

WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

# Student Handbook

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**2021-2022**



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#### **Russian**

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**WSHS CORE VALUES AND BELIEF STATEMENT:**

**West Springfield High School educates all students to be well rounded, responsible individuals who contribute to our evolving 21st century society.**

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**The West Springfield High School Learning Community will demonstrate target language proficiency through effective communication: reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing for a variety of purposes.**

<b>Core Value</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Effective Reading</b>	Student consistently demonstrates skill in analytical reading.	Student frequently demonstrates skill in analytical reading.	Student sometimes demonstrates skill in analytical reading.	Student rarely demonstrates skill in analytical reading.
<b>Effective Writing</b>	Student consistently demonstrates skill in all aspects of writing.	Student frequently demonstrates skill in all aspects of writing.	Student sometimes demonstrates skill in all aspects of writing.	Student rarely demonstrates skill in all aspects of writing.
<b>Effective Speaking</b>	Student consistently demonstrates use of appropriate vocabulary and knowledge of audience.	Student frequently demonstrates use of appropriate vocabulary and knowledge of audience.	Student sometimes demonstrates an appropriate use of vocabulary and knowledge of audience.	Student rarely demonstrates an appropriate use of vocabulary and knowledge of audience.
<b>Effective listening and viewing</b>	Student consistently demonstrates active listening/ viewing strategies and can consistently use information in a variety of assessments.	Student frequently demonstrates active listening/viewing strategies and can frequently use information in a variety of assessments.	Student sometimes demonstrates active listening/viewing strategies and can sometimes use information in a variety of assessments.	Student rarely demonstrates active listening/ viewing strategies and can rarely use information in a variety of assessments.

**The West Springfield High School Learning Community will be able to collaborate, think creatively, critically, and logically while using a variety of problem solving tools and methods, technology, research techniques and various mediums.**

<b>Core Value</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Effective critical thinking and problem solving</b>	Student consistently demonstrates higher order thinking skills, and uses current research techniques and resources to solve problems creatively.	Student frequently demonstrates higher order thinking skills, and often uses current research techniques and resources to solve problems creatively.	Student sometimes demonstrates higher order thinking skills, and seldom uses current research techniques and resources to solve problems creatively.	Student rarely demonstrates higher order thinking skills, and infrequently uses current research techniques and resources to solve problems creatively.

**The West Springfield High School Learning Community will demonstrate respect and responsibility by recognizing the impact of their decisions on others and themselves. They will also participate in meaningful activities in the learning community.**

<b>Core Value</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Respect</b>	Student consistently demonstrates respect for cultural, personal, and social differences.	Student frequently demonstrates respect for cultural, personal, and social differences.	Student sometimes demonstrates respect for cultural, personal, and social differences.	Student rarely demonstrates respect for cultural, personal, and social differences.
<b>Personal Responsibility</b>	Student consistently demonstrates positive choices, sets short and long term goals, and learns from mistakes.	Student frequently demonstrates positive choices, sets short and long term goals, and learns from mistakes.	Student sometimes demonstrates positive choices, seldom sets short and long term goals, and learn from mistakes.	Student rarely demonstrates positive choices, does not set short and long term goals, and infrequently learns from mistakes.
<b>Civic Responsibility</b>	Student consistently practices guidelines established in the school handbook.	Student frequently practices guidelines established in the school handbook.	Student sometimes practices guidelines established in the school handbook.	Student rarely practices guidelines established in the school handbook.
<b>School and Community Involvement</b>	Student consistently participates in school and community activities.	Student frequently participates in school and community activities.	Student sometimes participates in school and community activities.	Student rarely participates in school and community activities.

### **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

The school address is 425 Piper Road, West Springfield, MA 01089

Telephone [413] 263-3400 Office hours 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM

While efforts are made to communicate information home via School Messenger - our automated telephone calling system - students and families are encouraged to utilize the website and the student and parent portals to access important information about what is happening at

WSHS. [wshs.wsps.org](http://wshs.wsps.org)

**Teachers' hours:** 7:10 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

**Student Hours:** 7:20 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. ~ Student may not access the academic wings until 7:10 a.m. All student must exit the building immediately at 2:00 p.m. Student should NOT be on school campus without academic, athletic, or extracurricular involvement and under the direct supervision of an authorized staff member or designee.

**Office telephones** may be used only in the case of an emergency. Students may receive incoming calls/messages only from a parent.

Students in Work Experience must leave the building immediately after signing out. Work Experience students are expected to serve their detentions at 2:05 PM.

**School closings** or delayed starting: announcements are made on radio/television stations, online and through our automated telephone service.

**Transcripts:** All requests for transcripts should be addressed to the Guidance Office at 263-3478.

#### WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE

Bells	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:20 – 8:06	1	2	3	4	1
8:10 – 8:56	2	3	4	1	2
9:00 – 9:46	3	4	1	2	3
9:50 – 10:36	4	1	2	3	4
10:40 – 12:20	5	5	X Bock or 5	5	5
12:24 – 1:10	6	6	6	6	6
1:14 – 2:00	7	7	7	7	7

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Guidance Services:** Students and parents are encouraged to use the services of the School Counseling Department. Students may visit the Guidance Office before or after school. During the school day, **passes are required.**

**Working Papers:** Working papers are available through the main office or the Superintendent's office.

**Summer School:** A student must achieve a final average of at least 50% in order to attend summer school. In addition, the student must have taken the final examination and met all attendance requirements. No change in grade will be recorded; however, credits for the course will be added to the credits successfully completed on the student's transcript. Students may only use two (2) courses to earn credit in summer school per summer. A course taken for credit in Summer/Evening School must have the identical title of the course previously taken and failed at West Springfield High School.

**Sports Physicals:** A physical exam is required yearly for all students who wish to tryout/participate in a school sponsored sport. ***It must be on file in the Nurse's office prior to tryouts or practice.***

**Photographs/Video Recording:** Parents who do not want their child's **photograph/video recording** to appear in any school publication (e.g. newsletters, press releases, the school calendar, etc.) should submit a written statement to that effect to their child's school principal.

**Students Identification Cards:** Students will be issued an ID card each year for personal use.

**Food/Drink Outside of Cafeteria:** At no time is any food or beverage (except bottled water) allowed outside of the cafeteria area. Students in possession of open food or beverage (except bottled water) will be directed to dispose of it immediately. Failure/refusal to do so will result in disciplinary action. **STUDENTS MAY NOT ORDER OUTSIDE FOOD OR BEVERAGES** (i.e. Door Dash, Uber Eats, pizza, etc.). Any violation will result in disciplinary action.



**Restricted areas:** Students must remain in the building and on school grounds unless under the supervision of a teacher or staff member. **During lunch periods, students are restricted to the cafeteria.** Locker rooms are restricted to all students during the day except during regularly scheduled physical education classes.

**Loitering:** Students should NOT be on school campus without academic, athletic, or extracurricular involvement and under the direct supervision of an authorized staff member or designee.

**Student visitors** are not allowed without permission of the administration. All school visitors must sign in and receive a visitor pass. A visitor pass must be displayed at all times.

**Student Dress** School officials shall not abridge the rights of students as to personal dress and appearance except if such officials determine that such personal dress and appearance violate reasonable standards of health, safety and cleanliness. (M.G.L. c. 71, § 83). **Hats or bandannas or similar head cover** may not be worn in school (except for religious or disability reasons and upon notification to the principal.)

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents. Student attire cannot be destructive to school property, must comply with requirements for health and safety, and cannot cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements. **Articles of clothing bearing the advertising in the promoting of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, and profanities may not be worn.** Consistent, willful inability to adhere to the dress code will result in disciplinary measures.

Students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

**School-sponsored dances:** School dances are occasionally held during the year. All applicable rules of student conduct and dress code apply to dances. Students may not attend until all discipline is served. Students who are absent or tardy unexcused on the day of a dance may not attend. Students will not be allowed to enter dances one hour after the scheduled start time. In cases where other school related events conflict, exceptions will be made with pre-approval.

**Senior Prom** is a formal event. Black tie or “Sunday Best” required. Attendance at the prom is a privilege and the opportunity to attend may be revoked due to issues surrounding school attendance or discipline. The Senior Prom is the **ONLY** dance that students are permitted to bring an outside guest. All outside guests must be approved by administration **before** purchasing tickets. Underclassmen may attend the Senior Prom only as a guest of a senior. Students may not bring a guest who is 21 years of age or older.

**Electronic Device Policy:** Personal electronics may be used in the classroom to help achieve lesson objectives as defined by the teacher. Individual cell phone policies will be outlined by the teacher and must be honored.

Electronics will be allowed before and after school, between classes and during lunch. All use must be in accordance with the district acceptable use policy which is stated later in this handbook.

To ensure safety, students must be able to hear announcements and directions as they move through the hallways. Therefore students may only use one earbud/headphone when using electronic devices.

**Electronic Bulletin Board Usage.** All items to be posted on the electronic display boards should be submitted the administration or the athletics office as appropriate.

**Health Screening:** If you do not wish to have your child participate in any or all health screenings please notify the school nurse at the beginning of the year.

**All injuries/accidents** must be reported to the health office and a report must be filed.

**Illness in school:** If a student becomes ill while in school, he/she must secure a pass from the teacher and report to the nurse's office. If the nurse is out, the student must report to the main office. Under no circumstances are students to stay in the lavatory or leave school for home. Parents/guardians are responsible for taking their student home if he/she becomes ill at school or making appropriate arrangements with the school nurse to have them dismissed.

**Passes:** Students are *not* to be out of an assigned class or assembly without a pass/signed agenda.

**Mediation/Conflict Resolution:** Mediation is a process used to resolve conflict by bringing students together to talk about their problems. It is an option that would precede and hopefully eliminate the need to take disciplinary action. Mediation does not circumvent the discipline code but assists in solving problems before they escalate.

**School Insurance:** It is recommended that all students subscribe to the school health insurance plan, especially those who plan to participate in athletic programs.

**Student records:** The Massachusetts Board of Education has issued certain regulations concerning student records and access to them. This handbook covers some of this information, however copies of the full regulations are available in the guidance office.

**Visitors:** The school policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business to conduct at West Springfield High School. Although parents/guardians and other visitors are welcome, they must obtain approval prior to their visit to the school and, upon entering the school, must register in the office. Upon entry visitors will be asked to leave a valid photo ID at the reception desk. Students who wish to bring a guest to school must obtain prior approval. Anyone on school property for sales or fund raising purposes must have prior written approval from the administration. Visitors are expected to leave promptly when they have completed their business. CORI checks are required for any non-district employee who will have direct student contact.

**Custody:** Parent(s) should provide the principal with a copy of a current custody decree and/or custody agreement. It is necessary for the principal to have a copy of this document in order to decide on appropriate access to records, participation in TEAM meetings, and similar situations. In addition, if there is an outstanding temporary restraining order against a parent/guardian, a copy of that should be provided to the school principal.

### **Work Permits**

If you hold a full or part-time job, whether school related or not, you must provide your employer with a work permit. This form indicates to your employer that you are still in school and therefore may not be employed during school hours. Work permits may be obtained at the front office at the high school

both during the school year and during the summer. This request is in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 149 § 8695.

**Damaged Personal Items:** The high school is not responsible for stolen or damaged personal items.

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please see the Program of Studies and/or make an appointment with your School Counselor for information regarding graduation requirements.

**Student Performance Expectations:** The level descriptors below represent an attempt to match the student's needs, interest, and performance level with course expectations. All courses provide the opportunity for challenge, intellectual stimulation, and developmental progress. Teachers, counselors, and administrators are available to recommend a specific instructional placement.

**Note:** The level of courses for students new to West Springfield High School will be determined by an analysis of official records (transcripts) submitted as part of the enrollment process.

### **Grades and Academic Honors**

**Marking System:** The West Springfield High School marking system is based on a 0 – 100 numerical scale

60-100 = Passing, credits awarded.

59 and below = Failing, no credit.

60- [minus] working to the best of ability, credits awarded.

\*If a student withdraws from a class, he/she will receive WP (withdraw passing) or WF (withdraw failing) as a grade.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

All students who transfer into West Springfield High School must submit an official transcript from their sending school. If a student does not present an official transcript at the time of enrollment, their courses will be chosen by their counselors to the best of the counselor's ability. The school shall not be held responsible for lack of a transcript in the event that it is later revealed that a student was scheduled incorrectly. The School Counseling Department Chair is responsible for determining the level of transfer credit applicable to scheduling and graduation. Unless otherwise approved by the Principal, and regardless of the anticipated graduation date, all transfer students must meet all local and state graduation requirements.

The Principal or the Principal's designee can award elective credit for courses or activities outside of the high school under special circumstances. Any course or activity that will be awarded credit must be added to the student's transcript.

**\* Students entering grade 9 having completed any course(s) at the high school will have the course entered on their transcript after they are officially enrolled at the high school. All course(s) will count towards graduation requirements.**

WSHS follows the MASSCORE pathway. Students and parents are encouraged to consider enrolling in courses that are recommended by the Commonwealth in order to best be prepared for college and career.

**Promotion:** Grade 9 students must successfully complete their English and Math courses in order to be promoted to Grade 10

**Credit Recovery:** Students have many opportunities to recover the lost credits that they need for promotion and graduation. On an individual basis, students may be allowed to participate in summer school or other programs that will allow them to continue on their path to graduate in four years. The high school has designed a course called Natural Connections to assist in the recovery of credits. This course will be assigned to students during the school day. Please see the Program of Studies for graduation requirement.

#### **Honor Roll Requirements:**

**First Honors:** Average of all courses 93 or above

**Second Honors:** Average of all courses 85 - 92

**Third Honors:** Average of all courses 80 - 84

**Pro-Merito:** Seniors not already members of the National Honor Society are selected to Pro Merito if they have a 90 average or higher for the first three terms of their senior year.

*All Honors distinctions require NO grade of less than 70 in any course. Additionally, no withdraw fail (WF) in any course is permitted.*

*Pass/Fail courses are not considered when determining Honor Roll.*

#### **Advanced Placement**

Intensive and rigorous college-level course of instruction delivering content that has been determined by national standards as prescribed by the College Board. Students must make a strong commitment in terms of time spent on an Advanced Placement course because these courses go into greater depth than any other high school course. Students must accept responsibility for independent, outside preparations, including homework and long-term projects.

Since the course curricula are very extensive and the exams are given in May, some Advanced Placement courses require students to complete summer reading and writing assignments. Failure to complete these summer assignments will mean exclusion from the course. Students who are successful on the Advanced Placement Examination may be awarded college credit or advanced standing by the college they attend.

*Students are expected to sign up for the Advanced Placement Examination by November 1<sup>st</sup> for the May exam period. Students must take the Advanced Placement Exam in order to receive Advanced Placement credit. The cost of the exam will be borne by the student. Students choosing not to take the exam will receive Honors level credit for the course.*

#### **Honors**

Requirements for placement in Honors courses can be found in the course description.

Students must accept responsibility for independent, outside preparations including homework and long-term projects.

Students must demonstrate organizational and time management skills because of the depth and pace of the course.

**All non-honors courses are designed to prepare students for college unless otherwise indicated in the course description.**

**Rank-In-Class Defined:** Rank-in-class is a number which compares the academic success of any member of the graduating class with the success of all of the other members of the class. Any student who avails themselves of early graduation or who is placed at an Out of District School will not receive a rank nor will they be included in any rank in class. Rank-in-class at West Springfield High School is calculated in the fall of the senior year, or two (2) semesters before graduation, and is based on the grades earned during Grades 9, 10, and 11. It is calculated one (1) semester before graduation for inclusion with college applications and finally at the end of the school year to determine Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

**Courses Exempted When Calculating Rank-In-Class:** Physical Education/Health and all pass/fail courses are excluded when calculating rank-in-class. Students enrolled in the dual-enrollment program will not be included in class rank or rank with their class.

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF CALCULATING RANK-IN-CLASS, COURSES ARE WEIGHTED ACCORDING TO THEIR ACADEMIC LEVEL. FAILING GRADES FROM 0 – 59 DO NOT RECEIVE ANY QUALITY POINTS.**

A student who transfers into West Springfield High School will need to have completed at least three (3) semesters at **West Springfield High School** in order to earn a rank in class. Five (5) year graduates do not receive class rank.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS:**

Final examinations will be given in all courses and taken by all students, unless exempted.

Students who do not take the midterm/final examination (unless exempted) will receive a “0” for the exam.

Students must remain in their exam room for the entire period.

During the half-day exam period, students will come to school only for the examinations scheduled.

If for any reason school is cancelled during the test dates, the tests scheduled for that day would be administered the next day school is in session.

#### ***Who Must Take Finals?***

**All students** are required to take semester/final examinations with the following exceptions:

Students who hold a valid Renaissance Gold Card may be exempt from two (2) exams

Students who take the AP exam in a course are exempt from the spring final in that course

Delegates to Boys’ and Girls’ State are excused from all Final Exams

#### **MCAS Graduation Requirements and Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP)**

The Massachusetts Education Reform Law of 1993 requires that all students who are seeking to earn a high school diploma, in a public school, must meet the Competency Determination (CD) standard, in addition to meeting all local graduation requirements. The following examinations in the following areas are mandated by the state:

**Science**

**English**

**Mathematics**

The school district will develop an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP) for every student who does not meet the above requirements. This plan will guide the student toward reaching proficiency in specific academic areas and meet the requirements for graduation. For most students, an Educational Proficiency Plan will simply be a continuation of the rigorous course of study they are planning to complete.

For more information regarding MCAS please visit the DESE website: [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/)

#### **Differentiated Diplomas**

##### **Academic Diploma**

The basis for receiving an Academic Diploma in the West Springfield Public Schools is the earning of the required units of credit, in a prescribed course of study. This includes all requirements established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as it pertains to MCAS and EPP.

### **Certificate of Attainment**

The basis for receiving a Certificate of Attainment in the West Springfield Public Schools is the earning of the required units of credit, in a prescribed course of study. This does not include meeting the minimum requirements established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as it pertains to MCAS and EPP. Students seeking this certificate must maintain a 90% attendance rate in grade 12. These students will have the opportunity to participate in all graduation activities and will be allowed to participate in future MCAS testing at the High School.

### **Certificate of Completion**

The basis for receiving a Certificate of Completion for certain Special Education students in the West Springfield Public Schools is the completion of a prescribed course of study involving Fundamental Academic Skills, Social Skills, and Vocational Skills. Students who receive this course of study are not required to complete the prescribed unit of credit but are required to complete requirements established by the school district and by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as it pertains to MCAS, typically in the form of an Alternative Assessment.

**Dual Enrollment:** Students at West Springfield High School may elect to enroll at a local college or university through a Dual Enrollment (DUA) Program. To be eligible for such a program, a student must be in good academic standing at WSHS and have been accepted by the college/university of his/her choice for the upcoming or current semester or year. In addition, students must complete the appropriate (full day or per class) Dual Enrollment Contract with their school counselor. A DUA course Approval Form must be completed and signed by all necessary parties prior to the students' enrollment in *any* DUA course. Copies of the contracts and approval form can be found in the WSHS Guidance Office. **Students who choose dual enrollment will not be included class rank calculations or ranked.**

### **ADD-DROP Period:**

In order to affect schedule changes without penalty, all schedule changes must be resolved no later than the tenth day of school or the Friday following Open House, whichever is later. Schedule changes for Semester 2 only courses must be resolved no later than the tenth day of school during that semester.

After the no penalty add/drop period ends, all withdrawals will be recorded as a Withdraw Pass (WP) or Withdraw Fail (WF) on the transcript. Grades of WP or WF are not calculated in the GPA. Unless there are extenuating/special circumstances, any student entering a class after the first 10 days of class will be graded as an Audit (AU) for that semester.

Grade Policy Regarding Class Level Changes – If a student is allowed a class level change, after the 10 day no penalty add/drop period, teachers will factor in grades earned by students who change course levels in a specific subject area.

### **College Admissions**

As entrance requirements may vary at different colleges and universities, it behooves the student to study admission requirements closely and plan his/her schedule accordingly. The student's counselor will help you discover specific requirements for any college you may choose.

Admission standards for Massachusetts State Colleges and UMASS are subject to change. The student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) should learn about the requirements and start now to take the classes needed to be accepted into college.

## **Student Attendance**

The West Springfield School District encourages good school attendance, since only through regular attendance can a student take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. We believe in a direct and positive correlation between good school attendance and academic success. Therefore students are expected to be in attendance every day of the school year.

The school system does, however, recognize that occasional absence from school is unavoidable and legitimate.

Responsibility for regular attendance and adherence to district policy lies with the students and parents/guardians. The law requires that the parents/guardians of mandatory school age children (ages six through fifteen inclusive) ensure attendance of their children in accordance with district policy.

Pupils shall attend schools in the district and in accordance with district lines as approved by the School Committee.

Excessive absences, tardiness, and early dismissals have a negative effect on test scores, class participation, and other criteria used by the classroom teacher to establish satisfactory performance. Parents will receive notice when their child is absent or tardy five (5) days cumulative. When a student is absent or tardy for a total of ten (10) days, a meeting may be held with administration. Excessive absences may jeopardize a student's promotion and/or successful course completion. Work and/or educational support services will be provided for students whose absence is excused; the student is expected to complete all such work. The school reserves the right to request a doctor's note in the case of excessive absences. Students who are absent are considered ineligible for participation in any after-school activities.

A note from a parent or guardian must accompany the student upon his/her return from any absence. Arrangements should be made with the classroom teacher to clarify when and how work needs to be completed. It is the responsibility of the student to make up class work missed during any absence. Failure to complete class work will negatively impact a student's grade.

Students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- Observance of major religious holidays
- Legal obligations (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)
- Other - a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school administrator

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee.

In order to receive full credit for a course, a student is required to be in attendance 91% of the class sessions for each course. If a student is absent for more than 8 days for a semester course or 16 days for a yearlong course they may lose credit.

A warning notice/call will be sent at 5 absences in a semester course and 10 absences for a yearlong course.

Students who are in danger of losing credit due to attendance may be able to remediate time through arrangement with the administration.

Students who exceed attendance limits may file an attendance appeal with the high school administration.

First Semester Appeals will be heard in December. Second Semester and Year-Long Appeals will be heard in May (for Seniors) and June for all other students

**Excused absence** from class will not be counted in the total number of days that a student can be absent without losing credit for a course as long as proper documentation is presented to the administration.

**Students must be in school all day (7:20am – 2:00pm) in order to participate in any school activity, including athletics, on or off campus. Unless permission is granted by the Principal or Assistant Principal, students who are tardy, dismissed, absent, or suspended from school may not be on school property or participate in any after-school activity.**

**Tardiness to Class:** When a student is tardy (less than 20 minutes) to the same class 3 times, it will be counted as one absence. If the student is tardy to said class more than 20 minutes, the student will be considered absent from that class.

**Tardiness to School:** When students enter the building tardy they are required to sign in the main office. **Students who are late to school (unexcused) will not be able to participate in any after-school activities on that day.**

**Dismissal from School:**

Request for dismissal must be brought to the main office by 7:20 a.m.

The request must state the student's name, grade, telephone number, and reason for dismissal and time of dismissal.

Telephone dismissals will be allowed only by a parent/guardian.

The school nurse may dismiss students for illness with permission from parent/guardian.

**Truancy:** Unnecessary absence due either to a student's willful decision or a parent/guardian's inability or unwillingness to ensure attendance is a violation of law and district policy. A parent/guardian who supports or enables a chronic pattern of unnecessary absences for children under the age of 16 may be subject to agency or court action. Chronic truancy and excessive absenteeism will result in the filing of a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition in Juvenile Court by the Supervisor of Attendance.

**Student Parking**

**Parking Fee** - The West Springfield School District has authorized a parking fee for all eligible students who drive to and park at West Springfield High School. A **\$30.00** fee for the year or a **\$15.00** fee for second semester will be assessed to any student driving to and parking at West Springfield High School.

The right to bring a car to and from school is a **privilege**. Licensed drivers **without obligations** may drive to school. All school obligations must be satisfied prior to the student receiving their parking permit.

Parking during the school day without a permit or parking privileges may result in a ticket or tow.

Students who are tardy (unexcused) to school more than 6 times during the school year will lose their parking privileges. Parking permits are non-transferable and no refunds will be issued.

Students in violation of the attendance policy may lose their parking privilege.

**Proof of motor vehicle registration is required to obtain a parking pass.**

**All cars must display the authorized permit by the end of the second full week of school.** Students may only park in the area(s) designated as **student parking**. Any vehicle, which is not properly registered or does not display the proper parking permit, is subject to being ticketed and/or towed at the owner's expense. **All towing fees will be paid by and are the responsibility of the car owner directly to the towing company.**



No refunds will be given for any reason, including loss of the driving privileges.

Parking permits are the property of West Springfield High School and may not be transferred or resold. Emergency situations and/or other circumstances requiring short-term parking should be brought to the attention of the school resource officer where special arrangements may be made to accommodate the student's need if space is available.

### **School library**

The library is open from 7:20 - 3:30 p.m. Students may visit the library without a pass before and after school and during their lunch period. The library will follow the school's computer and Internet policies. The use of the computer system is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of this privilege. Books are borrowed for a maximum of two weeks. They may be renewed if not requested. It is the student's responsibility to return materials on time.

**Student Expectations:** Students are expected to be responsible and respectful while using the library. Failure to follow library rules may result in loss of privilege.

**Admission:** Students may visit the library before or after school or during their lunch without a pass. Students may visit during class time with a valid pass and agenda book signed by a teacher, school counselor, administrator, paraprofessional or other staff member.

**Computer:** The library will follow the school's computer and internet policies as they are developed. The use of the computer system is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of this privilege. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for students' use of the West Springfield School District's computer system. An acceptable use policy will be issued to each student and must be signed by both parent and student for access to the West Springfield School District's computer system.

**Circulation:** Books are normally borrowed for a period of 2 weeks. They may be renewed if not requested by someone else.

**Overdue Policy:** It is the student's responsibility to return materials when due. There are no late fines charged for overdue materials, but lost or damaged items will result in the filing of an obligation with the main office. Notices will be sent regarding overdue materials. Lost or Damaged

**Materials:** Students who lose or damage any library items will have to pay for the repair or replacement of that item. If a lost item is found and returned in good condition, a refund will be made less outstanding fines. In order to obtain a refund, you must have your paid receipt.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEES, AND ACTIVITIES**

**Student Government:** Students interested in participating in student government should see their class advisor(s).

**Student Activities/Clubs:** West Springfield High School supports a wide variety of clubs and student organizations. A list of those being offered each year will be provided to students at the beginning of school.

**Springfield Regional Advisory Council:** Two students are elected at large each spring to represent the students at West Springfield High School with the State Department of Education's Student Affairs Office. By virtue of their election, these two students are voting members of the Student Senate.

**Student Representatives to the School Committee:** Any student wishing to run for representative to the School Committee must obtain seventy-five [75] different, valid signatures from the members of the student body in order to have his/her name placed on the ballot. Next to each signature on the nomination paper will be space for the student's home address. These representatives are elected in the spring.

Because their candidacy is voted on by the entire student body, their names appear on the ballots of each class. The five [5] elected representatives communicate the business of the Student Senate to the School Committee and the School Committee business to the Senate. By virtue of their election these five students are voting members of the Student Senate.

**Student Representatives to the City Council:** Any student wishing to run for representative to the City Council must obtain seventy five (75) different, valid signatures from the members of the student body (excluding seniors) in order to have his/her name placed on the ballot. Next to each signature on the nomination paper will be space for the student's home address. These representatives are elected in the spring. Because their candidacy is voted on by the entire student body (excluding seniors), their names appear on the ballots of each class. The one elected representative communicates the business of the High School to the City Council and the City Council's business to the Student Senate. By virtue of this election, this representative is a voting member of the Student Senate.

**Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State** are programs for teaching how government works while developing leadership skills & an appreciation for your rights as a citizen. As a participant in the program, students will run for office, learn public speaking, create and enforce laws and actively participate in all phases of creating and running a working government.

Juniors may apply to the American Legion to attend.

Students who are selected to attend may be exempt from final exams with administrative approval.

### **Honor Societies**

The following organizations are societies designed to honor students who have shown outstanding achievement in academic areas.

### **National Honor Society**

The Via Veritatis Chapter of the National Honor Society was established at West Springfield High School in 1958. Members are chosen every fall from the Junior and Senior classes on the basis of scholarship, leadership, character, and service. Any junior or senior who has a weighted GPA of 3.730 or better is a candidate for selection. No rounding will be applied to the GPA reported by the School Counseling Department. All classes are considered for NHS eligibility, EXCEPT PE and any Pass/Fail course. From these candidates the NHS Faculty Council chooses those who qualify on the basis of leadership, character, and service. All members of the National Honor Society receive certain special privileges which are effective as soon as a member is inducted. Graduating seniors in good standing with the NHS receive the NHS seal on their diplomas and have the privilege to wear the NHS sash during senior awards and graduation ceremony. All members in good standing are also eligible to apply for certain national scholarships. Members must maintain the same standards at all times, or they may be asked to forfeit their membership after a probationary period of one marking term. The date of new members' induction is scheduled during the fall semester in any academic year.

The selection procedure is:

Students' academic records are reviewed to determine scholastic eligibility.

Students who are eligible scholastically are notified in writing and are told that for further consideration for selection to the National Honor Society Chapter they must complete the formal New Member Application that will be provided to them along with the invitation letter.

Because additional faculty input is beneficial, all faculty members are invited to make comments on candidates. However, the actual selections are made by the five appointed members of the Faculty Council.

The New Member Application Form is reviewed anonymously by the Faculty Council, along with any other verifiable information about each candidate. Candidates receiving a majority vote of the Faculty Council will be inducted in the Chapter during a formal induction ceremony.

Candidates not selected have the option of following the NHS appeal protocol if they are not satisfied with the Faculty Council's decision.

Interested candidates are highly encouraged to attend one of the pre-application informational sessions, to become familiar with the NHS pillars, the member application form and the selection and appeal process.

### **Pro Merito Society**

This society includes all seniors that are not already members of the National Honor Society who have achieved a non-weighted average of ninety [90.0] or better through the first three [3] terms of their senior year. No rounding will be applied to the cumulative averages reported by guidance. For example a student whose cumulative average is 89.999 will not be eligible for admission to Pro Merito. The senior must be carrying at least twenty-eight [28] academic credits during that school year. As all other Honors distinctions, the Pro- Merito status requires NO grade of less than 70 in any course. Additionally, no withdrawal fail (WF) in any course is permitted and Pass/Fail courses are not considered when determining Honor Roll or Pro- Merito status.

The purpose of this society is recognition of the scholastic achievement of seniors who meet this standard.

### **Renaissance Program**

#### **GUIDELINES:**

1. Students must be enrolled for a full term before being eligible for Renaissance privileges.
2. Community service forms are due no later than two weeks after the close of grades and by the end of the school year for term four.
3. Any suspension results in immediate loss of card.
4. Misuse of card, cheating, plagiarism or other acts of academic dishonesty, or any disciplinary problems will result in the loss of the card for that term.
5. Only one card is issued per term. Lost cards will be replaced for one dollar.
6. Eligibility will be determined at the end of each term. Privileges will continue until report cards are issued for each subsequent term.
7. Any problems or questions of eligibility, attendance, or disciplinary actions need to be resolved within two weeks of issuance of cards each term.
8. Determination of absences and tardies are made based on school records. Only documented medical absence for an extended period of time may receive special consideration for receiving a Renaissance Card for that term.

### **Gold Card**

#### **A. REQUIREMENTS**

Must carry minimum course load of 25 credits for full term; no withdrawals beyond the time allowed by school policy;

Term average of 85 or higher with no failures;

No more than three unexcused tardies or 5 unexcused absences per term;

No administrative disciplinary action (points assigned, suspension, detention);

Participation in a community service project or an extracurricular school activity as assigned by advisors/counselors.

## **B. PRIVILEGES:**

**Cards must be presented with your picture I.D. to receive the benefits.**

Discount admission [\$1.00] to home athletic events, excluding playoffs/tournaments.

**Exam Exemption:** 1st term holder will be exempt from two mid-year exams, provided that the student maintains a 90 average in those courses for the semester. *Also requires teacher permission.* 3rd term holder will be exempt from two end of the year exams, which cannot be in the same courses where an exemption was taken at mid-term. The student must also maintain a 90 average for the semester and have the *permission of the teacher.*

### **Foreign Language Honor Societies**

The Foreign Language Honor Societies have been established at West Springfield High School to honor those students who demonstrated outstanding ability in any given foreign language. The societies are the Latin, French, German, Italian, and Spanish National Honor Societies. The societies abide by the minimum requirements established by each National Charter. The Foreign Language Department chairperson and the teacher/advisor have available a complete list of the membership criteria.

## **ATHLETICS**

The Interscholastic Athletic Program is an integral component of the total educational curriculum of the school system. Participants are expected to govern themselves in a manner which will bring honor to all members of the sport and to the school. Participants are expected to train consistently, to abide by all training rules as directed by the coach, and to abide by the rules and regulations of the student body. In order to participate in sports, pupils must meet all standards set forth by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

**Physicals** – A physical exam is required for all students who wish to tryout/participate in a school sport. It must be on file in the Nurse's office prior to tryouts or practice. Sports physicals are required yearly. It is recommended that schedule a physical exam during the summer if possible so that the student will have a valid exam for the entire school year.

**Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility:** West Springfield High School is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). In order to be eligible, a student athlete must have received a passing grade (60% or higher) in six of the seven courses in which the student is enrolled and maintained an overall term average of 65% or higher on his/her most recent report card. Students who have a shortened school day due to early release must be enrolled in and pass 5 classes (with an overall 65% or higher average) in order to be eligible.

Seniors final report card is issued on the day of graduation and they are subject to eligibility determination at that point.

**2021-22 Fall Sports Only:** Each student must have received a passing grade in all but one class in which the student was enrolled **and** have maintained an overall final grade average of 65% or higher from the previous school year's **final grades**. A student may make up two failing grade during summer school and the summer school grade will replace the failing grade when calculating the 60% overall average requirement. All summer school rules and requirements apply.

All students entering grade 9 for the first time are considered automatically eligible for high school athletic participation and competition.

The violation of any eligibility rule may result in forfeiture of a game won or the elimination of a player from participation for up to one year. A mistake could spoil a season. If there is any doubt concerning eligibility, consult the principal. The rules apply to all teams [varsity, junior varsity, and freshman], to all grades, and to both girls' and boys' sports.

**WSHS Athletics Teams:**

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Soccer	Basketball	Baseball
Cross Country	Swimming	Track
Football	Wrestling	Tennis
Field Hockey	Cheerleading	Volleyball
Golf	Skiing	Lacrosse
Cheerleading	Ice Hockey	Softball
Volleyball	Indoor Track	

**STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY****ATHLETIC CONCUSSIONS****Medical/Nursing Review of Reports of Head Injury during the Season:**

The following procedures will be followed when an athlete receives a head injury:

The athlete is removed from the contest or practice.

The athletic trainer conducts a Standardized Assessment of Concussion and completes the “Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form”

If athletic trainer is not available, the coach completes the “Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form”

The certified athletic trainer/coach will give “Report of Head Injury during Sports Season Form” to Director of Athletics and the school nurse.

School nurse will contact athlete’s school counselor.

**Procedure for Reporting Head Injuries:**

Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play. Head injuries or suspected concussions (after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body) sustained during extracurricular athletic activities must be reported by the coach as soon as possible to the athletic trainer.

If an athlete sustains a sports-related head injury, including a suspected concussion, the athletic trainer or coach will notify parents immediately and the school nurse and appropriate school staff prior to the start of the next school day.

Any athlete who is symptomatic but stable is allowed to go home with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

If the head injury occurs at practice, parent/guardian(s) will immediately be notified and must come and pick up the student athlete and talk to the certified athletic trainer in person.

If the injury occurs at a game or even the student athlete may go home with the parent(s)/guardian(s) after talking with the certified athletic trainer or coach.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive important information regarding signs and symptoms of deteriorating brain injury/function prompting immediate referral to a local emergency room as well as return to play requirements.

All students returning to school and athletics after a concussion will have a plan for reentry. School staff, such as teachers, school nurses, counselors, administrators, speech-language pathologists, coaches and others should work together to develop and implement this plan in coordination with the student, their parent/guardian and the primary care provider.

Graduated return to athletic plans will begin only after a student has returned to full participation in academics and is completely symptom-free at rest. (For more information refer to Policies JJIF and JJIF-R)

## **FACE COVERINGS**

File: EBCFA

Effective immediately, public school students (age 5 and above), visitors and staff in all grades are required to wear masks indoors in schools, except when eating, drinking, or during mask breaks. By federal public health order, all students and staff are required to wear a mask on school buses. Masks should cover an individual's nose and mouth.

The West Springfield School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

For those choosing cloth face masks, they should be made of 2 or more layers of washable, breathable fabric, must cover the nose and mouth, fit snugly against the side of the face and be secured with ties or earloops. Masks should allow for breathing without restriction and be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

There should be no vents in masks. Gaiters, bandanas and hand knit masks are not acceptable.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:  
during mask breaks;  
while eating or drinking;

All face coverings must comply with the dress code provisions of the student handbook. Mask guidance will be updated according to Massachusetts Department of Public Health and CDC recommendations.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- in incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

### **Medical Exemptions:**

Students and staff who cannot wear a mask for documented medical reasons, and students who cannot wear a mask for documented behavioral reasons, may be exempted from the requirement. A written note from the student's physician is required for an exemption which must be approved by the school principal in consultation with the school nurse/school physician or 504 process.

### **Mask Compliance:**

Positive behavioral interventions, conferencing between families and school administration and progressive discipline will be used to address student non-compliance with this policy. Only after these steps are taken may a student be removed from the school building until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility. [S.C. approved 8/31/21]

**NOTE:** The mask requirement will be in place until at least October 1, 2021, and is subject to change thereafter.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS**

File: JLCD

### **Prescription Medications**

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

### **Exceptions:**

The school district shall, through the Director of Health Services, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of Epi-pens.

The school district may, in conjunction with the school physician and the director of health services, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

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

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

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

### **Over the Counter Medications**

With parent/guardian permission, your child's school nurse may administer over the counter (OTC) medication to your child according to established protocols. The parent/guardian may choose which OTC medications they want the school nurse to use, if needed. No OTC medication will be given at school without a parent/guardian signature. [s.c. approved 8/17/21]

## **IMMUNIZATIONS OF STUDENTS**

File: JLCB

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school district, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent/guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent/guardian, which must be renewed annually at the start of the school year. Student immunizations must be up to date in accordance with the Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements. [s.c. approved 8/17/21]

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND SCREENINGS OF STUDENTS**

File: JLCA

It is the policy of the school district that parents/guardians will provide documentation of physical examinations from their child's physician for students in the kindergarten and grades four, seven and ten and to provide documentation of a current physical examination upon enrollment.

Since family physicians have a comprehensive knowledge of the health stature of their student patients, parents/guardians should have their doctor perform the examination. (MA DPH 105 CMR 200.000)

Students will receive screenings in school according to the guidelines and schedules developed by the Massachusetts Department of Health. Results of screenings will be reported to parents/guardians per state regulations. Parents/guardians may request annually, in writing, that their child not participate in the program. In addition, non-identifiable aggregate data from screenings may be used to support the health of students. [s.c. approved 8/17/21]

## **Parental Notification of Family Life Education**

The Family Life Health curriculum includes the discussion of topics in family living which includes limited information about sexual reproduction, pregnancy prevention, and sexually transmitted disease with an overall focus on abstinence. Each topic is designed for the appropriate grade and maturation level of our students. Additionally, the entire curriculum is reviewed and approved by the West Springfield Curriculum Review Team, Health Teachers, Administration and School Committee.

The curriculum is available for your review through the Health Teacher or the Health Coordinator. Please feel free to make an appointment with them to discuss any questions or concerns which you may have, and/or view the content of this curriculum. If you wish to exempt your child from any portion of this curriculum, please provide written notification to the School Principal. No child so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption.

## **Health Surveys**

Periodically throughout the year, there may be youth risk behavior type surveys conducted at the high school. If you want to exclude your child from participating in these surveys, contact the Principal at the beginning of the school year.

## **Health Hotlines**

AIDS/HIV 1-800-235-2331  
Alcoholics Anonymous 532-2111  
Cocaine Hotline 1-800-262-2463  
DSS Hotline 1-800-792-5200  
Narcotics Anonymous 538-7479  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800- 273- 8255  
Overeaters Anonymous 783-4198  
Parental Stress 1-800-632-8188  
COMPANERAS [Teen Dating Violence] 536-1628

ALATEEN 782-3406  
Ambulance/Emergency 911  
Drug Abuse 731-7417  
Eating Disorders 1-617-738-7917  
Westfield Crisis 568-6386  
  
Runaway Hotline 1-800-621-4000  
Pregnancy Counseling 733-6639



**Fire Drills/Evacuations**

Depending on the circumstance, it may be necessary to quickly evacuate the building. In this event the fire alarm will sound in all corridors. When the fire alarm sounds everyone should promptly clear the building by the posted route as quickly as possible. The teacher in each classroom will give the students instructions. These procedures should be posted in each room and will be reviewed and practiced periodically through drills.

**Lockdown/Stay-in-place**

Depending on the circumstance, it may be necessary to have all students remain in the classroom for their safety. In this event either the “lockdown” or “stay in place” command will be given over the intercom.

“Lockdown” – When “lockdown” is called there is an immediate threat and all students should follow the lockdown procedures and attempt to conceal their location.

“Stay in place” – When “stay in place” is called there is not an immediate threat, but students should not be in the common areas of the building. Students should remain in their classroom but the class should continue as usual.

These procedures should be posted in each room and will be reviewed and practiced periodically through drills.

**Tobacco Free Zone**

Use of any tobacco products or tobacco related products such as e-cigarettes or vaping devices within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds, including vehicles or school busses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

**Alcoholic Beverages in School**

Chapter 272, Section 40A. Whoever gives, sells, delivers or has in his possession any alcoholic beverage, except for medicinal purposes, in any public school building, or on any premises used for public school purposes and under the charge of a school committee or other public board or officer, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than thirty days or by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars, or both; provided, however, that a school committee of a city, town or district may authorize a public or nonprofit organization using a public school building with its permission during non-school hours to possess and sell alcoholic beverages therein provided such nonprofit organization is properly licensed under the provisions of section fourteen of chapter one hundred and thirty-eight.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

*It is impossible to define in advance every possible situation. The administration will take appropriate action when a situation occurs that is not specifically addressed in the code.*

If, due to budgetary constraints or other prevailing circumstances, specific options or programs contained within the Student Code of Conduct are unavailable, either parallel measures or the next progressive option of discipline will be administered.

***This Code of Conduct is in effect on school grounds, and at all school functions including field trips and athletic events.***

Parents will be contacted when deemed appropriate by the Administration.

The discipline system is a graduated step system in which students will be assigned detention/suspension for violation of school rules and policies.

***In extreme cases, additional and more severe measures may be applied.***

The level of disciplinary consequence will be at the discretion of the Administration.

However, due consideration will be given by the Administration as to the level of severity and frequency of the infraction and the corresponding severity of the penalty imposed.

Please be advised that some student conduct may have athletic eligibility implications that the high school must enforce. For more information, please consult the MIAA blue book which can be found at [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net).

Field trips are a privilege not a right and student participation may be denied for academic, attendance and/or discipline related issues.

Students attending any school sponsored events are expected to follow all applicable school rules and policies.

## **RULES & REGULATIONS REGARDING STUDENT CONDUCT**

In order to maintain a safe, orderly, healthy, and educationally sound environment, certain standards of behavior are expected. The individual student is expected to conduct himself/herself in a manner befitting a responsible young adult.

Whenever it is deemed necessary, teachers and administrators may act to discipline students whose conduct or character is detrimental or inappropriate. Parents and students should be aware that in situations when student conduct is such that disciplinary measures are necessary, the disciplinary process will be supported by the principal, the superintendent and the School Committee. When appropriateness of such action is questioned, the student will have the right to appeal.

School principals and administrators are authorized to suspend a student. For designated offenses, the principal is authorized to expel or exclude a student. The suspension may be internal or external as determined by an administrator. Under certain circumstances the Superintendent also has the authority to expel or exclude a student.

In most cases, discipline will be based upon the disciplinary consequences listed in this handbook. However, the Principal retains discretion to impose discipline of a different length (longer or shorter), or impose some other penalty based upon the specific circumstances of each case. (Duperé Law Office 8/10/21)

Disciplinary and/or corrective action will be taken as soon as possible following completion of an investigation of a violation of the school's code of conduct, a school policy, and an incident of discrimination and/or harassment, and will have as its goal the elimination of the offensive conduct, the prevention of reoccurrence, and the re-establishment of a healthy school environment, especially for the victim(s). Such action will take into account the severity of the incident and the age and identity of the victim and harasser, and the effect upon the victim.

The Administration will consider factors such as frequency of prior infractions and the students standing in the school before rendering such decisions.

## **EXPLANATION OF DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

**Teacher Detention** is assigned by a teacher for disciplinary reasons within the class room. Times and length of the detention are determined by the teacher. Failure to serve teacher detention will result in a referral to the administration.

**Lunch Detention** is held during a student's assigned lunch block. Students will eat in this designated area.

**Office detention** Students are required to arrive at 2:05 p.m. to the assigned space in the high school and remain until 2:50. Students must remain for the entire detention in order to receive credit. Sleeping,

talking, using headphones or other electronic devices will not be allowed during detention. Failure to serve assigned office detention will result in additional discipline. If a student does not serve detention due to dismissal or absence they will serve the next school day the student is present.

**In-House Detention (IHD)** is held in a specially designated area for six periods of the school day. Academic work will be provided by the student's teachers and subject area teachers will be available during the day for support. If a student does not serve the entire detention due to illness or dismissal, or is absent on the assigned day they may be asked to serve IHD the next school day the student is present. Sleeping, talking, using headphones or other electronic devices will not be allowed during IHD. Students who are assigned IHD will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on the day it is served.

**Diversion** is a program run by the School Resource Officer (SRO) in the spirit of restorative justice and used in place of traditional discipline when deemed appropriate.

**Transitional Alternative Program (TAP)** is a full day educational program held off campus at the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative. This program is used in special circumstances instead of, or in combination with external suspension, at the discretion of the administration. A student who is assigned TAP will not be allowed to return to school until the required number of days has been served.

**External Suspension** forbids students from attending school or any school related function/activity on the day it is assigned.

**Chronic Defiance** is the willful and repeated violation of any rule. Students who are repeatedly and or chronically in violation of the student handbook as determined by the frequency and/or severity of infractions will be considered chronically defiant. The administration will notify parents when a student's behavior is deemed chronically defiant. Chronic defiance may result in suspension for all subsequent infractions.

**Expulsion** is a permanent or long-term exclusion from school after a due process hearing.

#### DISCIPLINE CODE

Violation	1st Offense	Subsequent Offense(s)
<b>Bus Misconduct</b>	Warning/reprimand/ Removal	Repeated offenses may result in suspension of riding privileges from 1 week through remainder of year.
<b>Consumption of food or drink outside cafeteria.</b>	Warning /reprimand or Office Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Public Displays of Affection.</b>	Warning/reprimand and contact parent/guardian.	Office Detention In-House Detention
<b>Dangerous Acts</b> <b>[i.e.-Shoving/throwing objects]</b> <b>Throwing of objects in cafeteria.</b>	Office Detention or In-House Detention depending on severity.	1-5 Days Suspension

<b>Defiance/Insubordination</b> <b>Failure to follow a reasonable administrative request</b>	In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Disrespect/Insolence</b>	In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Disruptive Behavior</b>	Office Detention	In-House Detention 1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Electronic Device Violation</b>	Office Detention *may include confiscation of device.	In House Detention: All subsequent violations require parent/guardian to pick up device.
<b>Out of class without pass.</b>	Office Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Failure to identify/false identification/refusal to identify.</b>	Office Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Failure to report to administration upon request.</b>	In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Failure to serve a teacher detention.</b>	Office Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Failure to serve office detention.</b>	Additional Office Detention(s) or In House Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Forgery/alteration of school documents. (i.e. Pass)</b>	Office Detention or In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Gambling</b>	In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Inappropriate Dress</b>	Warning/reprimand. Change of clothes required. Contact parent /guardian and/or sent home.	Office Detention In-House Detention
<b>Leaving school grounds without permission.</b>	In-House Detention NHS advisor notified.	1-5 Days Suspension

	Loss of driving privileges as determined by Administration.	
<b>Possession/distribution of inappropriate/ disruptive or pornographic material.</b>	In-House Detention Confiscation of material.	1-5 days suspension
<b>Profanity, obscene language or gestures, demeaning remarks.</b>	Office Detention or In-House Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Fighting words or threats between / among students.</b>	In-House Detention or Suspension	1-5 Days Suspension
<b>Unapproved sale of food, drink or candy during school hours.</b>	Warning/reprimand. Confiscation of goods, returned only to parent /guardian.	Office Detention In-House Detention
<b>Vandalism</b>	In-House Detention or up to 3-5 Days Suspension. Restitution and contact parent /guardian.	5-10 Days Suspension and restitution.
<b>Cheating/Copying</b>	Zero credit for assignment. Parent and admin notified by teacher. NHS advisor notified if applicable.	In-House detention. Zero for assignments. Parent and administration notified by teacher.
<b>On campus motor vehicle violation.</b>	In house detention. Loss of driving privileges to be determined by administration.	Loss of driving privileges. 1-5 Days Suspension Resource officer informed.
<b>Loitering (see student hours)</b>	Office Detention	In-House Detention
<b>Continued and willful disobedience of school rules.</b>	In-House Detention	1-5 Days Suspension

UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES/TARDY FROM SCHOOL OR CLASS		
Violation	First Offense	Subsequent Offense(s)
Class/Assembly Cut	Office Detention	In-House detention
Unexcused Tardy to School	3X per semester = Office Detention	6X per semester = IHD and loss of parking privilege.* Every 3 additional tardies per semester may result in IHD. (9, 12, 15...)
*Loss of parking privilege is cumulative and does not reset each semester.		
Full/Partial day truancy	In-house detention <i>No credit on all missed work</i>	
Standardized Testing Infraction - Any student who violates standardized testing procedures will be subject to progressive discipline up to and including external suspension.		
IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION MAY RESULT FROM THE FOLLOWING OFFENSES: <i>Additional criminal charges may also be filed</i>		
Violation		
Alcoholic Beverage: use, possession, under the influence of.	10 Day Suspension and possible expulsion.	
Alcoholic Beverage: Selling/distribution of.	10 Day Suspension and possible expulsion.	
Arson	Suspension, restitution, and possible expulsion. Criminal charges may be filed	
Drugs and Controlled Substances: use, possession, selling, distribution, or possession of paraphernalia	Suspension and a letter recommending expulsion to the School Committee. <i>Criminal charges may be filed</i>	
Drugs and Controlled Substances: Under the influence of.	Suspension and a letter recommending expulsion to the School Committee. <i>Criminal charges may be filed</i>	
Fighting/Assault:		
Spontaneous incident: up to 30 Days Suspension		
Incident with prior motivation and/or ill feelings: 5-30 Days Suspension		
Incident with clear evidence of provocation: 5-30 Days Suspension		
[The student provoked may be, but does not have to be, suspended]		
Prearranged fight incident: 5-30 Days Suspension		
Fighting on school grounds, second offense: 10-30 Days Suspension		

<b>Fighting outside of school: If the problem began in school, it is considered a school matter. School discipline may result.</b> <i>In all fights, the police department will be notified for possible further action. Court action may be brought for disrupting the school.</i>	
<b>Hate Crime: Any offense which results in a “hate crime” which is any criminal act coupled with overt actions motivated by bigotry and bias. 10 days suspension and possible expulsion.</b> <i>Criminal charges may be filed.</i>	
<b>Hazing</b>	External Suspension and possible expulsion.
<b>Indecent exposure or lewd conduct or behavior</b>	External Suspension and possible expulsion. Resource Officer Notified.
<b>Possession of dangerous devices/weapons</b>	Long term suspension up to and including expulsion from the school. School Resource Officer notified.
<b>Profanity toward/verbal abuse of staff.</b>	Up to 10 Days External Suspension
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	See sexual harassment policy (File: ACAB)
<b>Smoking/Tobacco Use: (District Pol. ADC)</b> <b>Including chewing tobacco, vaping, electronic cigarettes or related devices.</b>	Up to 5 day suspension or participation in Diversion Program; MIAA Violation; mandatory parent/guardian communication. *Resource Officer notified; devices will be tested for THC and if present will be considered a drug offense. *Chronic Defiance may be fined per M.G.L. c. 270, sec. 22(j)
<b>Theft</b>	Restitution & up to 10 days suspension for each offense.
<b>Threat Against School/Students: Any threat of harm against the school, faculty/staff or other students, written, verbal, on social media or other, will be considered genuine and treated accordingly. Making such a threat will result in immediate external Suspension and depending on circumstances possible expulsion. The police department will be notified.</b>	
<b>Use of racial, religious, ethnic, gender, or sexual orientation slurs or symbols that demean others.</b>	Written apology and up to 10 days suspension. Resource Officer notified.

The Mass Ed Reform Act requires that all public students take **MCAS** tests.

Any student who **refuses** to participate in this testing requirement are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension from school.

***Accessory to a violation of the disciplinary code:*** a person who assists in the commission of a violation, but who does not actually participate in the commission of the violation as a joint principal. The accessory to the violation (before, during, or after) will face the same disciplinary penalty as the principal offender.

## **INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES/SEARCHES BY STAFF**

File: JIH

Lockers, desks, computers, books and other items issued to students by the School District for their temporary use remain the sole and exclusive property of the West Springfield Public Schools. As such students should have no expectation of privacy as it relates to their use. The right of inspection including the use of canines to detect contraband in accordance with Policy JIH-R of students' school lockers, desks and other school property as well as vehicles driven and/or parked by students on school grounds is inherent in the authority granted to School Committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised at the sole discretion of Administration for such purposes such as, safeguarding students and staff and in the protection of students, staff and school property.

Administration reserves the right to search school property. Administration may, at their sole discretion, determine that it is practicable and warranted under the circumstances to make an attempt to contact the student prior to the search and provide the student with the opportunity to open the locker, desk, or other storable item/location, in the presence of one (1) or more school administrator(s) and allow the student to remove the contents for inspection by the administrator(s). Administration may confiscate any contraband found on or within school property. Confiscated contraband may be reported to local law enforcement who may further prosecute the matter.

Administration retains keys and/or combinations to all locks provided by the district for purposes of checking lockers when appropriate. When students choose to provide their own locks for placement on their lockers, the administration will be given a duplicate key and/or the combination for such locks for purposes of checking items in their lockers. Students are prohibited from bringing contraband or other items which are not appropriate for a public school environment onto school grounds, into the school building, to a school-related function, or onto a school transportation vehicle. Any student found to possess contraband shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Students shall not share lockers or allow others to store anything in their lockers. Students should not divulge their locker combinations to any other student. If an item is found within a student's locker, that item will be presumed to belong to the student's whose locker the item was located in.

The administration reserves the right to search vehicles driven and/or parked by students on school grounds without advance notice.

When an administrator or his/her designee has reasonable suspicion that contraband (including, but not limited to, illegal drugs, weapons, alcoholic beverages, stolen property, etc.) is being stored on a student's person or is in the student's possession, he/she may conduct a reasonable search which is reasonably related to the nature of the potential violation. The School Administration may conduct interviews with students as a part of the School's investigations.

It is the general policy of the West Springfield Public Schools to cooperate with law enforcement and social service agencies. When law enforcement officials (e.g., police, fire department) make a request to question students as part of an investigation during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, school administration will attempt to contact the student's parent(s) and/or guardian so that



the responsible individual may be notified of the situation. The school principal or his/her designee will be present for such questioning if the school principal or his/her designee determines being present is appropriate. When a student is removed from the school by legal authority, school officials shall attempt to notify the student's parent(s) and/or guardian. [s.c. approved 8/24/21]

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

### **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

#### **(Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively)**

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses, provided that the student has the opportunity to make academic progress and the Principal follows the following procedures:

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 ten (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 two (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 for the purpose set forth above, 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.

### **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)**

Some infractions are of such a serious nature that immediate and severe action is warranted. Suspension is the temporary exclusion from the regular school program for a specified number of days. The number of suspension days assigned is determined by the administration and depends on the nature of the case and your disciplinary record.

*Because of our commitment to make discipline more effective and to keep students in their classes, we will use suspensions rarely and only in seriously disruptive situations or when a student owes an excessive number of hours of detentions.*

Out-of-School Suspension will be imposed for serious incidents including, but not limited to: fights, drugs, alcohol, weapons, or other very serious offenses deemed so by the administration. Police may be involved in any instance which requires Out-of-School Suspension. Before a student is suspended from school, he or she is first given an informal hearing by an administrator. During the time of out-of-school suspension, a student may not participate in any sports practices and games, or extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, a student must stay off school grounds during this time. In cases of a serious nature, OSS will begin immediately. Otherwise, OSS will be in effect for twenty-four hours for each day of suspension from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. the next school day. Students are allowed to make up all missed work. Chronic school offenders may be referred to the juvenile court for further action.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL**

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing 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 temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

The principal shall not remove a student from the West Springfield High School until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation, and immediate and reasonable efforts are made to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

### **EXPULSION**

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

Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long-term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

### **DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS/EXPULSIONS**

Any principal or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

#### **Due Process for Certain Disciplinary Consequences:**

##### **I. Suspensions of Ten Days or Fewer**

Unless emergency circumstances dictate otherwise, the following procedure will be followed for suspensions of ten days or fewer.

The student will receive a letter in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student, indicating the intent to suspend which will include: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the

potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; and the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. The principal, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting.

At the hearing, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be told the nature of the charges, and have an opportunity to respond. The principal will make a decision based upon information presented by the student, further investigation if required, and evidence already known to the principal. If the principal determines that a suspension is warranted, he/she will notify the student of the nature and duration of the suspension verbally and in writing, and, if the student previously denied the charges, the principal will supply an explanation of the basis of his/her finding.

The school will make every effort to notify parents/guardians of the suspension by telephone immediately, and will, in all cases, notify them in writing.

In most cases, suspensions will be based upon the disciplinary consequences listed in this handbook. However, the principal retains discretion to impose a suspension of a different length (longer or shorter), or impose some other penalty based upon the circumstances of the case.

In all cases, once a student has been assigned to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to take part in or attend any school-related function or activity. This remains in effect until the student has officially returned to school from suspension. Suspension days will be counted as excused absences. Students who are suspended will be given the number of days they are out to make up their work.

## **II. Suspensions in Excess of Ten Days or Expulsion**

For cases involving suspensions in excess of ten days, expulsion, or indefinite suspensions based upon the issuance of a felony criminal complaint, the following procedure will be followed:

The Principal will notify the student in writing in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student, of the reasons for a suspension in excess of ten days or expulsion. The notice will include the information set forth in Section I. for "Suspensions of Ten Days or Fewer," as well as the following additional student rights: 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 in advance of the hearing; 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; and the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent 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.

The student will be allowed a hearing, prior to the suspension/expulsion taking effect except where circumstances make it necessary to impose the suspension prior to such a hearing. (Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, incarceration of student, refusal of student to attend the hearing, or

where the student poses an unreasonable danger to the welfare of the school). In cases involving a felony criminal complaint, the principal may decide to take action without a hearing.

The principal, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting.

The Principal will issue a prompt written decision setting forth findings on whether the student committed an offense and if so, the penalty awarded. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

Suspensions will be of a definite duration, except when based upon a pending felony criminal complaint. For suspensions in excess of ten days, educational services will be provided.

### **Superintendent Appeals**

A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

## **MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW, c. 71, §37H**

By State Law the following procedure is followed in certain cases of serious student misconduct as specified below:

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- (d) Any student who has been expelled from the school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- (e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under Section 21 of Chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its school or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under Section 21 of Chapter 76.
- (f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools as necessary to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of Elementary and Secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.
- (g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the Commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

## **FELONY COMPLAINT OR CONVICTION OF STUDENT; SUSPENSION; EXPULSION, RIGHT TO APPEAL (M.G.L., c. 71 §37H 1/2)**

- (1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension

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

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

- (2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to an appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

### **Discipline and Special Education Students**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. However, students eligible for special education are entitled to certain additional protections under state and federal law.

Specifically, these laws include M.G.L. c. 71B and its implementing regulations (603 CMR 28.00) and 20 USC 1401 et.seq. ("IDEA") and its implementing regulations (34 CFR 300 et. seq.).

Students eligible for special education who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten school days per school year, to the extent that such removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability.

Any time school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten school days in a school year, this constitutes a "change of placement" and invokes certain procedural rights including but not limited to a review by the IEP Team of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is referred to as a

Manifestation Determination. The Team will determine whether the student's misconduct is a direct and substantial manifestation of the student's disabilities, or results from an inappropriate special education program/placement or an IEP that was not fully implemented. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis before deciding whether a change in placement is warranted. Depending on the result of the determination, exclusion may or may not be implemented.

If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability the student's Team must convene within 10 days to revise the IEP to reflect a new program or placement designed to meet the student's needs more effectively, or, if the misconduct resulted from an appropriate IEP that was not fully implemented, all necessary steps shall be taken to ensure that the IEP is fully implemented. The student will also be returned to his educational placement unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.

If a new program or placement is designed for the student as a result of the review, the program or placement shall be implemented immediately following parental approval of the IEP. If the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) refuse consent to the IEP, the school or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may request a hearing to determine the appropriateness of the proposed program. Alternatively the parties may seek mediation to resolve the dispute. If a hearing is requested, during the pendency of the hearing, the student shall remain in his/her last agreed upon educational placement, unless another placement is agreed upon by the school and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), or a court or hearing officer's order permits the school to change the student's placement based on a showing the student's continued presence in school presents a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be removed from his educational placement to the same extent that a regular education student would be removed, provided that the school shall: (1) conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment and develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan, (2) Provide an appropriate interim alternative educational plan for the delivery of services to the student during the period of exclusion; and (3) Present the interim alternative educational plan to the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s). A copy of the interim alternative educational plan must be included in the student's file, which shall also include documentation which demonstrates that: (1) the school has complied with all required procedures; (2) the disciplinary action is for a stated number of days; (3) the action is necessary in light of the needs of the student and others; (4) the school administrators have conferred with appropriate special education staff as to the disciplinary action and have followed all the procedures outlined herein including notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right of appeal.

There are certain situations in which school personnel may order a change in placement of a special education student without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. These situations include when a special education student:

1. Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency;
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

In these situations, school personnel may remove the special education student to an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. A student

may also be placed in such a setting on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is substantially likely to injure him/herself or others.

If a special education student commits an offense, which causes the student to be expelled from school, the school district continues to be responsible for providing the student with a free appropriate public education in another educational setting.

For more information regarding the rights of special education students see the Massachusetts Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards Notice, which is available in many languages, at [www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/). Additionally, copies of the state and federal special education laws are available online at the Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals website, at [www.doe.mass.edu/bsca/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsca/) or can be requested from the Director of Special Education at 978-249-2403.

### **Discipline of Students not yet Eligible for Special Education**

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for special education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if, before the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the student's school or to a teacher of the student that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
2. The parent requested an evaluation of the student; or
3. District staff expressed, directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel, specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be deemed to have had knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student was completed and resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If the district had no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities. However, if an evaluation is requested during the time period in which the student is subjected to these disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner.

### **Discipline of Students of 504 Plans**

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten consecutive school days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for eligible 504 students are the same as those afforded to special education students. Please contact the principal of the School.

### **Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.



Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### **Collection and Review of Discipline Data**

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

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

## **RELEVANT LAWS AND SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST HAZING**

File: JICFA

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

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

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

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, be subject to appropriate discipline.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process. [S.C. approved 8/31/21]

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

### **A. General Provisions**

The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school.

The rights outlined below may be exercised by the parent/guardian of the student (for a student under the age of 14 years), or jointly by the student and the parent/guardian of the student (if the student is over the age of 14 years). A student 14 years of age or older, or who has entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade is called “an eligible student”. A student 18 years or older may, in writing, deny his/her parents/guardians access to his/her student record, with the exception of transcripts, report cards and/or progress reports.

Each eligible student and parent/guardian has the right to see his or her own student records. Copies of records may be obtained upon request and shall be provided within ten (10) days of the request.

The student’s record is available to school contracted personnel who work directly with the student. This includes administrators, teachers, counselors, administrative office, staff and clerical personnel. They do not need permission to see student records.

Information in a student’s record is not available to anyone outside the school system without written permission from the student and/or parent and/or guardian, unless the requesting party is entitled to such information through an exception as provided by the Student Records regulations. However, students and parents will generally be notified before these records are released. A written release must be signed to have any part of the student record sent outside the school when an exception does not apply. This includes, but it not limited to prospective employers, other technical schools, and colleges.

An eligible student and parent/guardian have the right to request to add relevant information to the student’s record as well as the right to request removal of information believed to be untrue or incorrect.

### **B. Directory Information Notice**

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

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (7) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors and awards received.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. When a parent or eligible student has provided notice that they do not wish for their directory information to be shared, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the principal on or before the 15th day of each September.

In the event that a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

### **C. Recruiter Access to Students and Student Information**

The law provides secondary schools shall give access to secondary school students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, when requested by military recruiters or an institution of higher education. A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student’s name, address, and

telephone listing not be released without prior written parental consent, and the school shall comply with any such request.

**D. Rights of Parents without Custody**

It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order so that the school system may identify which of the parents has custody of the child. If a parent does not have custody of a child, then the parent will not be allowed to access the records of his/her child unless the parent submits a written request for the student record to the school principal (this request must be submitted annually).

Upon receipt of the request the school will immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access. Such documentation prohibiting the non-custodial parent from accessing these records would need to indicate one of the following:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation;
2. The parent has been denied visitation;
3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record; or
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The school will delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

**E. Amending Your Child's Record**

1. A parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student's record. The parent should submit the additional information in writing to the principal with a written request that the information be added to the student record.
2. A parent has the right to request in writing deletion or correction of any information contained in the student's record, except for information which was inserted into that record by the TEAM. Such information inserted by the TEAM shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:
  - a) If a parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
  - b) The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.
  - c) If the principal's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeal shall be in writing and submitted to the Superintendent

- within five (5) business days of receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.
- d) If the Superintendent's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing on the appeal as required by 603 CMR §23.09(4).

#### **F. Notice on Transfer to Other Schools**

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

#### **G. Destruction of Records**

1. Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or the parent/guardian of such destruction.
2. In addition, each year, the principal and/or teachers and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions/expulsions/exclusions), any notes from the parent/guardian, or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian want those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them.

#### **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The West Springfield School District reaffirms that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or exercise of civil rights in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs or activities. The West Springfield School District also affirms its commitment to maintain a school and work environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or exercise of civil rights. Any harassment on the basis of sex, race, national origin, religion, age, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or exercise of civil rights will not be tolerated.

If you should have a complaint or concern that there has been discrimination, you may contact the principal, a trusted teacher, the Title IX Coordinator, and/or the Superintendent.

Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U. S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack POCH, Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

File: JICFB

The West Springfield Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student or school staff member shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members 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 target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

“Cyber-bullying” means 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 the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in 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 the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

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

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- at functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- at school bus stops;
- on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the West Springfield Public Schools;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited 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 West Springfield School District if the act or acts in question:

create a hostile environment at school for the target;  
infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or  
materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

#### Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

#### Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

#### Investigation Procedures

The principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the

principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

When possible, the investigation shall be completed within fourteen (14) school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken against their child. At a minimum the principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

#### Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

#### Target Assistance

The West Springfield Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

#### Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

#### Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the West Springfield Public Schools website. [Duperé Law Office 8/11/21] [S.C. approved 8/31/21]

## TITLE IX

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal assistance.” The Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Vito J. Perrone, is the Title IX, Coordinator, whose contact information is:

Dr. Vito J. Perrone, Assistant Superintendent  
(413) 263-3299 / [perrone@wsps.org](mailto:perrone@wsps.org)  
West Springfield School District  
11 Central Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
West Springfield, MA 01089

### ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

File: ACAB

The West Springfield Public Schools are committed to maintaining and promoting an educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to the District. Discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, or disability (hereinafter “membership in a protected class”) will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any student or other individual who has complained of discrimination, including harassment, or individuals who have cooperated with an investigation of such a complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate, remedy any harm, seek to prevent recurrence of such conduct, and will also develop procedures to accomplish this end. This policy applies to conduct directed toward persons associated with the educational community by all other persons associated with the educational community including, but not limited to, students, District employees, the School Committee, school volunteers, and independent contractors.

#### **I. What Is Discrimination, including Harassment?**

- A. Discrimination: Treating persons differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.
- B. Harassment: Oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct relating to a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that person’s ability to participate in the District’s programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment.

Harassing conduct based on a person’s protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- o Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- o Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- o Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays, or symbols on school or another’s property;
- o Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- o Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- o Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;
- o Threatening letters, emails, instant messages, or websites that come within the scope of the District’s disciplinary authority;
- o Defacing, damaging, or destroying school or another’s property.

C. Sexual Harassment: Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- i. A school employee conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e. quid pro quo); or



- ii. Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity; or
- iii. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act as: any sexual act directed against another person, without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act as: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others; or (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.).

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment

## **II. Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community**

Each member of the educational community is personally responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct does not in any way harass or discriminate against any other person that he/she has contact with in the performance of his/her duties or studies or while acting as a member of the school community. In addition, each member of the educational community is required to fully cooperate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment. Further, District employees are obligated to intervene and stop any discrimination, including harassment they witness and to immediately report to the appropriate party instances of discrimination, including harassment that are reported to them or of which they otherwise learn.

## **III. Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints**

The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and Title IX Coordinators are responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination, including harassment, with the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinators. If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination based on disability, the person filing the complainant also has the option to file his/her complaint with the building level 504 coordinator. A report or complaint of a violation involving the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinators should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint of violation involving the Superintendent should be filed with the Committee.

### **Civil Rights, Title VI & Title IX Coordinator**

Dr. Vito J. Perrone, Assistant Superintendent  
(413) 263-3299 / [perrone@wsps.org](mailto:perrone@wsps.org)  
West Springfield School District  
11 Central Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
West Springfield, MA 01089

### **Section 504/Title II Coordinator:**

Mark Minnucci, Special Education Director  
(413) 263-3277 / [mminnucci@wsps.org](mailto:mminnucci@wsps.org)  
West Springfield School District  
11 Central Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
West Springfield, MA 01089

#### **IV. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment**

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of discrimination, including harassment.

A person who believes that he or she had been discriminated against, including being harassed may, to the extent that they feel comfortable, immediately:

1. Confront the harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against him/her;
2. State the conduct that he/she objects to;
3. Indicate that he/she finds such conduct offensive, intimidating and/or embarrassing;
4. Insist that the person(s) engaging in the conduct stop the conduct immediately; and/or
5. Report the conduct immediately to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s);

If the individual with the concern is not comfortable with such a confrontation, or feels that such a confrontation is unsafe and/or otherwise inappropriate, he/she should instead report the situation to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s). Reports/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after the conduct complained of occurred or within the time the individual reasonably becomes aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) Reports/complaints filed after ninety (90) days will still be accepted, however, it is important to know that the investigation may be impeded due to the passage of time after the conduct or occurrence. The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. the specific conduct objected to,
2. the date(s) and time(s) such conduct took place,
3. the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the location(s) where the conduct occurred,
5. the name(s) of any witness(es),
6. action sought to remedy the situation, and
7. any other details or information requested by the designated official.

The individual can contact the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) to file a report/complaint as well as to seek assistance in the filing of a report/complaint. If a report/complaint is filed, the person should provide the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination, including harassment.

#### **V. Investigation of Complaints**

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) should conduct a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser, and any other appropriate party to provide information, including witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the consideration and resolution of the complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will also endeavor to promptly interview and obtain detailed written statements from potential witnesses. If further documentation or information is necessary, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will notify the appropriate party, asking that the information be provided within ten (10) school/working days.

The District will take interim steps, as necessary, to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant and the alleged harasser while the investigation is being conducted. Interim measures are available even if the complainant does not file or continue to pursue a complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) shall notify the complainant and the alleged harasser of specific types of interim measures available, which may include measures to avoid contact with the other party, allowing employees to change work situations as appropriate, or prohibiting contact between the parties pending the results of the District's investigation. At any time, a complainant or the alleged harasser may request either orally or in writing

to the Civil Rights Coordinator that specific interim measures be taken pending the outcome of the investigation.

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the Civil Rights Coordinator to the complainant and the alleged harasser within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint. The determination of whether the District's antidiscrimination policy has been violated will be based upon a preponderance of the evidence standard.

The complainant or the alleged harasser may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Civil Rights Coordinator. The Superintendent or his/her designee will respond to such request with notice to both parties within (30) thirty school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; his/her decision is final.

If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of the violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected. Such steps may include appropriate disciplinary action, counseling, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

#### **VI. Consequences of Violating Policy - Discipline & Discharge**

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the contractual provisions governing his/her employment. In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may range from detention, suspension from schools, or expulsion from school. (Note: students with disabilities will be subject to the applicable disciplinary procedures set forth in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities District handbook, which adhere to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

#### **VII. Confidentiality**

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those with a need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The District shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

#### **VIII. State and Federal Authorities**

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including harassment based on membership in a protected class.

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
5 Post Office Square  
8th Floor, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02109-3921  
Telephone: (617) 289-0111 <http://www.ed.gov>

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination  
436 Dwight St., 2nd Floor, Rm. 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Telephone: (413) 739-2145

Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148-4906  
Telephone: (781) 338-3000

### **IX. Procedure for Reporting and Investigating Title IX Complaints**

**Notice:** The school is considered to have actual knowledge of a sexual harassment complaint if notice of sexual harassment or an allegation of sexual harassment is provided to a Title IX Coordinator, any school official, or any school employee. The School will investigate every formal complaint (which may be filed by a complainant or by a school's Title IX Coordinator). If the alleged conduct does not fall under Title IX, then a school may address the allegations under the school's code of conduct and can still provide supportive measures. The school is required to investigate the allegations in a complaint, send written notice of the allegations to both parties upon receipt of a formal complaint, and investigate under specified procedures. Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

**Reporting:** Any person may file a report of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), at any time either in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. However, if a person files a false complaint in bad faith, knowingly and intentionally, they will be subject to discipline.

**Investigations:** The School will investigate and adjudicate formal complaints of sexual harassment using a grievance process that incorporates due process principles, treats all parties fairly, and reaches reliable responsibility determinations. The school's grievance process will:

- Give both parties written notice of the allegations, an equal opportunity to select an advisor of the party's choice (who may be, but does not need to be, an attorney), and an equal opportunity to submit and review evidence throughout the investigation;

- Use trained Title IX personnel to objectively evaluate all relevant evidence without prejudgment of the facts at issue and free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against either party;

- Protect parties' privacy by requiring a party's written consent before using the party's medical, psychological, or similar treatment records during a grievance process;

- Obtain the parties' voluntary, written consent before using any kind of "informal resolution" process, such as mediation or restorative justice, and not use an informal process where an employee allegedly sexually harassed a student;

- Apply a presumption that the respondent is not responsible during the grievance process (often called a "presumption of innocence"), so that the school bears the burden of proof and the standard of evidence is applied correctly;

- Use the preponderance of the evidence standard for all complaints of harassment on the basis of sex, regardless of whether the complaint is against students or district employees;

- Ensure the decision-maker is not the same person as the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator (i.e., no "single investigator models");

- Parties may submit written questions for the other parties and witnesses to answer;

- Protect all complainants from inappropriately being asked about prior sexual history ("rape shield")

Send both parties a written determination regarding responsibility explaining how and why the decision-maker reached conclusions;  
Effectively implement remedies for a complainant if a respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment;  
Offer both parties an equal opportunity to appeal;  
Protect any individual, including complainants, respondents, and witnesses, from retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or participating (or refusing to participate) in any Title IX grievance process;  
Make all materials used to train Title IX personnel publicly available on the school's website or, if the school does not maintain a website, make these materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public; and  
Document and keep records of all sexual harassment reports and investigations for at least seven years.

### **Record Keeping for Sexual Harassment Complaints**

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every Title IX sexual harassment complaint. Records relating to complaints of sexual harassment must be kept in accordance with the records retention schedule. Such records include: records of a school's investigation (including complaints (formal and informal), notices, the determination, investigative report, disciplinary measures or remedies, etc.); records of any appeals and materials associated with the appeal; records of any supportive measures taken in response to a complaint of sexual harassment (even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint); records of any informal resolution process; all materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, decision makers, and those facilitating an informal resolution. The training materials must be kept on the School's website.

### **Retaliation is prohibited.**

Any person who experiences retaliation for exercising their rights under Title IX can file a retaliation complaint with the Title IX Coordinator. The school will keep the names/identity of parties and witnesses confidential unless such disclosure is required under another law, or is necessary to conduct a thorough grievance procedure.

### **Supportive Measures**

When alleged sexual harassment is reported, the Title IX Coordinator must inform the victim to their right of supportive measures even if not formal complaint is filed. The school must consider the alleged victim's wishes with respect to supportive measures. Supportive measures for those involved in the sexual harassment complaint process may include: counseling, extending deadlines, modifications of work and/or class schedules, school escort services, increased school security and/or monitoring, mutual restrictions on contact between the individuals involved through a safety plan.

Supportive measures will be kept confidential whether they are provided to the alleged victim or accused person to the extent the confidentiality will not interfere with the supportive measure offered. [Source: Duperé Law Offices 8/13/20] [s.c. approved 8/25/20]

## **GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR TITLE IX COMPLAINTS**

File: ACAB-R

### **Civil Rights, Title VI & Title IX Coordinator**

Dr. Vito J. Perrone, Assistant Superintendent  
(413) 263-3299 / [perrone@wsps.org](mailto:perrone@wsps.org)  
West Springfield School District  
11 Central Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
West Springfield, MA 01089

### **General Information:**

Practices within these grievance procedures will be applied equally to both complainants and respondents.

The respondent is presumed innocent and can only be found responsible for the alleged conduct at the conclusion of this grievance process.

All parties are entitled to an advisor of their choice to assist them in this process. The advisor may, but does not have to be, an attorney.

Schools may, in their discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.

### **Important Terms**

**Complainant** – An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

**Respondent** – An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

**Title IX Coordinator** – The person who oversees the grievance process and coordinates communication between the school and the parties.

**Investigator** – The person conducting the investigation into the allegations of sex discrimination and/or harassment. This person is not the Title IX Coordinator in order that the Title IX Coordinator remains a neutral participant.

**Decision Maker** – The person who reviews all the information/evidence gathered by the investigator and decides whether or not the sex discrimination and/or harassment occurred. This person is not the Title IX Coordinator or the Investigator.

**Appeals Decision Maker** – The person who makes the final determination in the event an appeal is filed. This person is not the Title IX Coordinator, the Investigator, or the original Decision Maker.

### **Supportive Measures**

Supportive measures are individualized services reasonably available that are non- punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment.

When the school becomes aware of alleged sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator must inform the victim to their right of supportive measures even if no formal complaint is filed. The school must consider the alleged victim's wishes with respect to supportive measures. Supportive measures for those involved in the sexual harassment complaint process may include but are not limited to: counseling, extending deadlines, modifications of work and/or class schedules, school escort services, increased school security and/or monitoring, and mutual restrictions on contact between the individuals involved through a safety plan.

Supportive measures will be kept confidential to the extent the confidentiality will not interfere with the supportive measure offered.

### **Dismissals of Complaints:**

#### **Mandatory Dismissals of Complaints**

The School must dismiss a complaint of harassment on the basis of sex when:

1. The conduct in the complaint does not meet the definition of sexual harassment;
2. The alleged sexual harassment did not occur within the school's education program or a school activity;

3. The alleged sexual harassment did not occur in the United States at all.

Complaints falling into these categories can still be processed under the school's code of conduct.

**Discretionary Dismissals of Complaints:**

The School may dismiss a complaint of harassment on the basis of sex when:

1. The Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant wishes to withdrawal some or all of the allegations within the formal complaint;
2. If the respondent no longer is enrolled in the school, or employed by the school; or
3. If specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination about the allegations.

Whenever a dismissal occurs, the Title IX investigator will send written notice of the dismissal to the parties outlining the reason for the dismissal. Both parties have the right to appeal the dismissal decision as outlined in the appeals process below.

**THE PROCESS:**

**Step One: Filing a Complaint**

Any person may file a report of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), at any time either in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. There is no time limit or statute of limitations on a complainant's decision to file a formal complaint. However, if a person files a false complaint in bad faith, knowingly and intentionally, they will be subject to discipline.

Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or otherwise a party during a grievance process, and must comply with requirements for all Title IX personnel to be free from conflicts and bias.

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the school with which the formal complaint is filed.

**Step Two: Initial Notice**

Upon the filing of a formal complaint, both parties will be provided with written notice of the complaint. The notice will include key details of the alleged sexual harassment incident. Such details will include but not be limited to: who was involved, when and where the alleged incident occurred, and the alleged misconduct that constitutes sexual harassment. Any known possible violation of the code of conduct along with potential consequences must be included in the initial notice. A copy of this grievance process must also be included with the notice.

This written notice will be sent to the parties within three business days of the filing of a formal complaint.

- \* Interviews with a respondent may not occur until this notice has been provided and the respondent is provided reasonable time to prepare before an initial interview.

### **Step Three: Gathering Evidence**

During the collection of evidence, the school is not allowed to access a party's personal records if they are maintained by a physician, attorney, psychologist, psychiatrist or other professional with whom the student shares privileged information unless the student provides written consent.

Equal opportunity will be provided for all parties to provide witnesses and evidence, including written expert testimony and inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Parties cannot be prevented from discussing the allegations or collecting relevant evidence. The school will use the preponderance of the evidence standard for all complaints of harassment on the basis of sex, regardless of whether the complaint is against students or school employees.

#### **Interviews**

Students will be provided with written notice prior to any interviews or meeting involving the Title IX complaint. The notice will include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the interview/meeting and will allow the respondent/complainant enough time to properly prepare for the meeting.

#### **Inspection of Evidence**

The school must send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.

#### **Opportunity to Respond**

The parties will have the opportunity to provide a response to the evidence if they desire.

#### **Opportunity to Ask Questions**

The parties will have the opportunity to provide relevant written questions to each other before the decision maker reaches a determination. In the event the decision maker decides not to allow a particular question, the decision maker must explain to the parties why the question is not relevant to the determination. \* Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.

The investigator will attempt to conclude the evidentiary process within three weeks. This may be extended if the investigator finds that more time is necessary to appropriately investigate the matter. The Title IX Coordinator will have to approve the investigator's request to extend the timeline in order to assure all investigations are processed in a timely manner as to prevent evidence from becoming stale or unobtainable.

### **Step Four: The Investigative Report**

After the evidence is collected, and the parties have been provided with ten days to respond to the evidence in writing, the investigator will prepare an investigative report regarding the allegations in the complaint. If a party submits a response to the evidence, the school must consider that response before finalizing the investigative report. The report will fairly summarize the evidence the school gathered about the alleged incident. The report, once finalized, must be submitted to the parties in electronic form, or a hard copy. The parties then have another 10 days to provide additional information before a determination is made.

### **Step Five: The Determination**

The decision maker will objectively review the relevant evidence and reach conclusions about whether the respondent engaged in the alleged harassment. The decision maker must use independent judgment,



so the decision maker is not the same person who conducted the investigation and cannot be the school's Title IX Coordinator.

The determination must be written. It must include at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) The school's policy/policies that were alleged to be violated;
- 2) A description of the procedural steps that were taken (including notices sent, interviews conducted, evidence gathered);
- 3) A section detailing the findings of fact;
- 4) A conclusion section that applies the facts to the relevant policy/policies;
- 5) A statement and rational regarding the ultimate determination of responsibility;
- 6) Any disciplinary sanctions the school will impose and any remedies to the complainant if applicable;
- 7) A statement of the rational for the remedies to the complaint and how those remedies will restore or preserve equal access;
- 8) A statement of the school's procedures and a statement regarding the parties' rights to appeal the initial determination of responsibility and the permissible basis for an appeal.

The determination will be sent to the parties simultaneously along with the appeals information.

### **Step Six: The Appeals Process**

Parties may appeal after a dismissal occurs, or a determination is issued. Parties will have five (5) days to appeal the dismissal or determination.

### **Grounds for Appeals**

- 1) If a party believes that procedural irregularity altered the outcome of the determination or dismissal.
- 2) New evidence has been discovered that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination or dismissal. \*An appeal for this reason may occur after the five day appeal requirement but not after one year.
- 3) A conflict of interest on the part of a Title IX Coordinator, investigator who compiled evidence, or the decision maker existed, and that conflict of interest affected the determination or dismissal.

To file an appeal, a party must notify the Title IX Coordinator in writing that they wish to appeal the determination. All parties will have an equal opportunity to submit a written statement supporting or challenging the determination. The Title IX Coordinator will inform the parties that they have 7 days to submit their written statements.

The person who will decide the appeal cannot be the decision maker, the investigator, or the Title IX Coordinator. Upon review of the parties' written statements (if they so choose to provide them), and review the determination, the appeals decision maker will issue a written decision and send it to the parties simultaneously. The determination becomes final after the appeals process.

### **Remedies:**

If the school makes a determination that sex discrimination/harassment did occur, the school will help effectively implement remedies for a complainant.

### **Retaliation is prohibited.**

Any person who experiences retaliation for exercising their rights under Title IX can file a retaliation complaint with the Title IX Coordinator. The school will keep the names/identity of parties and witnesses confidential unless such disclosure is required under another law, or is necessary to conduct a thorough grievance procedure.

### **If the Grievance Process may Result in Discipline:**

If upon the conclusion of this grievance process, discipline appears warranted, the school will follow the usual disciplinary process for students outlined within the student handbook. The school will also follow the required disciplinary process for school employees. [Source: Duperé Law Offices 8/13/20]

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

File: JKAA

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint is defined by 603 CMR 46.02 as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The use of mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion is prohibited. The use of prone restraint except as permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, or of any physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with the regulations at 603 CMR 46.00, is also prohibited. The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR 46.02.

Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training requirements, follow-up procedures, and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints regarding restraint practices;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- Procedures for conducting periodic review of data and documentation on the use of restraint as required by the regulations; and
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated, as previously documented by a licensed physician.

The use of time-out procedures during which staff continuously observe and remain immediately available to the student shall not be considered seclusion restraint.

This policy and its accompanying procedures (see: Physical Restraint Procedures [File: JKAA-R]) shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students.

**Nothing in this policy shall be construed to preclude any teacher, employee, or agent of the West Springfield Public Schools from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent serious harm.** [s.c. approved 11/12/19]

#### **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS POLICY**

File: IJNDB

In support of the district's mission for educational technology, the West Springfield School District is now offering internet access for student use. The use of computer system is a privilege, not a right.

Inappropriate use will result in the loss of the privilege. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for student's use of the West Springfield School District's computer system. **(For the complete policy, go to: <https://sites.google.com/a/wsps.org/policy-manual/wsps-policy-manual-introduction/section-i/ijndb>)**

**An acceptable use policy release (Student Account Agreement / File: IJNDB-E) will be issued to each student and must be signed by both parent and student for access to the West Springfield District's computer system.**

#### **STUDENT CHROMEBOOK AND ACCEPTABLE USE**

Chromebooks are a tool issued to assist students in their daily academic work. Students are expected to bring their Chromebook to each class charged and in working order. Failure to do so constitutes being unprepared for class and may result in academic consequences or discipline. If a Chromebook needs repair or is lost or stolen it is the student's responsibility to report it immediately.

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the 1:1 program at West Springfield High School is to create a collaborative learning environment for all learners. This environment will enable and support students and teachers to implement transformative uses of technology while enhancing students' engagement with content and promoting the development of self-directed and lifelong learners. Students will transition from consumers of information to creative producers and owners of knowledge.

West Springfield High School endeavors to prepare students for an ever-changing world that sees technological advancements happening at a rapid rate and is committed to preparing students for college and career readiness. West Springfield Public Schools demonstrate that, with a rigorous, high-quality program and the right social and emotional supports in place, all students, regardless of racial or economic background, can achieve outstanding results. WSHS is implementing the Chromebook initiative to further personalize the way each student uses time, receives support to master essential skills, and deepens understanding of content.

### **Compliance with the Law**

Students using the Internet, will follow all laws, policies, and rules set forth governing computers. This includes but is not limited to copyright laws, software publisher's rights, license agreements, acts of terrorism, cyber bullying, assault, threats, and student right of privacy.

Students are required to follow all copyright laws around all media including text, images, programs, music and video. Downloading, sharing, and posting online illegally obtained media is against the Acceptable Use Policy.

Congress enacted the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, 15 U.S.C. §6501, et seq. (COPPA) in 1998. COPPA required the Federal Trade Commission to issue and enforce regulations concerning children's online privacy. The Commission's original COPPA Rule became effective on April 21, 2000. The Commission issued an amended Rule on December 19, 2012 that became effective on July 1, 2013.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was enacted by Congress in 2000 to address concerns about children's access to obscene or harmful content over the Internet. CIPA imposes certain requirements on schools or libraries that receive discounts for Internet access or internal connections through the E-rate program. Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection measures must block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) obscene; (b) child pornography; or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors).

West Springfield Public Schools works diligently to comply with COPPA and CIPA requirements. West Public Schools does not collect student personal information or transmit such information directly to online entities for the purpose of creating web based accounts. In cases of web based account creation, West Springfield Public Schools will use an internal school district identification number to represent each student user.

### **Monitoring Student Use**

West Springfield Public Schools administrative staff and faculty retain the right to collect and/or inspect Chromebooks at any time, including via electronic remote access and to alter, add or delete installed software or hardware. Users of school technology have no rights, ownership, or expectations of privacy to any data that is, or was, stored on the Chromebook, school network, or any school-issued applications and are given no guarantees that data will be retained or destroyed.

Students have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to any usage of a Chromebook, regardless of whether that use is for school-related or personal purposes, other than as specifically provided by law. The school may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use of student Chromebooks at any time for any reason related to the operation of the school. By using a Chromebook, students agree to such access, monitoring, and recording of their use. The information on the network in general files and email is not private and is subject to review by the network manager at the request of the West Springfield Public Schools' administration to substantiate inappropriate activity and to comply with requests of law enforcement agencies as part of their

investigations. Search of particular files of a user shall be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or West Springfield School Committee Policies.

Teachers, school administrators, and the technology department staff may use monitoring software that allows them to view the screens and activity on student Chromebooks.

Inappropriate media may not be used as Chromebook backgrounds or themes. No images or graphics containing people can ever be used as a background or theme. The presence of guns, weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drug, gang-related symbols or pictures will result in disciplinary actions.

Students may be selected at unannounced and at random to provide their Chromebook for inspection. The purpose for inspection will be to check for proper care and maintenance as well as inappropriate material contained on the device.

### **Network Access**

The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others.

The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be utilized to provide information to the community, including parents, government agencies, and businesses.

Access to the system/network, including external networks, shall be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

Access to the system/network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures.

### **Noncompliance**

Failure to comply with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies and student handbooks of the West Springfield Public School.

### **Content Filtering**

The district utilizes an Internet content filter that is in compliance with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Chromebooks, regardless of physical location (in or out of school), will have Internet activity protected and monitored by the District. If a website is blocked in school, then it will be blocked out of school. If an educationally valuable site is blocked, students should contact their teachers to request the site be unblocked. Such requests will be given consideration following administrative review.

### **Improper Use/Consequences**

Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in loss of Chromebook privileges, as well as other disciplinary action including detention, suspension, and/or police involvement.

Use of the computer network and Internet is an integral part of research and class work, but abuse of this technology can result in loss of privileges. Students who use technology devices, digital resources, and

network infrastructure, along with information technology inappropriately may lose their access privileges and may face additional disciplinary or legal action.

The length of time for loss of privileges will be determined by building administrators and/or other staff members. If the user is guilty of multiple violations, privileges can be removed for one year or more.

### **Ownership**

Chromebooks are issued to individual students for educational purposes and should be used only by the student to whom it is issued. The Chromebooks are the property of West Springfield Public Schools, not the students to whom they are issued.

The District will maintain a log of all Chromebooks that includes the Chromebook serial number, asset tag code, and name and ID number of the student assigned to the device.

Each Student will be assigned the same Chromebook for the duration of her or his time at West Springfield High School. Manufacturer and school issued ID tags shall not be removed or marked upon.

### **Warranty / Liability**

The West Springfield Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The West Springfield Public Schools will not be responsible for any damages students suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at a student's own risk.

The West Springfield Public Schools specifically denies any responsibilities for accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

The West Springfield Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, implied or expressed, that the services and functions provided through the West Springfield Public Schools technology devices, digital resources and network infrastructure, along with information technology will be error free or without defect.

The West Springfield Public Schools, along with any persons or organizations associated with the school department internet connectivity, will not be liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the internet through the school network infrastructure. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise for their actions while connected to the internet.

The West Springfield Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any information or materials transferred or accessed from the internet. The West Springfield Public Schools cannot be responsible for inappropriate or offensive material students encounter on the Internet.

Parents and guardians agree to accept financial responsibility for any expenses or damages incurred as a result of their student's inappropriate or illegal activities on the West Springfield Public Schools network. Parents and guardians agree to reimburse West Springfield Public Schools for any expenses or damages incurred in the use of district owned devices such as Chromebooks in 1:1 school deployments. Parents and guardians will have access to optional third party insurance carriers. The West Springfield Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users.

### **Insurance and Fees**

West Springfield High School will offer students and their families the opportunity to purchase insurance for their Google Chromebooks which are valued at approximately \$250 each. This insurance policy will cover accidental damage and theft. The insurance will not cover any damaged caused by intentional or negligent acts. The cost of the insurance is \$25 per year. Students who do not opt to buy the insurance offered by the school are cautioned that any damage to or loss of their Chromebook will result in an obligation being assessed to the student's account in amount equal to the cost to repair/replace the Chromebook up to \$250. Students who do not purchase insurance will not be issued more than two Chromebooks unless all Chromebook-related obligations have been paid. As a reminder, all obligations must be satisfied prior to commencement in order to participate in the ceremony.

### **Acceptable Use**

Guidelines for High School Use:

Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:

1. Using the computer/network for non-educational purposes (i.e., commercial/political purposes, financial gain, or fraud).
2. Sharing and/or using someone else's password to access the computer/network.
3. Attempting to bypass the computer/network security system, including accessing proxy servers.
4. Trespassing in, deleting or altering others' folders, work, or files.
5. Using the computer/network in any way that is disruptive to the educational process (i.e., listening to loud audio or video without headphones).
6. Engaging in any form of cyber-bullying, harassment, or other malicious behavior that would negatively affect another's ability to participate in the school community.
7. Revealing anyone's personal information, such as home address or telephone number.
8. Sharing or re-posting audio, video, or any material of or created by another student or faculty member without that individual's permission.
9. Sending massive, inappropriate and unsolicited information through "spamming," chain letters or the like.
10. Damaging or modifying the computers, computer system, or computer network in any way.
11. Intentionally wasting limited network or district resources by downloading unnecessary files or through unnecessary printing.
12. Viewing, sending, or displaying offensive images or messages.
13. Purchasing goods and services for personal use on-line through the computer/network.
14. Abusing or vandalizing system software, applications, files, or other network resources.
15. Accessing any social media networking websites for non-educational purposes during the school day.
16. Using mobile electronic devices of any kind without direct permission from a staff member for appropriate educational purposes.
17. Violating any federal, state, or local laws including, but not limited to copyright, plagiarism, libel, and slander laws.

**The West Springfield Public Schools reserves the right to change these Acceptable Use Guidelines for Computer and Internet Use at any time.**

### **Digital Citizenship**

While working in a digital and collaborative environment, students should always conduct themselves as good digital citizens by adhering to the following:

1. Respect Yourself- I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate. I will use caution with the information, images, and other media that I post online.

I will carefully consider what personal information about my life, experiences, and/or relationships I post. I will not be obscene. I will act with integrity.

2. Protect Yourself - I will ensure that the information, images, and materials I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details, or a schedule of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at me while online. I will protect passwords, accounts, and resources.
3. Respect Others - I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to antagonize, bully, harass, or stalk people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of Websites: I will not visit sites that are degrading to others, pornographic, racist, or inappropriate. I will not enter other people's private spaces or areas.
4. Protect Others - I will protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. I will avoid unacceptable materials and conversations. I will not publish others' personal details, contact details, or a schedule of their activities.
5. Respect Intellectual Property - I will request permission to use copyrighted or otherwise protected materials. I will suitably cite all use of websites, books, media, etc. I will acknowledge primary sources. I will validate information. I will use and abide by the fair use rules.
6. Protect Intellectual Property - I will request to use the software and media others produce. I will purchase, license, and register all software or use available free and open source alternatives rather than pirating software. I will purchase my music and media and refrain from distributing these in a manner that violates their licenses.

## **Student Use**

### *Educational Use*

School issued Chromebooks should be used for educational purposes, and students are to adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

### *Ownership*

Chromebooks are issued to individual students for educational purposes, and should be used only by the student to whom it is issued. The Chromebooks are the property of West Springfield Public Schools, not the student to whom it is issued.

### *Charging Device*

Students are expected to bring a fully charged Chromebook to school every day.

### *Personalizing the Chromebooks*

Chromebooks must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, paint, tape, adhesives and labels. Students may add appropriate music, photos and videos to their Chromebooks. Personalized media is subject to inspection, and must follow the West Springfield Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy.

### *Use Outside of School*

Students are encouraged to use their Chromebooks at home and other locations for educational purposes. A WiFi internet connection will be required for the majority of Chromebook use. Students are required to abide by the WSPS Acceptable Use Policy and Student Handbooks, local, state and federal laws.

### *Sound*

Sound must be muted at all times, unless permission is obtained from a teacher. Student provided headphones may be used at the discretion of the teachers.

### *Printing*

Students will be encouraged to digitally publish and share their work with their teachers and peers, when appropriate. Because all student work should be stored in an Internet cloud application, students will not print directly from their Chromebooks. Printing stations will be available in the library and other locations. A print station will consist of a desktop computer and networked printer. Students may log into a print station to print their work.



#### *Data Backup*

The majority of student work will be stored through Google Drive and cloud-based applications, and can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection and most mobile devices. Students are encouraged to maintain backups of their work on portable storage devices. West Springfield Public Schools does not backup student data, and is not responsible for lost or corrupted data.

#### **Right of the School Committee**

The West Springfield Public School Acceptable Use Policy shall govern all use of technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure. Student use of technology resources, digital resources, web enabled devices, and network infrastructure will be governed by the West Springfield School Committee's disciplinary policies as outlined in the policy manual of the district and the student's school handbook.

Because information technology is constantly changing, not all circumstances can be anticipated or addressed in this policy. All users are expected to understand and comply with both the "letter" and the "spirit" of this policy and show good judgment in their use of these resources.

The West Springfield School Committee reserves the right to modify or change this policy and related implementation procedures at any time.

File: ACE-R

#### **GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

Any student, parent/guardian of a minor student or employee of the West Springfield Public Schools who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any program, activity or service of the West Springfield Public Schools because he/she is an otherwise qualified disabled individual may file a written grievance giving the factual basis of the grievance, and the requested remedy, with the school principal when such grievance arises from an alleged discriminatory practice occurring in a school or related to a school program or policy. The principal or the principal's designee will investigate the grievance and respond, in writing, within seven (7) working days. The investigation will include an interview of the grievant. If the grievance alleges discrimination which is based upon a policy or district-wide procedure or event, then the grievant should file the grievance with the Section 504/ADA coordinator for the District.

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at the principal's level, the written complaint may be forwarded to the West Springfield Public Schools' Section 504/ADA Coordinator who is the Administrator of Special Services. The written grievance must fully set out the circumstances that gave rise to the alleged grievance and must be filed within seven (7) working days of the receipt of a response from the school principal or designee.

The Section 504/ADA Coordinator will conduct a hearing, and respond in writing within fourteen (14) working days.

If the parent/guardian, student, or employee disagrees with the decision or proposed resolution made by the Coordinator, the grievant may appeal, in writing, to the Superintendent of Schools. Such appeal must be received by the Superintendent within seven (7) working days of the response from the Section 504/ADA Coordinator. The Superintendent will provide the grievant with the opportunity to present evidence supporting the grievant's position that the response of the Coordinator was wrong. The

Superintendent will issue a written response to the appeal within fourteen (14) working days of the final submission of written or oral information provided by the grievant.

If the grievant is still not satisfied with the response of the District, he/she must notify the Superintendent within seven (7) working days of the Superintendent's determination, and the Superintendent shall arrange for a due process hearing with an impartial hearing officer who shall be an individual knowledgeable about Section 504 and the ADA, and who shall not be an employee of the district. The impartial hearing officer shall conduct a hearing as soon as practicable, and shall issue a decision writing on the grievance. The complainant has the right to opt for a hearing before the BSEA if the complainant is bringing a grievance on behalf of a student. Rules for the conduct of the hearing shall be generally consistent with the BSEA rules for due process hearings, but may be modified as determined appropriate by the hearing officer. [S.C. Approved 1-11-11]

## **PARENT OBSERVATIONS IN CLASSROOMS**

File: IKA

The West Springfield Public Schools believes parents are important partners in educating students and welcomes parental participation in determining a child's appropriate educational program. To that end, we open our classrooms to parents or a parent representative\* who want to observe a child in the school setting.

- \* For the purposes herein, "parent representative" means an independent evaluator, educational consultant, or an individual who preferably holds certification or licensure from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a field directly related to the child's educational program.

The following procedures shall be followed when an observation is requested:

1. All requests to observe a child in school shall be responded to in a timely manner;
2. All observations must be scheduled through the building principal;
3. Observations during MCAS testing or the first or last several weeks of school are highly discouraged and will generally not be scheduled;
4. The parent and/or parent representative will discuss the purpose(s) of the observation with the principal prior to the observation being scheduled;
5. The observation will be scheduled at a mutually agreed-upon time and date after consultation with the classroom teacher(s);
6. The principal and parent/parent representative shall determine the parameters (date, time, length) of the observation;
7. The duration and extent of the observation shall be determined on an individual basis;
8. The parent/parent representative must report to the school office, as do all visitors (see policy IKA "Visitor Passes and Sign In"). The parent/parent representative will then be directed to the classroom by the administration. The principal or his/her designee(s) may accompany the parent/parent representative during the observation;
9. The parent/parent representative must sign the **Observation Agreement** (link below) so that both the School district and classroom parents have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed publicly;
10. The parent/parent representative may only observe a classroom in which the parent's child is enrolled and in attendance that day or in a specific program proposed by the School District for the child;
11. The parent/parent representative must be a silent observer at all times and not interrupt or disrupt the educational process in the classroom;
12. The parent/parent representative must refrain from using the observation to critique or evaluate teacher performance;

13. The parent/parent representative may schedule a time to meet with the teacher(s) or administrator(s). The principal or his/her designee(s) has a right to be present at all parent/teacher meetings;
14. When observing interferes with the educational process, the school committee recognizes the administration has the right to refuse any request;
15. The principal has the right to limit the number of parent observations in a school setting.

**Observation Agreement:**

<https://sites.google.com/a/wsps.org/policy-manual/wsps-policy-manual-introduction/section-i/ika-1>

**PARENT OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

File: IHBAA

1. Parents/guardians' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five (5) days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent/guardians(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the request.
3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within the law and DESE regulations. When possible or appropriate, the specific teacher(s) will be notified of observation.
4. The Special Education Director or the Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that they are not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If the observer's presence presents a problem, they will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit a report of the observation to the Educational Team Facilitator at least three (3) days in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that they are there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. They are not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his/her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of a student's records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible, the observer will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A school administrator or designee will also observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) at least three (3) days in advance to any follow-up TEAM meeting.
13. When observing interferes with the educational process, the school committee recognizes the administration has the right to refuse any request.

14. The parent or parent representative must sign the attached **Observation Agreement** (link below), so that both the School District and classroom parents/guardians have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed publicly.
15. The amount of observation time will be determined by the Special Education Director in conjunction with the building principal. [S.C. approved 8/17/21]

**Observation Agreement:**

<https://sites.google.com/a/wsps.org/policy-manual/wsps-policy-manual-introduction/section-i/ihbaa>

NOTE: This handbook has been updated with edits from H. Girardin, VP; S. Straitiff, CTF; Atty. Roche, Duperé Law Offices and approved by the School Committee