 7:30am.
Cable	Hamilton-Wenham local Channel 10 is notified of any cancellations or delays.
TV	Boston Channel 4, Channel 5 and Channel 7

Emergency Drills

In keeping with state regulations, fire drills are conducted regularly in each school under the supervision of the building principal. Procedures are posted in each classroom or teaching area. A program on fire safety is provided in the schools by the local fire departments.

To provide fire engine access to our school in case of an emergency, we are asking parents/visitors not to park in the bus lanes located in front of the building.

We also practice safety drills and evacuation procedures periodically with the children to safeguard them in the unlikely event of a crisis situation.

Transportation

Student safety is the number one priority in the transportation of your child. Children must wear a mask at all times on the bus and only sit in their designated seat.

Behavior on the bus must be acceptable at all times. This is important to assure the safety of ALL bus passengers. Disruptive behavior can lead to the suspension of bus-riding privileges. We encourage you to help your child exhibit good bus-riding practices at all times, including a regard for all other riders.

Bus Rules

- Each student shall be seated immediately upon entering the bus in the place assigned by the driver, if such assignments have been made. Generally younger students sit toward the front of the bus and older students toward the back of the bus, unless siblings are seated together.
- Students must wear a mask prior to entering the bus and for the duration of the ride.
- Once seated, students should remain in their seats until the bus has reached its destination.
- Loud and/or profane language, or inappropriate conduct shall not be tolerated.
- No windows or doors will be opened or closed except by permission of the driver.
- No students shall enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the door has been opened by the driver.
- Students are to obey the directions of the bus driver and will identify themselves correctly when requested.
- There is to be no lighting of matches or smoking on the bus.
- Eating on the bus is not allowed.
- Students are not to throw objects on the bus or out of the windows.
- Students shall not put their hands or their heads out of the windows.
- Students are responsible to arrive at the bus stop on time.
- Littering the bus is unacceptable. Any damage to the bus caused by a student will result in reimbursement to the bus company.
- Students are not to stand in the stairwell of the bus.
- Any incident of disruptive behavior will be reported to the principal. Parents will be notified.
- A second instance may result in a suspension of bus privileges and requires that the parents and student meet with principal.

Bicycle Permission

Students in grades K-3 may ride their bikes to school with adult supervision. Children in grades four and five are allowed to ride their bicycles to school independently. All children under 12 years of age must wear a helmet according to Massachusetts State Law. Students should ride bikes with the flow of traffic. A bike rack is provided for student use. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen bicycles. Children should not ride bicycles in rainy, icy or snowy weather. Parents are responsible for

the safe operating condition of their children's bicycles. Youngsters who ride to school should be reminded that riding bicycles on the playground is not allowed. Improper use of this privilege will result in its suspension.

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District

Recommendations for Bicycle Safety

Approved 4/27/00

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District, its administrators and staff wish to recommend that students, within the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District and their parents/guardians, consider the following suggestions for Bicycle Safety should the student and his/her parents/guardians opt to have the student ride a bicycle to and/or from school:

- **BIKE PLAN** – It is recommended that parents/guardians and students prepare a bike plan outlining the route that the child may take to and from school. It is recommended that the student and parent/guardian write out a bike plan that may minimally include the streets to be traveled to and from school. The bike plan, if the student and parent/guardian decide to follow this recommendation, could be kept by the parent/guardian and periodically reviewed for safety.
- **SAFETY TIPS** – Helpful general safety and bicycle safety tips and suggestions are circulated by the Hamilton and Wenham Police Departments and the School District. It is recommended that students and their parents/guardians consider reviewing these safety tips. These safety tips often address issues involving the proper use of a bicycle helmet, where one can safely (and legally) ride a bicycle, how to properly cross a street, and proper bicycle maintenance.

It must be remembered that riding a bicycle can be very dangerous, and that the best way to avoid any accidents is for the student to plan out a bicycle route to and from school with a responsible parent/guardian, adhere to all traffic laws, and to follow any general recommended safety tips for a safe and enjoyable ride.

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee, the administrators and the staff hope that the above suggestions and recommendations are helpful and remind each student and parent/guardian that bicycle safety is up to you.

Health Services

The Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools share with the parents of our community a deep concern for the health and well-being of its children. How well our children will be able to meet their new opportunities and responsibilities which they face in the years ahead will depend on a large measure of their physical vitality as well as intellectual capabilities. Your child's health status is determined through the modalities of observation, screening tests, (vision, hearing and postural), measurements (height and weight) as well as medical, dental, and psychological evaluations.

All children in grades K-5 are screened for visual and auditory problems during each school year and any problems are reported to parents. In addition, parents may request that the school nurse do further screening during the school year if they feel that their children may have impairment in vision or hearing.

Physical examinations are required for all children prior to entering school and in grade 4.

The school nurse is your child's advocate. There are many opportunities for individual and informal health guidance offered in the course of a school day. Her role is to work in collaboration with you, the parents, and with others in the school system and in the community to foster good and wholesome health practices.

You may call the health office at any time to check on the well being of your child or to voice concerns that may arise. If your child has a fever or symptoms which would interfere with normal classroom functioning, please make arrangements to keep him/her out until the child is able to perform in the classroom. We are here as a team to provide a safe, healthful, and wholesome environment in which your child can experience growth and vitality each and every day.

Medication

In accordance with the Massachusetts State Law governing the administration of medications in schools, all medicines must be accompanied by a written doctor's order, including all over-the-counter drugs (e.g. cough syrup). All requests for the dispensing of medications must be directed to the school nurse. In situations where it is necessary for medication to be given on a regular basis at school, the medicine should be brought to school in a prescription bottle by a parent. The container should be labeled with the name of medication, the amount to be given, the time to be given, the expiration date, if any, and the physician's name. The parent will also be asked to sign a permission form authorizing the school nurse to administer the medication.

It would be helpful for us to know of any serious accidents or operations or of any medicine administered at home which might affect a student's performance at school. In addition, it is important that the school be informed about children with allergic reactions so that proper action can be taken if the need arises.

Counseling Services

The School Counselor is a professional trained in social work or counseling and certified by the Massachusetts Department of Education as a School Social Worker/Adjustment Counselor. It is the role of the School Counselor to help students with their personal, social and academic concerns with a focus on school functioning. The School Counselor meets with students individually and in small groups. The School Counselor also works with teachers, administration and parents to help all students be successful in school. School personnel, i.e. teachers, principal and nurse all may refer a student to the School Counselor if they believe he or she may benefit from this service. A parent may refer a student to the School Counselor or may call the Counselor for information, advice, suggestions or with

concerns. Students can also request to meet with the School Counselor themselves for assistance with various issues including academic, social or personal matters.

Buker Colleen Langone c.langone@hwschools.net 978-468-5324	Cutler Ann Creilson a.creilson@hwschools.net 978-468-5330	Winthrop Debra Lanigan d.lanigan@hwschools.net Jeanne Attaya j.attaya@hwschools.net 978-468-5340
---	---	---

What kinds of services does the School Counselor offer?

Student Services

- Individual and small group counseling
- Lunch/Snack Groups
- Instruction in various social curriculums and personal safety
- Conflict resolution
- Coordination of puberty unit
- Family Services
- Provide information and consultation to parents around social/emotional issues.
- Meetings with parents upon request
- Communication with parents (phone, e-mail)

School/Community Services

- Provide consultation and support to classroom teachers around individual student needs and social/emotional issues.
- Develop various social curriculums to address the Massachusetts Health Frameworks.
- Make appropriate community based referrals and network/collaborate with community based clinicians and state agencies working with students and families.
- Act as the primary school liaison for students with collateral agency involvement.
- Participate in various Special Education Team meetings as indicated.
- Member of Student Assistance Team and Clinical Team.
- Member of school's Crisis Team.
- Provide crisis intervention as needed.

If you have any questions about these services, please feel free to ask. The school counselor is always happy to speak with families and looks forward to working with you.

Non-smoking Policy

State law prohibits the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel.

Special Education

Special Education Laws, Massachusetts Chapter 766 and Federal P.L. 99-142, provide for eligible students ages 3-21 the right to an appropriate education through their local public school system.

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District offers a variety of programs and services to students ages 3-21 who have disabilities. Our special education programs provide for the maximum possible development of students in the least restrictive environment. Special education services and support are provided in the regular classroom through the collaborative efforts of a special education teacher and the classroom teacher whenever possible. Most children with disabilities progress faster academically and are less socially isolated when they remain with their peers in the regular classroom setting. Special classes, separate schooling, or the removal of the child from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature of severity of the disability is such that the educational needs of the child cannot be met in the regular classroom.

Emphasis is placed on early recognition and correction of student problems. The school system is required to screen all kindergarten entry level children to assess weaknesses in skill areas, and in addition, has the responsibility to notify the parents of three or four year olds that their children are eligible for the screening program.

Requests for an evaluation may be made by parents, teachers, or other staff at any time to determine the presence and nature of special needs.

Subsequent individual programs, if needed, are then planned in collaboration with specialists, parents, the pupil's teacher, and other persons whom the parents and/or specialists wish to involve.

Observations of Students and Programs

Parents/guardians may request an observation of their child's program or proposed program. The request should be directed to the principal or special education coordinator, who will work collaboratively with the parents/guardians to make the necessary arrangements in accordance with the District's observation policy and procedures.

Title VI/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District recognizes its responsibilities under the federal statutes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to prohibit discrimination against handicapped individuals on the basis of their disability.

The definition of a disabled person is the following: any individual who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more of major life activities; has a record of such an

impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. A major life activity for students is participation in activities and learning opportunities at school.

The policies of the Regional District are non-discriminatory in their employment practices for staff and reasonable accommodations are made to provide access to school meetings and functions for handicapped parents. No discrimination against any person with a handicap is knowingly permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system.

*As cited in the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Civil Rights Booklet (revised 4/3/01).

A complete Section 504 policy statement is available upon request from each building principal.

Section 504 Coordinators

Stacy Bucyk, Director of Student Services	978-468-5303
Ben Schersten, Buker School Principal	978-468-5324
Rebecca Butler and Ed Kaufman, Cutler School Co-Principals	974-468-5330
Carolyn Shediak, Winthrop School Principal	978-468-5340

Records Request

Only authorized personnel have access to information in a student's record. Written consent of the parent, or legal guardian, is generally required for school records to be released to a third party, except as provided by law. At any time, a parent, or legal guardian, may request amendment of the student record or make a request to the principal for review and consideration.. If a parent or legal guardian wishes to review a student's records, contact the building principal. A "Request to Transfer Students Records" to another school must be done in writing. Please contact the principal if you have any questions.

Student Use of Personal Device Technology

We acknowledge that an increasing number of our students have access to personally owned electronic devices including but not limited to cell phones, iPods, iPads and eReaders. Students and parents are responsible for adhering to our guidelines regarding personal technology. If a student is not responsible in following these guidelines, the device will be held in the school office until a parent is able to pick it up.

- Cell phones are to be turned off and stored in the student's backpack.
- No photos or videos of other students are to be taken with personal devices on school grounds or on the bus.
- eReaders may be used with teacher permission.
- All other electronic devices of personal value should be left at home.
- The school assumes no liability for the loss, theft, or damage of any personally owned electronic device

APPENDIX

GUIDELINES FOR CONFIDENTIALITY AND ETHICS

Teachers, staff, and other adults working in the school setting will be at times privileged to confidential information as they work and spend time with children and their families. A strict code and policy of confidentiality is maintained and upheld at all times during school and after school hours to ensure the privacy of the children and families who are involved in any aspect of the elementary school program. The recommended “best practice” for those involved in elementary school programming is to treat all information regarding children with complete confidentiality. These guidelines protecting student and family rights with respect to confidentiality and ethics are listed below:

- Never share a child’s or family’s issues with another family.
- Avoid talking about a particular child in the presence of other students or people who are not authorized to access information.
- Refrain from discussing personal issues with parents and families.
- Obtain written permission from parents before sharing or receiving information with anyone outside the school setting.
- Allow only authorized personnel access to children’s records.
- Defer to a supervisor (such as an administrator) when people request sensitive information from a staff member.
- Avoid judging families or imposing personal values on a child if there is a difference in belief systems.
- Avoid gossip at all times and refer direct questions and/or concerns to someone authorized to provide accurate information.
- Require written permission to take a photograph and/or to make video or audio records used for research, advertising, and/or publishing in a newspaper, or for any other purpose.
- Do not keep such documentation within the context of classroom activities or give documentation to others without specific authorization.
- Request additional permission if photographs, video or audio records are to be used for research, advertising, and/or publishing in a newspaper, or for any other purpose.

Confidentiality can ONLY be broken when:

- A child is in danger, with regard to health, neglect, or abuse and it becomes necessary to report confidential information without permission.
- When a child imparts information that implies abuse or neglect, you are legally obligated to report this information to your immediate supervisor.

(*Citation Source: Hamilton-Wenham Integrated Preschool Program Guidelines for Confidentiality and Ethics)

GENDER IDENTITY

The term “gender identity”, distinct from the term “sexual orientation,” refers to a person’s innate, deeply felt psychological identification as male or female, which may or may not correspond to the person’s body or designated sex at birth (meaning that sex was originally listed on a person’s birth certificate.)

-Human Rights Campaign Website

Non-Discrimination

It is the goal of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District to maintain a school environment free of harassment and/or discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, disability, gender identity, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law. The District will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any of its schools, including any school programs, services or activities. The District is committed to equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities. The District does not discriminate in admission to its schools, access or treatment in its services, programs and activities for any student.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment on the basis of any protected class, please contact the school principal or Stacy Bucyk, Director of Student Services and Title IX Coordinator at 978-468-5304, s.bucyk@hwschools.net; 5 School Street, Wenham, Massachusetts 01984.

PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES CONCERNING PETS & OTHER ANIMALS

The control of animals on school grounds is required to insure the safety of all students in the district. Please note the following town by-laws specifically related to dogs:

Section 1.

1.01 The Animal Control Officer is authorized to require owners or keepers of dogs to prevent such dogs from becoming a public nuisance. The Animal Control Officer is further authorized to require owners or keepers of dogs to restrain their dogs from running at large. Excessive or untimely barking, worrying or otherwise threatening or harming persons or domestic animals, chasing vehicles, trespassing upon school grounds, or trespassing upon private property or public property in such a manner as to foul or otherwise damage property shall be deemed a violation of this by-law.

1.02 No person owning, harboring, or otherwise having custody or control of a dog, shall permit such dog be at large in the town of Hamilton at any time, except that it be on the premises of another person with their consent. Any owner, harborer, or person having custody or control of a dog which is not on either premises of the owner or the premises of another person with their consent shall control and restrain such dog by a leash of appropriate length. Disposition of complaints or violations of this by-law will be in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 140, 173A.

Definition of Nuisance

Animal behavior which constitutes nuisance includes, but not limited to, the following: molesting passerby or passing vehicles (including bicycle), attacking persons or domestic animals, trespassing on school grounds or other public property, damaging public or private property, barking, whining, or howling in an excessive continuous, or untimely fashion.

FOR COMPLETE LISTING OF DISTRICT POLICIES

<http://www.hwschools.net/page.cfm?p=1894>