

WESTHAMPTON ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL HANDBOOK



2021 - 2022

PROFILE

Westhampton Elementary School is located in a small rural community. Our staff is committed to education. We serve children in grades pre-kindergarten through grade six.

School Mailing Address:

Westhampton Elementary School
37 Kings Highway
Westhampton, MA 01027

Telephone number: (413) 527-0561. **FAX number:** (413) 529-9753.

Web Site: www.westhamptonelementaryschool.org.

Our basic premise is that learning is an active process shared by students and staff. This process takes many different forms with teachers serving as models. Content is important, but emphasis will also be put on the process. Skill development, critical thinking, and problem solving will be actively taught and will include a variety of approaches. Students will be viewed developmentally, and instructional expectations will be based accordingly. Staff endeavor to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where students feel comfortable developing responsibility as an active participant in the learning process. The majority of the time students of varying abilities will be working together in a supportive, cooperative environment. Students will respect others' opinions and share ideas, and each student will be a valuable, contributing member of the group. There will be a maximum amount of inclusion in the least restrictive setting. There will be considerable inter-grade involvement. Examples of the students' work will be displayed throughout the school, and building-wide themes and projects will be in evidence.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Westhampton Elementary School is committed to establishing an environment in which we encourage good character formation, foster self-esteem, stimulate continual curiosity and develop a life-long desire for learning. The mission of the Westhampton Elementary School is to provide a broad range of learning experiences and equal opportunities for students to grow to their full potential.

Nondiscrimination Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5, as amended by Chapter 282, Acts of 1993, states in part: "No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation."

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Deane Bates, Principal
413-527-0561
Email: dbates@hr-k12.org

Ms. Diana Bonneville
Email: dbonneville@hr-k12.org
Superintendent's Office
413-527-7200

Westhampton, with two neighboring towns, is a member of School Union 66. Such rural school unions are formed in the interests of administrative and financial efficiency, sharing the services of a school superintendent and office staff as well as other supervisory personnel where such cooperative use is desired and appropriate. The Superintendent is Diana Bonneville and her office is located in the Hampshire Regional High School at Stage Road, Westhampton, MA 01027. The telephone number is (413) 527-7200.

Local authority for the school rests with the five-member School Committee. School Committee members traditionally are elected for three-year terms and are eligible for re-election. Current school committee members are Ian Stith, Peter Cleary, Morley Cleary, Scott Johndow and Wesley Bowser.

In response to the Massachusetts Reform Act of 1993, we have established a School Council that will serve the Principal and School Committee in an advisory capacity. The site-based team is made up of the Principal, two teachers, three parents, and a community member.

Westhampton is also part of the Hampshire Regional School District for grades 7 through 12. Two elected members of the community and one appointed member of the local School Committee represent Westhampton on the Regional School Committee. Young people primarily interested in vocational education may attend Smith Vocational Agricultural High School in Northampton, a four-year high school admitting students at the freshman level.

**Westhampton Elementary School
2021-22 Staff**

Deane Bates, Principal
Deborah Sholly, Administrative Assistant
Anne Chaput, School Nurse

Classroom Teachers:

Jenny Finnie, Grade 6 Teacher
Sarah Moylan, Grade 5 Teacher
Sarah Overstreet, Grade 4 Teacher
Lisa Florek, Grade 3 Teacher
Amanda Faro, Grade 2 Teacher
Letitia Scafidi, Grade 1 Teacher
Jennifer Thomas, Kindergarten Teacher
Deb Connell, Preschool Teacher

Special Education:

Kelly O'Connor, Speech and Language
Lindsey Meisner Thomas, Gr. 2-6
Kathryn Elsea, K & 1

Support Staff:

Artur Strauss-Kennedy, Aide
Maura Meunier, Aide
Elizabeth Millay, Aide
Jennifer Miklasiewicz, Aide
Tria Sweeney, Aide
Alexa Groeber, Preschool Aide
Maryrose Rovatti -Aide
Matthew Huggett - Aide
Dayna Doolittle, Aide
Jessie Whitley, Aide

Colleen Gilbert, Reading Recovery Teacher
Katie Galenski, Reading Specialist
Shelby Marowitz, Math Interventionist
Rachel Delano, Adjustment Counselor
Janet Caruso - Psychologist
Sally Imbimbo, ELL
Brian Gilman, Technology Teacher
Natalee Dias, Art Teacher
Veronica Rovatti, Music Teacher
Michael O'Connell, Physical Education Teacher
John Allen, Custodian
Jaclyn Provencher - OT

CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of the Westhampton Elementary School community have the right to work and learn in a safe and secure environment. To do this, we all have responsibilities to behave with courtesy and respect. All members of the Westhampton Elementary School community should treat others as they would like to be treated.

Our responsibilities include:

- To express one's own ideas, opinions and feelings and to listen respectfully to others
- To respect school, personal and other's property
- To do one's best and support others
- To accept responsibility for one's actions

Many children will learn these responsibilities through instruction via the Responsive Classroom model that we follow at WES and by working with caring adults who model these traits on a daily basis.

Consequences for violations to the code of conduct

We understand that children don't always behave in the ways they know they should. When violations to the code of conduct occur, there are logical consequences. Consequences depend on the age of the child, the seriousness of the offense, and whether it is a first time or repeated offense. Certain violations are considered **more serious**. These include *fighting, intentional destruction of school property, foul language, refusal to follow adult directions, and intimidation and harassment of others*. When more serious behaviors occur, the following steps will be taken:

1. The adult who observed the offense communicates with the classroom teacher and the principal.
2. The adults brainstorm and invoke consequences that are logical, reasonable, and related to the behavior involved.
3. Parents will be informed of their child's behavior and the consequences by a note or phone call.
4. Certain situations may require the writing of a behavior plan in consultation with the parents or guardians, who sign and return the plan.
5. In extreme circumstances, where students may be a danger to themselves or those around them, the school may deem it necessary to send a child home.

Repeated misbehavior may require additional consequences, which are discussed between the principal and parent or guardian. Possible replacement costs for may be required as a result of malicious damage to property.

Note: Certain behaviors are **major offenses** (such as physical aggression, use of drugs or alcohol, or possession of weapons) and may lead to suspension.

Including regulation changes contained in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, amendments of 2004 (IDEA-04). Discipline of students with a disability is now governed by these federal regulations.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:15	Earliest arrival time for walkers, bike riders, and children being driven by parents
8:30	School Begins
11:40	Lunch K & 1
12:10	Lunch 2, 3, & 4
12:40	Lunch 5 & 6
2:55	Warning Bell
3:00	Dismissal

RECESS

All grades have two recess sessions each day. Recess is designed to give your children vigorous exercise, a time to be active and learn to play cooperatively. Recess is outdoors unless weather is inclement so it is important that children dress appropriately for the weather conditions.

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the town will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by a specific action of the School Committee. Proof of residency may be required at registration. The Town Clerk will provide the school with a list of student names and addresses for purposes of verifying residency.

Entrance Age

Children who are otherwise eligible may be enrolled in Kindergarten class beginning in the year in which they turn 5 on or before September 1. (Under the current Board of Education regulations, children must be enrolled in school beginning the September of the year in which they attain the age of 6 and be regularly enrolled until they reach the age of 16.)

Advance registration for prospective Kindergarten students will take place in April. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency of legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

School of Choice

Each spring the School Committee makes the determination as to whether to open School Choice slots for the coming year. This program allows students from other communities to attend school in Westhampton. Limited number of openings may become available to students not residing in Westhampton. More information is available on School of Choice at the school office.

Home Education (Home Schooling)

Parents must obtain and complete the form: Notice of Intent to Pursue a Program of Home Education, prior to commencing a home education program.

PRESCHOOL

Children are eligible to attend the Westhampton Integrated Preschool Program if they are three or four years old by September 1. Flexible scheduling is available for non-special education students and parents are responsible for tuition. The goals of this program are

- to build healthy and positive self concepts.
- to provide opportunities to enhance social skills.
- to encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment.
- to promote language development.
- to encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutrition habits.
- to respect cultural diversity.
- to develop initiative and decision-making skills.
- to provide opportunities for physical development.

KINDERGARTEN

We offer a full day program (8:30 - 3:00). Registration for Kindergarten is held in the spring. To be eligible, a child must be five years old on or before September 1. A birth certificate and a record of all required immunizations should be presented at registration. The state requires that each child complete the following immunizations before entering school: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio series, measles, rubella (German Measles), mumps, hepatitis B (1997) and lead poisoning screening. One dose of the varicella vaccine is required if the child has not had chicken pox. A physical exam by your private physician is required before a child enters Kindergarten.

As mandated by law, all children entering Kindergarten must be screened for special needs. The screening must be completed by October 31. This involves evaluation of speech and language as well as academic and motor skills. The child's vision and hearing are also checked. Parents will receive a report of the screening results.

ATTENDANCE

The School Committee strongly believes that regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that among the responsibilities of parents of students attending Westhampton Elementary School, is the requirement to ensure that their children attend school regularly in accordance with state law.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his or his character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

According to Chapter 76, Section 1 of Massachusetts General Law, more than fourteen (14) absences per year is considered excessive. Regulations that govern MCAS performance appeals state that students must have maintained at least 95% attendance level during the school year prior to testing and the year of the appeal.

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

1. Illness.
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family.
3. Documented legal responsibilities.
4. Observance of major religious holidays.

School begins at 8:30 A.M. To avoid confusion and to give your children an equal start with classmates, we strongly encourage you to make sure they arrive by 8:30.

Supervision is provided at 8:15 -- students should not arrive before that time. Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. A written note from a parent/guardian should be provided if students are going someplace other than their normal destination at the end of the day. The afterschool program, Bonnie's Program, is available at the school at a reasonable cost. Applications are available in the office or by calling 529-2229.

RESPONSE TO EXCESSIVE ABSENCES OR TARDINESS

Following 5 incidences of absence or tardiness – letter home from principal reminding parents/guardians of the attendance policy and their responsibility in supporting it.

Following 10 incidences of absence or tardiness – certified letter home from principal requesting meeting to develop plan to improve attendance.

Following 15 incidences of absence or tardiness – certified letter home from principal requesting meeting to revisit plan to improve attendance; possible referral to Department of Children and Families.

FAMILY VACATIONS

We recognize the value of family trips and travel as worthwhile experiences. However, it is important to strike a balance between family time and the negative consequences of falling behind and missing classroom instruction. A typical school day is filled with learning activities that are not limited to books, i.e. group projects, discussions and activities. This learning cannot be duplicated with makeup work. We offer the following guidelines for you and your child when an extended absence is anticipated:

- ❖ If at all possible, schedule your vacation during a regularly scheduled school vacation.
- ❖ If this is not possible, parents should notify their child's teacher at least two weeks in advance of the planned absence. The teacher will then review your child's progress and suggest the best plan to compensate for missed learning experiences. Teachers may decide to provide assignments during the absence; however, teachers are not required to provide alternative assignments, re-teach work or to tutor students when they return.

CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS

Twenty-minute parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in October. As a supplement to the conference, parents will receive a form that outlines student progress. Parents and teachers are encouraged to schedule conferences at other times whenever they feel a need. Report cards are distributed in December, March and June.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework assignments provide ongoing opportunities for our students to learn good study habits, develop a sense of responsibility for task completion, and learn time management. These skills will help them transition to junior high and high school successfully. The Westhampton Elementary School staff believes that homework assignments strengthen the ties between home and school. Both the school and the home must assume their responsibilities if successful implementation of this policy is to be achieved. Parent cooperation is crucial in this matter.

As a general guideline each class is assigned approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level; i.e. first grade 10 minutes, second grade 20 minutes, etc.

At the primary level, homework may be modified at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Homework at this level may be given if a child has not completed work assigned for class time or as an extension of work being done by the class on a particular thematic unit. Many assignments given to primary students require

some parental participation. It is expected that all assignments will be completed with accuracy, neatness, and effort.

At the intermediate level, a structured schedule will be followed for homework. At this level, homework is expected to be completed with 70% accuracy. Monthly meetings may be scheduled with parents of students not completing homework on a regular basis. The following schedule has been set for homework at the intermediate level:

Grade 3 - At least 30 minutes of homework will be given per day Monday - Thursday.

Grade 4 - At least 40 minutes of homework will be given per day Monday - Thursday.

Book reports and other long-range projects will be assigned periodically.

Grade 5 - At least 50 minutes of homework will be given per day Monday - Thursday.

Long-range projects will be assigned periodically.

Grade 6 - At least 1 hour of homework will be given per day Monday - Friday.

Long-range projects will be assigned frequently.

At all grade levels, homework will be assigned to meet the needs and abilities of each student. Expectations for homework will be adjusted as needed to suit these needs and abilities. If a child takes substantially more or less than the suggested time to complete homework assignment, parents should contact the teacher. It is extremely important that parents communicate openly with their child's teacher whenever questions or concerns arise over any educational issue.

When homework is assigned, we expect children to complete it. If a child does not finish assignments with regularity, a homework slip will be sent to the parents explaining the child's options to make up missed assignments. In grades three through six children will have a homework grade on their report card to provide evidence of their ability to complete assignments in an accurate and timely manner. In this way, we are working to help children succeed in the handling of their responsibilities. We also encourage students to arrange with their teacher a schedule for Finishing incomplete or overdue assignments. This initiative on the part of students serves to further reinforce their acceptance of responsibility for their own schoolwork.

The staff at Westhampton Elementary School will, in turn, strive to make homework assignments at all grade levels appropriate and relevant to the work being done in class. We will also monitor the amount of homework that is given in an attempt to keep assignments consistent with the guidelines stated above. In addition, teachers will try to make certain that all necessary directions and materials for completing homework are sent home with children at the time that the assignment is given.

By working together cooperatively, parents, students and teachers can make homework a productive, practical part of the educational process at Westhampton Elementary School.

SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR

The adjustment counselor is a licensed mental health clinician. The counselor's job includes consulting with parents and teachers about the academic progress and social-emotional development of children as individuals and in relation to others. This is accomplished through individual and group counseling, social skills training with students, classroom developmental guidance programs, and facilitation of home and school communication. The counselor is available as a liaison among families, the school, and community services.

Counseling and counseling materials free from bias and stereotypes:

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and homelessness, all counselors:

1. Examine testing materials for bias and counteract any found bias when administering tests and interpreting test results;

2. Communicate effectively with limited-English-proficient and disabled students and facilitate their access to all programs and services offered by the district;
3. Provide limited-English-proficient students with the opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a language they understand;
4. Support students in educational pursuits that are nontraditional for their gender

REMEDIAL LANGUAGE ARTS

The school currently employs one certified language arts teacher who works as a tutor during the school day in grades 1 - 6 in the areas of reading and writing (which includes spelling). Classroom teacher recommendations and standardized testing are used as the basis for the selection of students who will receive this support. A goal of this program is to increase motivation, interest, and attitudes about reading and writing. Students are provided with experiences to increase their reading/writing skills and strategies and to feel good about themselves as readers. The program is designed to create fluent readers who bring meaning to text.

READING RECOVERY

The school employs a specialist known as a Reading Recovery teacher. The goal of the Reading Recovery Program is to supplement classroom-reading instruction with early intervention support for at-risk first grade students. This program was implemented in September 1997.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under Chapter 766, a state law, and P.L. 94-142, a federal law, children ages 3 to 21 inclusive with special needs are eligible for special education services. Our goal is to include children with special needs within the regular classroom whenever possible. Parent involvement is required and welcomed. Parents are vital members of the team, which determines each child's needs and subsequent educational plan.

All students receiving special education, regardless of placement, shall have an equal opportunity to participate in and, if appropriate, receive credit for the vocational, supportive, or remedial services that may be available as part of the general education program as well as the non-academic and extracurricular programs of the school.

Section 504

Any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

A major life activity also includes the "operation of a major bodily function," including but not limited to functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive bowel bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for special education under IDEA, may qualify under Section 504. These disabilities might include students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), students with AIDS, heart conditions, and other physical disabilities such as severe asthma, juvenile diabetes, severe arthritis, cerebral palsy, etc. All of these conditions under 504 allow a student to receive the necessary related services to make their education comparable to non-disabled students.

Eligibility for services under Section 504 must be determined. It is never automatic. There are two levels of protection under Section 504. (1) If a child has an impairment or disability, the child is protected against discrimination by Section 504. (2) If it is determined that the impairment **substantially limits** the child's

ability to learn, then the child is entitled to a Section 504 Individual Accommodation Plan. Section 504 eligibility is not automatically bestowed on a student who is referred for a special education evaluation and is subsequently found to be ineligible. Services given to students under Section 504 are considered the responsibility of regular education, as they are not in need of basic skills help and can function with adjustments in the regular classroom.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Westhampton Elementary School contracts a physical therapist to support the education of students suspected of and/or diagnosed with disability requiring physical therapy. The physical therapist provides screening, evaluation and intervention services.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Westhampton Elementary School uses RTI to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, provide timely interventions, monitor student progress, and adjust the degree and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. RTI consists of 3 levels or "tiers" of intervention, each increasingly more intensive. . RTI is a strategy for intervening early within general education and serves as one component in the process by which students are identified with learning disabilities that receive special education and related services.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

Speech and language services are provided to students identified with communication disabilities in order to help them to reduce or eliminate the disability and to develop compensatory learning strategies. Services are provided in individual or small group pullout sessions, in the regular education classroom, or in a combination of settings. As a member of both the pre-referral and referral teams, the Speech and Language Pathologist assists teachers in observing and referring students with suspected communication disabilities, and provides assessment and diagnosis of speech and language abilities.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

State and federal guidelines require that students in public schools whose native language is not English and who are currently unable to perform ordinary class work in English be placed in specially designed programs of English Language development to assist them in learning English and in learning subject matter content. MGL 71 A requires that Limited English Proficient (LEP) students receive Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) until they reach district criteria in English language proficiency allowing for their placement in the mainstream classroom.

SEI is content area instruction taught by teachers trained to use specialized techniques that assist ELL students to understand the content and language of the subject areas. SEI classrooms are those in which nearly all classroom instruction and activities are conducted in English, but with the curriculum and presentation designed for students who are learning English as their second language. Books and other instructional materials are in English. All reading, writing and content matter are taught in English. In addition, the following are key elements of Sheltered English Immersion:

- Teachers of ELL students are required to have specialized training in how to work effectively with non-English speaking students.
- Classroom instruction in English based on the MA Curriculum Frameworks/Common Core and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency Standards.
- SEI allows teachers and tutors to provide native language assistance to students in order to clarify the content of the curriculum.
- Annual testing in reading, writing, speaking and listening is required for every student in SEI.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are required by law to take physical education. If your child cannot participate for an extended period of time, we must receive a note from a doctor. Parents are strongly urged to provide their children with sneakers/gym shoes. This will be the only footwear allowed when we use the gymnasium. Each year students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 take part in the President's National Physical Fitness Program. This program and subsequent tests are designed to measure strength, speed, and agility.

SEX EDUCATION

School Committee policy governs the rights of parents or guardians in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Parents must be notified about the curriculum and may exclude their child from portions of the curriculum, without penalty to the child.

The child may be given an alternative assignment in such cases. Parents may also inspect and review instructional materials. Please call the school office if you would like to see the policy or review the instructional materials.

LIBRARY

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of our library. Specific information on our book borrowing policy is sent to parents early in the school year. If a book is not returned, students are responsible for the cost of the book. If a library book is damaged, the replacement charge applies.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Children are encouraged to participate in the lunch program, which can help them learn good nutritional habits and the easy acceptance of food variety. Our school lunch program operates each regular school day and is planned to meet one-third of the daily dietary requirements set by the state office. It consists of protein foods, fruits and/or vegetables, bread, butter, energy-building foods, and one-half pint of milk daily. Iron, Vitamin C, and Vitamin A needs are met. Menus must fit state and federal requirements within a strict operating budget and are expected to include a balance of color, texture, and flavor, as well as variety.

The current charge to students is \$3.00 a day, payable weekly. Weekly menus are published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette and monthly menus are sent home each month. A child may order lunch for individual days or the entire week. A credit is given in the case of absence. Free and reduced price lunches are available to those students who meet the financial requirements. Applications can be obtained from the principal. Students may bring a box lunch from home and purchase milk. The current cost is \$.50 per half pint, also payable on Mondays.

TRANSPORTATION

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Bus safety is a priority. Bus travel is part of the school day and school rules for behavior apply. Bus drivers can assign seats at any time. Behavior that interferes with the bus driver's attention constitutes a serious safety hazard and shall be reported to the principal/assistant principal. The buses are equipped with and may be using video and/or audio surveillance. Parents will be notified either by mail or by telephone of their child's bus rule infractions. Consequences for inappropriate behavior could include suspension from riding the bus from one day to an entire school year. The school

buses are private property of bus contractors and destruction of such equipment may require appropriate payment for any damage.

Whenever there is a change in a child's transportation [including walkers], the school must be notified in writing. If the school does not receive written or verbal notification from a parent for transportation changes, your child will be placed on his/her regular bus. If this change is on a regular weekly or monthly basis, then a single note will be sufficient for the school year.

Walkers, bicycle riders, and children dropped off by parents should not arrive at school before 8:15 A.M. Supervision is not provided until that time.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

If there is no school or a delayed opening, the superintendent will send an automated telephone message using the automated system. It will be also be announced over radio stations WHMP, WHYN, WTTT, WNNZ, WMAS, WPKX, WRNX, WRSI, WPVQ, and WAQY. Television stations WWLP [Channel 22] and WGGB [Channel 40] will also broadcast these announcements. In addition cancellations may be found on the call-in Gazette Line or internet website, *cancellations.com*. In the event we would close school early, although it is unlikely, this information will be announced over the same stations. Parents should inform the school and their children of the proper place to go in case school is dismissed early.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

There is an active P.T.O. who usually meets monthly during the school year. Parents and teachers are invited to attend any of the meetings. The purpose of the P.T.O. is to provide support and enhance the quality of education for all students.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Please observe the one-way traffic signs. During school hours cars must turn by the mailbox and not go around the island, which is for buses only.

Parents who drive their children to school in the morning should drop them off at the sidewalk ramp next to the accessible parking spaces. Students will then use the concrete walkway as they proceed to the rear playground.

Parents picking up their children at the end of the day should use the parking spaces adjacent to the sidewalk. Please try to arrive before the 3:00 dismissal and do not park in accessible spaces. Children will not be allowed to walk across the parking lot or driveway unless an adult accompanies them.

VISITING GUIDELINES

The Westhampton Elementary staff values its home and school partnership. Please keep the following in mind when visiting:

- All visitors and volunteers must be buzzed into the building at the front door and sign in at the office. All other doors are locked during the school day for the safety of our students and staff. Should a visitor wish to tour the building, the principal or a designee will gladly escort an individual or small group through the facility.
- All visitors should sign the "Visitor's Log" in the main office.
- When picking up students early, the main office will call the student down eliminating classroom disruptions.
- Parents may wish to visit their child's classroom to observe the offered programs. Please talk with your child's teacher to arrange for a visit. Prior arrangements must be made. If you have any

questions, the policy is available in the school office for your review.

- Please limit observation to 20-30 minutes.
- Please do not “pop-in” on another teacher when you are scheduled to observe in the school.
- Please do not try to conference with the teacher while s/he is teaching the class. Make an appointment for a conference.
- Parents and other visitors must turn off all beepers and/or cell phones when observing, visiting, or volunteering in classroom during instructional time.
- A staff member will be present during parent classroom observations.

These guidelines will allow our school to avoid unauthorized people in the building and avoid frequent interruptions to the children's instructional time.

Invited Guests

Because there is a wealth of experience, expertise and knowledge among community members which can be used to good advantage of effective teachers in enhancing student learning, invited guests are welcomed in classrooms and the school at large.

Teachers should inform the Principal and secure approval before inviting guests to their classroom. If it is expected that an invited guest will discuss a controversial issue, reasonable efforts will be made to see that all appropriate viewpoints are represented in a fair and reasonable fashion.

Conduct on School Property

The Principal is authorized to refuse entry to persons who do not have legitimate business at the school, and to request that any unauthorized person or person engaging in unacceptable conduct leave the school grounds.

The Principal is authorized to request assistance of law enforcement officers in cases of emergency. With the assistance of the Superintendent, the Principal may seek prosecution to the full extent of the law when persons violate the provisions of the district policy regarding trespassing on school grounds, damage to school property, loitering, and disruptive activity.

NO SMOKING POLICY

We are smoke free. Smoking and use of tobacco are not permitted inside the building or on the school grounds.

DISCIPLINE OF ALL STUDENTS (INCLUSIVE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504)

All students are expected to follow the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as 603 CMR 28.00 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. Section 1400 and 34 CFR Section 300, require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have a disability and whose program is described in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with special needs students and students with 504 Accommodation Plans:

- Any modifications of the discipline code will be identified in the student's IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan.
- The principal will notify the Special Education Administrator/504 Coordinator of the suspendable offense of any student with a disability and a record will be kept of such notices.
- When it is known that the suspension(s) of a student with a disability will accumulate beyond 10 days in a school year, a review of the IEP/504 Accommodation Plan will be held to determine

the appropriateness of the student's placement or program. The team will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition and:

- Develop or review a functional behavioral assessment.
- Determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of the disability.
- Consider a modified program or alternate placement for the student.
- Consider an amendment to provide for the delivery of services during the suspension and any needed modification of the IEP/504 Accommodation Plan.

In addition, the Department of Education will be notified when required by law, and the procedures promulgated by the Department of Education for requesting approval of the alternative plan will be followed. Parents will be provided with written notice of their rights under special education regulations. If the School District has knowledge that a student may have a disability and if that student has been referred for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education or section 504, that student will be entitled to all of the protections for a student with a disability until the eligibility process is completed.

SUSPENSION

In the case of extreme disregard for school policies and rules a student may be suspended for a number of days. This response to misbehavior is serious consequence. **During the period of suspension the student may not attend any extra-curricular activities either as a participant or a spectator in which the school is involved. Students are expected to make up all work missed.**

In-School Suspension – at the discretion of administration, students may be assigned an in-school suspension instead of an out-of-school suspension. The student would be in a separate room for the day monitored by the administrative staff and/or a substitute teacher and be required to do school work for the day.

Social Suspension – A student under Social Suspension will attend school but is not allowed to attend any school functions for the duration of the suspension. This would include sporting events, dances, field trips, assemblies, etc.

Procedure

1. Charges
 - a. A student facing suspension shall be given oral or written notice of the charge(s) against him/her.
 - b. The student shall also be given an explanation of the basis for the charge(s) and shall be informed of his/her right to present his / her side.
2. Hearing
 - a. The student shall be given an opportunity to explain his / her version of the incident or situation upon which the charge is based.
 - b. This hearing must precede rather than follow the suspension.
 - c. Such a hearing does not require that school officials give the student the opportunity to secure counsel, nor for confrontation and cross-examination of witnesses.
3. Exceptions If a student's continued presence in school might endanger persons or property or threaten disruption of the academic process, he or she may be immediately ejected. In this case, notice of suspension hearing must be sent to the parents within 24 hours of removal.
4. Alternatives to school suspension may include community service and/or Saturday school.

EXPULSION

An expulsion is a permanent suspension from school. This means a student would never again be able to attend any school in the Hampshire Regional School District. Some of the reasons for expulsion are:

- 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; (see *Weapons* under *Code of Discipline*) or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin.

- 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.
- c) Any student who is in habitual violation of school regulations, and / or restricts the education of others, and / or consistently jeopardizes the welfare of others, and fails to positively modify his or her behavior or improve on past negative attitude and performance.
- d) Any student who is charged with an offense that warrants an expulsion shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing. At the hearing the student may have representation and the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After the hearing, the Principal will decide whether to expel or suspend the student. Any student who has been expelled has the right to appeal to the Superintendent within ten days from the date of the expulsion. The student has the right to counsel before the Superintendent.

WESTHAMPTON SCHOOL ADA GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

This grievance procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination in employment practices and policies of the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by Hampshire Regional School District.

The complaint should be in writing or on audiotape and contain information about the alleged discrimination including name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interview, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The grievant and/or his/her designee should submit the complaint as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

**Nancy Parlakulas, Pupil Services Director
Hampshire Regional School District
19 Stage Road
Westhampton, MA 01027**

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing and, where appropriate, in a format accessible (e.g. large print, Braille, audiotape) to the complainant.

The response will explain the position of the Hampshire Regional School District and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision of the ADA Coordinator within 15 days after receipt of the response to the Superintendent of Schools.

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Superintendent will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting the Superintendent will respond in writing in a format accessible to the complainant with a final resolution of the complaint.

Individuals always have the legal right to file a complaint independent of the grievance procedure with an appropriate agency if they so choose.

SCHOOL HEALTH
AND
SAFETY

WELLNESS

Demonstrating commitment to the full development of our students, the Westhampton School Committee endorses a Wellness Policy which defines the goals and the means to further our students' understanding of the important role that good nutritional choices and physical activity will have on their lives. Central to this policy statement is the belief that success will be achieved from the combined efforts and encouragement of teachers, administrators, staff, and parents. We recognize wellness is a critical component that enhances a student's academic performance.

SCHOOL HEALTH

School Nurse:

The school nurse provides care to all of the children and the staff at the Westhampton School. The school nurse functions with the support of the school physician and under the school health guidelines provided by Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). The school nurse will assess each child's illness individually. Children may be sent home according to the nurses' discretion and according to MDPH law and Hampshire Regional School District guidelines. We ask parents to carefully assess their child prior to sending him/her to school if they think the child might be ill. **Please see our "Attendance Guidelines During Times of Illness or Infection"** for reference when trying to make a decision. The school nurse is also accountable for managing the student health records and immunizations per MDPH law and guidelines. Throughout the school year the school nurse will also provide direct student instruction in the classroom regarding various health issues.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the nurse at 437-5402.

Communicating health info with school nurse via email: The Attorney General has ruled that communication via email in the public domain is not confidential and is considered a matter of public record. In order to ensure your student's protected health information remains confidential, no exchange of health information should occur with the school nurse via email.

If your child has a health diagnosis that may affect his/her school day and/or ability to access the curriculum without accommodations, please contact the school nurse as soon as possible. The nurse will help with identifying accommodations needed for your child during the school day. The school nurse will create an individual health care plan (IHCP) for your child. The nurse can also assist with the implementation of a 504 Plan if one is determined necessary. Health diagnoses requiring an IHCP or a 504 Plan can be either chronic or acute and temporary. Please contact the nurse if you have any concerns about your child's health condition and his/her ability to participate in the academic setting.

The school also requests that if a child receives any medication for an acute condition or for/during a procedure prior to coming to school the same day that the school nurse be notified before the child is left at school for the day. A physician's note allowing the child to return to school on the same day will be requested regarding any procedure and/or medication given on the same day a child returns to school. If a physician's note is not provided and/or the child is not able to participate safely in the school day the child will be sent home by the school nurse. Please be advised that some medications can alter a child's ability to perform motor skills or participate mindfully in the classroom and in the interest of safety for your child it is important to communicate with the school nurse. **For more information see "Guidelines for Medication Administration in School".**

Fluoride: A fluoride rinse is administered weekly to students in grades 1 through 6. Parent/guardian permission forms need to be filled out annually at the beginning of each new school year. The Department of Public Health provides this program free of charge.

Height/Weight, Vision and Hearing Screenings: Screenings will be performed by the school nurse following Mass. Dept. of Public Health regulations. Families will be notified of abnormal findings. If a follow up screening with a healthcare provider is suggested, we ask for the completed referral report/recommendations to be given to the school nurse to be placed in the child's health record. Parents can request in writing that their child be exempt from screenings and must provide documentation from their private physician that the screening was done. Grades 1 & 4 will also be screened for body mass index (BMI), and a health screening report will be confidentially mailed home.

Postural Screenings: Grades 5 & 6 will participate in annual scoliosis screenings. You will be informed of any abnormal findings.

Physical Examinations/Immunizations: Physical examinations performed by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner must be on file with the school nurse upon entering school as a new student, entering kindergarten, and then again in grade 4. The date the physical exam was done must be within one year prior to the entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry. Students will then be asked for documentation of a physical prior to entering grade 7 and again in grade 10.

Immunizations are required for all students prior to entering school. They are then collected throughout the child's schooling at required intervals by the state. The only exemptions for the immunization requirement are for religious or medical contraindication purposes. Medical exemptions (dated statement signed by a student or parent/guardian, that a vaccine(s) are against sincerely held religious beliefs) must be renewed annually. At the start of each new school year this documentation must be provided to the school's health office in order for your student to attend school. State law does not allow philosophical exemptions, for immunizations.

FIRST AID & CPR

If the school nurse is not present in the building when a student arrives at the health office, trained personnel may provide immediate first aid if needed and the nurse will be contacted in the other building. Various school staff members are trained in first aid and CPR in order to assist with emergencies. School personnel are trained in epinephrine administration in the case of a severe allergic reaction.

GUIDELINES FOR MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION IN SCHOOL

- Medication **MUST** be brought to and from school by a parent/guardian or responsible adult.
- **All medication must be in its original prescription labeled bottle or original manufacturer container.** Medication will not be accepted any other way.
- ALL medication will be kept locked in the nurse's office.
- No more than a thirty-day supply of medication should be delivered to the school.
- **A physician's written order is mandatory** for any medication (inhaler, epi-pen, lactase enzyme, Ritalin, vitamins, allergy medication, homeopathic treatments, etc) whether over-the-counter or prescription.
 - There are only two exceptions to having as physician's order:
 1. Your child may be given regular strength (or according to body weight) acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Benadryl, and/or calamine lotion with only a parent/guardian consent because there is a standing order in place from the school physician.
 2. Your child has been prescribed an antibiotic for ten days or less and you have sent in only the doses needed during school hours in the original prescription bottle with written parent consent.
- **A parent consent form MUST be completed and signed** before a child can receive any medication in school. Completing and signing the emergency information sheet at the beginning of

the school year or completing a separate parent consent form can give consent for standing order medications provided in school. A list of standing orders is available upon request.

- A medication administration plan also needs to be signed by a parent/guardian.
- Medication will be administered by the school nurse or by her designee as allowed by MDPH and FDA medication delegation licensure with parent consent.

The guidelines above follow MDPH (105 CMR 210.000) and exist solely to protect the health and safety of your child. If you have any questions or need to obtain forms necessary for medication administration during school hours, please contact the school nurse at 437-5402.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES DURING TIMES OF ILLNESS OR INFECTION

Students with non-emergency illness:

Students should only be in school when they can fully participate in their educational program. Therefore, students with the following should stay at home and/or will be referred home by the school nurse:

- If a student has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, the student should stay home until he or she is **fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-controlling medicine.**
- A student with a persistent cough, excessive discharge from the nose or eyes, a sore throat, an earache, a severe headache and/or general malaise or fever should stay home until the condition subsides.
- If a student vomits and/or has diarrhea, he or she should be kept home for 24 hours **after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea without the use of medication.**
- If a student has impetigo, **the student must stay home for 24 hours after taking the first dose of medication. The sores should be covered until all lesions have crusted completely.**
- If a student has head lice, **he or she may return to school after using a physician recommended lice treatment and nits have been removed. The school nurse must check the student before returning to the classroom.**
- If a student has a skin problem such as a rash or an infected sore, please provide a note from the student's doctor to the school nurse stating that the student has been **diagnosed and treated by a physician before returning to school.**
- If a student has conjunctivitis, (an inflammation of the eye where the white part of the eye becomes pink and there is often itching, drainage, and crust formation on the eyelid during the night), the student should be seen by a doctor for proper diagnosis and **may return to school after receiving antibiotic treatment for 24 hours.**
- If a student has strep throat, the student may return to school after any **fever has resolved and he or she has received the appropriate antibiotic treatment for 24 hours.**
- If a student is seen as unable to participate fully in the school day for any reason, the nurse will perform an assessment to determine whether the student should be sent home. In some cases a note from the physician may be requested.

All communicable (contagious) diseases (chickenpox, scabies) must be reported to the school nurse, who will, if the disease is reportable, report it to the local Board of Health. Any student who has had a communicable disease must report to the school nurse before returning to the classroom.

By following the above guidelines set forth by the MDPH, we strive to provide a healthy environment for everyone in the school community. If your student has a specific chronic condition the school will make every effort to work with you and your student.

Please feel free to contact the school nurse or school administrator if you have questions.

GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER MEDICAL TREATMENT

If your student has had a medical or dental surgery/procedure or has had a serious medical emergency that required a visit to the emergency department and/or hospitalization, a parent/guardian:

- must contact the school nurse prior to the student returning to school.
- must notify the school nurse if the student received any medication for an acute condition and/or for a procedure prior to coming to school the same day before the student is left at school for the day.
- must provide written documentation from a medical provider or dentist that indicates that the student is medically cleared for return to school, explains any restrictions/accommodations while in school, and states any other pertinent information important to the safety and well being of the student.

If a physician's note is not provided or the child is not able to participate safely in the school day, the student will be sent home by the school nurse.

Please be advised that some medications can alter a student's ability to perform motor skills or participate mindfully in the classroom and in the interest of safety for your student it is important to communicate with the school nurse.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The school nurse coordinates with teachers to provide instruction regarding the health topics. Our goal is to provide reassurance to your child about his/her growth and development and to provide basic health facts to help ease anxiety as your child enters puberty. Although we are opening the door for communication with your child about sensitive topic areas we will of course encourage him or her to come to you for support and guidance. By working together with you we hope to ease your child's transition into the teen years. We will continue to foster a safe environment for learning by providing up to date information in a positive learning environment.

"No. Section 32A requires schools to notify parents of curricula which primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues, and of their right to review program instruction materials and exempt their children from any portion of these curricula. Neither § 32A nor any other law requires consent from parents before students may take a course involving sex education.

Parents may exempt their children from curriculum covered by § 32A by written notification to the school principal. No specific form letter is required. The parent should specify the course, class or school assembly from which the child is to be exempted. As long as the course or school program primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, the exemption is to be granted upon request."

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/c7132adv.html>

Weapons

MGL c.269, s.10 prohibits carrying of a "firearm" on school grounds. For the purposes of this paragraph, "firearm" shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged.

Whoever, not being a law enforcement officer and notwithstanding any license obtained by the person pursuant to chapter 140, carries on the person a firearm, loaded or unloaded, or other dangerous weapon in any building or on the grounds of any elementary or secondary school, college or university without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of the elementary or secondary school, college or university shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 2 years or both. A law enforcement officer may arrest without a warrant and detain a person found carrying a firearm in violation of this paragraph.

Any officer in charge of an elementary or secondary school, college or university or any faculty member or administrative officer of an elementary or secondary school, college or university that fails to report a violation of this paragraph shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not more than \$500.