

# Dawson Elementary School 2021-2022 Student Handbook

**“Developing our students’ knowledge, skills and talents to the fullest so they can make the world a better place for all.”**



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Wachusett Regional School District

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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Dawson Elementary School and the Wachusett Regional School District. Please keep this handbook as a reference guide to your school's programs and policies. The handbook is reviewed annually and is intended to assist you in adjusting to your surroundings and to familiarize you with the many services your school has to offer.

As we move into a new school year, I look forward to working with the students, families, staff, and other members of the Dawson community to continue to support the District's commitment to educational excellence for its young people.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Wallace, Principal

Wachusett Regional School District Committee policies supersede the material contained in this handbook. A copy of the district policies is available at the Dawson Library, the WRSD central office and online at <http://www.wrsd.net>. WRSD policies are formatted the same as this paragraph when referenced in part or in whole.

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

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

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

**At the District level, the ADA (disability pertaining to non-students), Title VI and Title IX (race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, and sexual orientation Coordinator is Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670 ext. 224**

**At the District level, the ADA and Section 504 (disability pertaining to students) Coordinator is Catherine Knowles, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 608-829-1670 ext. 237**

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

Staff and School Directory	
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>Instructional Aides</b>
Mrs. Bercume	Mrs. Leung
Mrs. Mercer	Mrs. Gonzalez
Mrs. O'Malley	Mr. Larson
Mrs. Flynn	Mrs. Shabo
	Mrs. Boyan
<b>Grade 1</b>	Mrs. Spakauskas & Crossing Guard
Mrs. Bembenek	Mrs. Lovejoy
Mrs. Librandi	Mrs. Tsiramanes
Mrs. Fullam	Mrs. Harding
	Mrs. Simmons
<b>Grade 2</b>	Ms. Stevens
Mrs. Murphy	Mrs. Mahoney- Kindergarten Aide
Mrs. Duquette	Mrs. Donovan-Kindergarten Aide
Mrs. King	Mrs. Johnson - Kindergarten Aide
Mrs. Trant	Mrs. Smollin- Kindergarten Aide
	Mr. Zimov - Playground Monitor
<b>Grade 3</b>	Mrs. – Playground Monitor
Mrs. Crowley	
Mrs. Marzo	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>
Mrs. Gauthier	Mrs. Verrier
Mr. Sweeten	
	<b>ELL Specialist Teacher</b>
<b>Grade 4</b>	Mrs. Predergast
Mrs. Koziol	
Mrs. Consiglio	<b>Teaching and Learning Center ( TLC)</b>
Mrs. Johnson	Ms. Zahigian
<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>School Cafeteria Services</b>
Mrs. Larson	Ms. Hudson -Head Food Services Assoc.
Mrs. St. Germain	Mrs. O'Coin - Food Service Assoc.
Ms. Warner	Mrs. Hastings - Food Service Assoc.
Ms. McKillop	
	<b>Custodial Services</b>
<b>Art Education</b>	Mr. Kenary - Head Custodian



Mrs. Hickey	Mr. Guerin - Custodian
	Mr. Miller - Custodian
<b>Music Education</b>	Mr. O'Coin - Custodian
Mrs. Stringer-Grimsley	
	<b>Health Services</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	Mrs. Salvatore
Mr. Conrad	
	<b>Dawson School Administration</b>
<b>Language Specialist</b>	Melissa Wallace, Principal
Mrs. LePage-Speech	Joseph Yaskis, Assistant Principal
<b>School Psychologist</b>	<b>Wachusett Regional School District Administration</b>
Mrs. Michele Licio	Dr. Darryll McCall, Superintendent
	Jane Daly, Deputy Superintendent
<b>Special Education</b>	<b>Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources</b>
Mr. Hackett	
Ms. Dick	
Mrs. Lore	
Ms. Loverin-Physical Therapist	
Mrs. Githmark Occupational Therapist	

## **School Hours**

School office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

### **Grades K-5**

8:50- 9:00 Arrival. Students who arrive after 9:00 will be marked tardy and must receive a late pass from the office.

3:30 Student Dismissal

**Supervision of students by staff does not begin until 8:50. Therefore students must not be left off at school prior to that time unless they are attending the Before School Program.**

## **1. Wachusett Regional School District Committee**

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee, elected by the citizens of Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland and Sterling, is directly responsible to the Massachusetts Department of Education for the operation of the District's Schools in accordance with State Laws and Department Regulations, and to the citizens of the District for the quality of the educational program and responsible stewardship of the District's financial resources.

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee is the policy-making body and has the final authority in all matters relating to the schools. The School Committee determines policy and enacts business only when meeting as a committee in a legally called meeting.

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee recognizes that every child is entitled by law to a free public education designed to meet his or her needs and potential. The Committee recognizes its responsibility to provide an educational environment that will:

- Encourage equal opportunity for intellectual and creative growth for all children.
- Encourage opportunities for physical and emotional growth for all children.
- Encourage opportunities for independent and responsible thought and action on the part of all students.

## **2. Non-Discrimination 6631**

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

## **3. Mission Statement**

The Mission of Dawson Elementary School is to provide a caring, safe school environment in which all students are valued, differences are respected, and each student is supported in a way that allows their full academic potential to be reached. Within this environment, students will develop socially and emotionally through the study of our core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, kindness, and integrity. Dawson students will be provided the opportunity to think critically and creatively about their world, collaborate with peers, and develop a love of learning. Our strong foundation of academic and social emotional education will foster an inclusive environment where all students are dynamic, contributing members of the Dawson community and beyond.

## **4. Annual School Events**

Dawson School has several traditional activities that happen each year and are posted on the web-site.

September-November: Scheduled PTA Meetings, Boosterthon

December: Holiday Helper, working with a social services agency to provide gifts to those in need of assistance, Friday Night Basketball (grades 3-5)

March/April: Pancake Breakfast, volunteers produce anthologies of student poetry.

May: Luau Night

June: Field Day

Some grade levels take field trips in and out of school linked to their studies. Examples in recent years include: Davis' Farmland, Southwick's Zoo, Patriot Place, Lowell Mills, and Heifer Project. Please note that the above mentioned activities are subject to change each year.

## **5. Organizations**

### **5.1. School Improvement and Modernization Council (SIMCO)**

The SIMCO is an organization providing an opportunity for teachers, parents, students, and members of the community to become informed and actively participate in the educational process at Dawson School. Included in this group are parent, teacher and community representatives. The council meets monthly to advise and assist the principal in:

- setting goals for the school;
- identifying students' educational needs;
- reviewing the school building budget;
- preparing the school improvement plan.

All meetings are open to the public and parental attendance is encouraged. Notices regarding times and locations of meetings are typically sent home on Communication Day through e-mail and the website the week prior to each meeting.

### **5.2. Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.)**

The P.T.A. is a service organization whose main function is providing educational materials and social and cultural events, which will be of mutual benefit for parents, teachers and children. It promotes a closer working relationship between home and school by encouraging volunteers to participate at school and P.T.A. events.

One of its functions has been to raise funds for enrichment programs, field trips, equipment and family programs and events. Officers are elected annually and consist of president (or co-presidents), vice president (or co-vice presidents), secretary and treasurer. Members volunteer to coordinate or assist at events during meetings or through sign-up sheets.

Anyone who is interested in the Dawson School is cordially invited to join the P.T.A. meetings, which are held monthly. Notices regarding times and locations of meetings are typically sent home via email the week prior to each meeting. More information can also be found on the PTA website:

<http://www.dawsonpta.com/>

## **6. Health Services**

Students who become ill or injured will be directed to the school nurse for assessment, evaluation, treatment and/or referral. If the nurse is not available, students are to report to the office. Students are

not to leave the building without authorization. Parents will be notified when a child must be sent home. If the parent cannot be contacted, the person indicated on the Emergency Card will be called. **It is imperative that the Emergency Card be completed annually and updated as necessary.**

### **6.1. Confidentiality (WRSDC P6650)**

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

### **6.2. School Immunization Law**

In accordance with Chapter 76, Section 15 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, parents/guardians of students must provide documentation of immunizations or have on file a religious or medical exemption.

### **6.2. Immunizations**

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

### **6.3. Physical Examinations**

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

### **6.4. Mandated Screening Programs**

Students in grades K through 5 are tested for various parameters annually according to the chart below. The school nurse does postural screening for scoliosis with assistance from the Physical Education Staff. Parents will be notified if screening procedures identify possible problems.

Grade	Weight	Height	Vision	Hearing	Scoliosis
Kindergarten	X	X	X	X	
1	X	X	X	X	
2			X	X	
3			X	X	
4	X	X	X	X	
5			X	X	X

## **6.5. Contagious Conditions**

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

It is suggested that if your child is placed on antibiotics, they remain at home for the first 24 hours and/or follow physician's orders. Children having a fever should remain at home until their temperature is within normal range for 24 hours.

District policies regarding other health conditions can be found on the District website.

## **6.6. Temporary or Permanent Exclusion from School Activities/ Physical Education**

Students are expected to participate in all activities of the school program including recess and physical education. If, for health reasons, a child must be excluded for a temporary time from any activity, written verification from parents is required. For a long-term exclusion, a physician's note is required.

## **6.7. Administration of Medication**

The policy for the administration of medication in school is designed to protect the health of the child and the rights of the staff. The following policy and procedure will be followed for administering any medication during school hours. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. If the medication to be administered falls under the classification of "psychotropic drugs", Guidelines of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71 Section 54B, will be followed.

For ALL medications (prescription and non-prescription), medication shall be administered by the school nurse provided that:

- 1.1. The school nurse must have on file the "**Physician Medication Order/Parent Consent Form**" properly completed by the physician. This form states the type of medication and the frequency with which to give it. This form must also be signed by the parent/guardian. Parental permission alone is not acceptable.
- 1.2. The "Physician Medication Order/Parent Consent Form" must be updated by the physician and parent whenever the medication is changed.
- 1.3. All medication should be properly safeguarded in the nurse's office.
2. Procedure
  - 2.1. The nurse shall have the right, with just and reasonable cause, to refuse the administration of medication.
  - 2.2. No child is to transport medication to or from school. All medication must be brought to and from school via the parent or other responsible adult. However, in the case of self-medicating students, students may transport and self-administer upon completion of a written agreement between the parent and the nurse.
  - 2.3. All medication must be submitted in the original pharmacy container with the label intact.
  - 2.4. Cough drops and lozenges are prohibited in Elementary and Middle Schools by WRSD Policy.
3. Medical Emergencies

- 3.1. In the event of a life-threatening or serious injury or illness, an attempt will be made to contact the parent or guardian. Emergency Medical Services will be contacted for their assistance, and the student will be transported to the appropriate medical facility for treatment.

## 6.8. Accident Insurance

The Wachusett Regional School District sponsors a student-participation insurance plan. Brochures describing the plans available are available to all students during the first week of school.

(WRSDC P6616) The Wachusett Regional School District shall require each student participating in intramural programs to provide evidence of an active accident or health insurance policy covering the student.

## 6.9. Eye Protection (WRSDC P6613.1)

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

## 7. No-School Announcements

A School Messenger call will be made to all parents to notify them of a school cancellation. In addition to the school-messenger call, no-school announcements will be aired on the following radio/television stations beginning at approximately 6:15 A.M.:

WTAG 580 AM	WFTW 1440 AM	Channel 4
WNEB 1230 AM	WSRS 96.1 FM	Channel 5
WEIM 1280 AM	WAAF 107.3 FM	Channel 7
WORC 1310 AM		

During the winter months, bad weather occasionally makes it necessary to delay the opening of school. Delayed openings will be announced on the radio, television stations, and through School Messenger.

If the announcement is for a **delayed opening**, students or their parents should continue listening to these radio stations for further announcements, in case we change to **no school** all day. Delays could be up to two hours. Delayed openings do not affect dismissal times. When a two-hour delayed opening is called, there will be no A.M. kindergarten. PM kindergarten will be in session.

In an emergency such as a loss of water, boiler breakdown, or extreme weather conditions school may be dismissed earlier than the regular closing time. Additionally, the Recreation After-School Program is sometimes cancelled due to weather conditions. **Parents should be certain that all Unanticipated Early Dismissal/Cancellation of After School Program Forms are kept up to date, and should inform their children as to what they should do in case of early dismissal.** These forms are distributed for completion at the beginning of the school year; if changes need to be made during the school year, parents should contact the school secretary.

Afternoon kindergarten classes are sometimes cancelled due to storms. Should this be necessary you will be contacted through School Messenger. Information will also be announced on the radio and TV. Occasionally, the high school and some middle schools are dismissed early to assure that the buses arrive on time for dismissal at Dawson to take place at the usual time.

Because of requests from the radio stations, we strongly emphasize that no one call the stations or town officials for school cancellations. There will be announcements aired at the times mentioned above if school is cancelled, delayed in opening, or dismissed early.

## **8. Attendance**

Education requires good attendance in order to reap its fullest reward. **It is imperative that your child has good school attendance.** Any day missed splinters the educational sequence, which affects school attitudes and overall progress. However, children who are sick and cannot function well should be kept at home.

**If your child is going to be out of school for the day, please call school first thing in the morning. This is informational as well as a safety check. A message can be left at (508) 829-6828.**

### **8.1.1. Absence, Tardiness, Early Dismissal**

A note is required after a child has been absent, when he is tardy, or when the parent desires the child to be dismissed early.

### **8.1.2. Late Arrival Policy**

If a pupil arrives at school after 9:00 A.M., they must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the Office where a tardy slip (which is to be presented to the teacher by the pupil) is issued. It is important to have your child arrive for school on time. **Please do your best to have your child arrive on time for school.** When a child is late it causes a disruption in their classroom routine and he/she may miss specific instruction on morning work.

### **8.1.3. Early Dismissal Policy**

Early dismissal (before 3:30 P.M.) of pupils can be arranged through the office. Please see that your child brings a note stating reason for dismissal and the time he/she is to be dismissed. The child should then be picked up at the office at the early dismissal time.

### **8.1.4. Dismissal Time Parent Pick-Up**

If a parent wishes to pick up a child at the regular dismissal time, please send a note with the child in the morning. In order to facilitate end of the day dismissal for the entire school, students who are parent pick-ups will be dismissed from the rear door and not from the main office. Parents are to use the Bailey Rd. access at the rear of the building to pick up their child at dismissal time. If you arrive early and are waiting for your child to be dismissed please do not leave your car idling as the exhaust from the cars is drawn into the building.

### **8.1.5. Before School Drop off**

- Students should not be dropped off prior to 8:50 A.M.
- Vehicles should enter school property via the access from Bailey Road to the rear of the building and proceed to the entrance at the glass corridor leading to the gym and wait until they are the first vehicle in line pulled up to the entrance.
- A faculty member will open the doors at 8:50 A.M. and students may begin to disembark, one vehicle at a time.
- Vehicles should then proceed off the property in a **ONE WAY TRAFFIC FLOW** by turning right and going out to Salisbury Street (vehicles **SHOULD NOT** exit to Bailey Road).
- The front entrance should only be used when parents are dropping students off late, so as to ensure that the driveway is clear of bus traffic and safe for students to cross the driveway.



Students should not be let out of cars in the parking lot to cross the driveway unaccompanied by an adult.

#### **8.1.6. Recreation Department's Before/After School Program Drop off and Pickup**

- Drop off: Park in front drive; turn off vehicle. Parents must accompany children through the parking lot and in the crosswalk across the front driveway to the main entrance. Proceed through the building to the cafeteria and drop off children with childcare workers.
- Pick up: Park in front drive; turn off vehicle. Using the main entrance parents should proceed through the building to the cafeteria and pick up children. Exit either via the cafeteria door that leads out to the front of the building or back through the main entrance.

#### **8.1.7. Vacations during School Time, Makeup Work**

Families are expected to plan any family trips/vacations so as to not take place on days when school is in session, but to plan these to coincide with school vacation periods. As per the State Department of Education, students who are absent for reasons other than medical ones for the State MCAS testing will be recorded as “failing” the test and the School’s test performance record will be affected accordingly.

The Department of Education further points out those students who are absent from school for reasons other than illness or family emergency are “truant”. As per the Department of Education, schools are not required to plan for work for student absences other than illness or family emergency or to make up instruction or work for students who are absent for other reasons.

Students who have been absent must assume the responsibility for making up work. It is very difficult for the teacher to send work with a child to do in advance. It is expected that the work that will be missed will be given when the student returns to school for completion. If a student is absent for illness or family emergency for a prolonged period of time, he/she will be given an adequate amount of time to make up the work missed. Upon return to school, a student who is absent for any other reason will have one day for every day of absence plus one to makeup and submit all work missed during the absence.

It is recommended that parents request class assignments for a sick child to work on at home if absence exceeds more than one day. These assignments can be picked up in the school office. This can prevent a child from being overwhelmed by having to make up missed schoolwork while trying to keep up with current assignments when he/she returns to school.

Please avoid scheduling vacations or appointments during testing. The MCAS testing schedule is determined by the State of Massachusetts and notification will be sent home as soon as possible.

## **9. General Information**

### **9.1. Pre-School Screening**

Parents may request pre-school screening for their child (age 3 and above) if they believe there may be a possible learning problem. This evaluation could detect problems that may hinder the child’s ability to learn. Parents should call the Special Education Office at the Superintendent’s Office.

Prior to kindergarten each child is screened for possible vision and hearing problems. All children who have entered the Kindergarten Program are screened for vision, hearing, gross and fine motor skills, language delays and speech.

## **9.2. Kindergarten Entrance**

### **9.2.1. Registration**

Registration begins in early February. Kindergarten Orientation occurs prior to the end of the school year.

### **9.2.2. School Entrance**

Any child entering Kindergarten shall have attained the age of five (5) years on or before August 31st.

Any child entering first grade shall have attained the age of six (6) years on or before August 31st.

The parent seeking entrance of a child to first grade who does not meet the age requirements but who has completed an accredited Kindergarten program in a public or private school, and whose records indicate that the child is ready for first grade, may be allowed to enter first grade at the discretion of the principal.

To be eligible for entrance, the following must be brought or sent to the school with the completed registration papers:

- Birth Certificate (if it an original is copied and later returned to the parents),
- Record of all immunizations.

Parents should inform the school of any disabilities, health concerns and of any information that they feel might affect their child's ability to function in school.

## **9.3. Media Center- Library**

The library has reading and reference materials and is used for story hours and library instruction. Children are allowed to take up to two books at a time for a period of up to two weeks. It is the responsibility of the children to see that the books are properly taken care of at home, or while in their possession. There is a charge for lost books.

### **9.3 a. Social Media P6531.1A**

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

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

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

## **9.4. Art**

There is a dual philosophy to the art program: (1) that art stands alone as an important basic educational area in its own right, and (2) it is an important integrating force with respect to other subject areas such as, reading, math, science and social studies. Emphasis is placed on one or both objectives at a time. Experience in materials, techniques and concepts are presented.

## **9.5. Music**

As with art, music has a dual philosophy to its approach: (1) that a comprehensive and sequential music education stands alone in its own right and (2) that music is one of the ways children are known to learn; it helps to develop multicultural understanding and to develop the skills needed for reading, writing and listening. Experience in listening to a wide variety of music is provided along with musical programs as scheduling allows and recorder lessons are taught in grade three.

## **9.6. Physical Education**

Classes are scheduled out of doors in good weather and in the gym during the colder months and inclement weather. The program provides a range of activities allowing for all the children to participate, both as individuals and as part of a team.

**Sneakers are a must for gym classes.** As for other dress, the children wear their regular school clothes. It is recommended that clothing be able to provide full freedom of motion without exposing skin. Wear a belt if necessary. Low hanging pants, tank tops and shirts that expose skin when arms are raised overhead should be avoided. A sweatshirt or jacket is recommended for outdoor physical education. Students are allowed to bring a water bottle to class.

## **9.7. Chapter 766**

This is a Massachusetts Law that became effective in September 1974. It is designed to assist individuals between the ages of three and twenty-one, with identified disabilities who require specialized instruction.

For further information, please contact the School Psychologist.

## **9.8. Student Assistance Team (SAT)**

The Student Assistance Team is composed of an administrator, the school psychologist and the referring teacher. Other staff may sometimes be asked to participate as well. The purpose is to help students when challenges arise with either academic or social emotional learning. The Team makes recommendations for classroom interventions/strategies or additional assessment. If accommodations are recommended, it reconvenes at a later date to assess the effectiveness of those recommendations. Referral to SAT does not mean an automatic referral for special education evaluation. Parents will be notified about the recommendation to SAT, but at this level of intervention their involvement is not required.

## **9.9. Resource Room**

The Resource Room Program offers support for children with identified disabilities who have difficulty learning in the regular classroom. Several instructional aides support the resource room teachers. These teachers coordinate the evaluation of students who are experiencing learning problems. The resource room teachers occasionally conduct individual and small group classes. They often prescribe specific

learning approaches to be used by classroom teachers and co-plan and co-teach classes with the regular classroom teachers.

### **9.10. Speech and Language Therapy**

Students with speech, voice and language difficulties may receive services as indicated by an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). A speech and language therapist is available to work primarily with children who have been evaluated under Chapter 766 (see Chapter 766 above).

### **9.11. Home Tutoring**

Home Tutoring is available for extended student absence due to illness and/or serious injury, or for children with a Chronic Illness Plan. Parents needing this service should contact the School Administration.

### **9.12. Report Cards/Progress Reports**

Report cards are issued for grades 3- 5 four times a year - November, January, April and June. Report cards are issued for grades K - 2 three times a year-January, April and June. In lieu of a report card for the first term, parent/teacher conferences for students in K-2 will be held by the end of the first term in November. Final report cards (Grades K - 5) will not be issued until the last day of school. Parents may view Report Cards through the parent portal on PowerSchool. Progress reports are provided to parents of students receiving special education services four times a year, November, January, April, and June.

### **9.13. Parent/Teacher Communication**

Parents and teachers may communicate effectively in a number of ways (e.g., phone, letter, e-mail, etc.). However, as a result of a need/concern/issue, a parent or teacher may request a conference to discuss the issue. Parents and teachers should arrange for such a meeting at a mutually convenient time contingent to the school day. Voicemail may be left for individual teachers by calling the main number (508-829-6828).

### **9.14. Audio, Video and/or Stenographic Recording of Meetings (WRSDC P3813)**

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

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

### **9.15. Radios, Cell Phones, Messaging Devices, other Electronic Devices, etc.**

Students **may not** bring cell phones, IPODs, or other similar items to school because they disrupt the educational process. Exceptions to the rule may be made only when items in question are used for classroom activities and when administrative approval is obtained. Portable games or other electronic

devices such as those listed above are NOT permitted on field trips. Laser pointers are not allowed at school and will be confiscated. Inappropriate use of laser pointers will be considered a violation of the weapons policy **P6433**.

## **9.16. Homework**

If you wish to give valuable assistance to the education of your child, you can do so by encouraging your child to take pride in passing in neat and carefully completed assignments. The teacher should merely have to check the paper for accuracy.

If the homework is incomplete after a serious attempt has been made over this period of time, the parent should write a note to the teacher stating the amount of time spent and that the homework was seriously attempted although incomplete. If any emergency arises, and your child is unable to complete his/her homework, please write a note to the teacher. However, this does not excuse the student from completing the assignment the following evening. Other out of school activities do not constitute a reason for a student being excused from completion of homework. If a notice from the school that requires a parental signature gets misplaced, a note from the parent stating that the information was reviewed will be accepted in lieu of the parent signature slip.

## **9.17. Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action will be taken for homework not completed as follows:

- The child will be warned
- Loss of recess privileges
- Notification to parents with conferences as required.

## **9.18. Student Transfers**

Please inform us if you are moving and let us know the last day (date) that your child will attend Dawson School. We will also need your new address and the name of the next school your child will attend.

The parents must sign certain release forms so that school records may be forwarded to your new school. Your child will need a transfer card to present at the Principal's Office at the new school. Records will not be given to parents for transit, but will be sent to the school upon request.

## **9.19. Assignment of Students to Classes**

Every effort is made to ensure that your child is placed in a classroom that will enhance their learning experience. Classroom placement is determined by the principal based on the recommendation of the sending grade level teachers and input from parent surveys, guidance and special education personnel.

# **10. Miscellaneous Information**

## **10.1 Financial Assistance**

Occasionally, money is collected from students to cover expenses related to field trips, special programs, snacks in Kindergarten, etc. Financial constraints should never prevent participation of students in educational programs of the school. Any family needing assistance in this regard should contact the principal. All such contact will remain confidential.

## **10.2 Hot Lunch Program and Breakfast at School - Free until 6/20**

Hot lunches, including milk, are available throughout the year. For those wishing to bring a cold lunch, milk is available. A child may buy more than one carton if he/she chooses. Alternate sandwiches and salads are also available. Annual lunch and milk fees shall be provided at the start of the school year. Hot lunches begin the first day of school.

We have a computerized lunch system. Every student is given a unique pass code that they enter to access their account to pay for their lunch. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for their child's lunch. This money is placed in an account that a child may use to purchase lunch or milk, but not snacks. Parents can pay by the week, month or year. This system is an effective means of purchasing lunch and students no longer have to worry about losing their lunch money. The Dawson School is happy to share that we have a Breakfast program for students who wish to have Breakfast at school.

## **10.3 Free/Reduced Hot Lunch/Breakfast**

Free hot lunch or partial payment is considered under special request. Forms for this will be sent home to parents the first week of school. The forms must be filled out completely in order to be processed. As financial situations do change, these forms are always available at the office.

## **10.4 Snacks for Kindergarten**

Each child is responsible for his own healthy snack and drink.

## **10.5 Recess/Snacks**

No snacks are allowed to be taken outdoors at recess. Snacks may immediately precede or follow outdoor recess held at times different from lunch recess. Snacks purchased from the cafeteria at these times may not be opened until the student arrives back to the classroom. Snacks may be eaten at designated times only (i.e., lunch, recess and special occasions). Gum chewing is not allowed at any time at Dawson School or on the school bus. Eating is also not allowed on the school bus.

## **10.6 Birthday Snacks**

Due to the many food allergies, medical conditions, and other food related issues, we are requesting that children not bring in snacks for sharing. If you feel that you still want to send something in, birthday pencils, colored pencils, erasers, or other school supplies are alternatives to snacks. Although we do not celebrate with a snack, your child will be recognized by their teacher and at morning announcements.

## **10.7 School Evacuation/Critical Incident Drills**

Drills are held regularly to ensure the safety of all persons in the event of fire, disaster or critical incident. Students are instructed in understanding signals, exits used, procedures for leaving the building, areas in which to assemble, and procedures for returning to the building.

Periodic checks by our fire department are conducted.

## **10.8 School Bus Evacuation Drills**

School Bus Evacuation Drills are held twice annually in conjunction with the school bus contractor.

## **10.9 Personal Attire**

We take pride in the appearance of our students and students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly in attire suitable for each school day.

Hoods, bandannas covering the full head, and hats/caps, except those worn in relation to required religious practice or with prior Administrative approval, are not acceptable attire within the school building.

Clothing or footwear that presents a safety hazard, such as in time of evacuation and on the playground, will be strictly prohibited. Shoes or sandals should have either a strap around the heel or a large strap across the instep; the child must be able to wear them safely. **Flip-flops and high heels are not acceptable.**

Any apparel that makes reference to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, profanity or violence or apparel with offensive words or pictures is not considered appropriate school attire.

In grades 3-5, the following are not acceptable school attire during school and school activities:

- Any item that may cause injury or do bodily harm.
- Items that are distracting, revealing, or educationally disruptive (including sunglasses, mesh, see-through clothing, bare midriffs, spandex shorts, short-shorts, spaghetti straps [a two-inch strap width is a good rule of thumb], “low rider” slacks.). **A good rule of thumb for shorts or skirts is that when a student extends their arms at their sides, the shorts should approximate the tips of the fingers.**

The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing. Students who dress in a manner, which is not appropriate to the school setting, may have parents called and appropriate clothing brought to school before the student can rejoin the academic setting.

### **10.10 Bicycle/Scooter Policy**

Children in Grades 4 and 5 are allowed to ride their bicycles or scooters to and from school, but are not allowed to ride or play with them on school grounds during school hours. **A note from home giving permission to ride to and from school is required.** The students should walk the bicycle or scooter to and from the proper area (i.e., bicycle rack). The privilege of riding bicycles to school will be taken away at any time if the child does not follow safety procedures or is being harmful to other students. State law requires all children below the age of sixteen wear a helmet while riding. Students will not be allowed to ride a bicycle or scooter home if they are not wearing a helmet. Bike/scooter riders will be dismissed after traffic has cleared. Bikes and scooters must be walked off school property. For safety reasons, children should refrain from riding bikes or scooters during inclement weather.

### **10.11 Parties/Celebrations**

Brief parties are occasionally held for some special occasions. Room Parents and teachers organize refreshments for these parties. Please make arrangements with your child’s teacher. Many children have food allergies and other health conditions. Please stay away from ALL foods that contain peanut or peanut by products. The teachers will provide you with a list of known foods that may cause an allergic reaction.

### **10.12 Gift Giving**

Students may donate gifts that enhance the classroom or school such as markers, glue sticks, books, etc. in lieu of personal gifts to mark any occasion. Books may also be donated to the school library.

### **10.13 Lost Articles**

The school will not assume responsibility for any items (brought to school by students), which are lost or stolen. A Lost and Found Table is maintained in the cafeteria. On a monthly basis, unclaimed clothing will be donated to Good Will.

Pupils are encouraged to turn in any article found to the Lost and Found Table. Items coming to school, including lunch boxes, book bags, coats, hats, boots, and mittens should be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name.

#### **10.14 Care of School Books**

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

Books that are lost or damaged must be paid for in total, including shipping costs.

#### **10.15 School Phone**

Students will be permitted to use the telephone with permission of the teacher, the school secretary, or the principal.

Students will not be called to the telephone except in a case of an emergency. Similarly, messages to students will be delivered in an emergency.

#### **10.16 Student Photographs**

As a service to parents, school photographs are taken in the fall at all grade levels. Information regarding fees and packages available is typically sent home prior to photographs being taken.

#### **10.17 Wachusett Regional School Committee Policy on Students Publications (P6515)**

The Wachusett Regional School Committee recognizes and supports student publications and other literary activities that give students an experience in journalism.

The school committee recognizes that the District must maintain a level of objectivity deemed to be in the best interest of the communities, and to this end, the following procedures are in effect:

- No school publication will accept advocacy or advertising that is political, religious or discriminatory in nature.
- All advertising is subject to review and approval by the principal or a designee relative to content and appropriateness.
- Final editorial control and approval of all materials intended for publication are the responsibility of, and may be subject to the approval of, the school administration.
- This policy shall be referenced in the student handbook.
- A statement indicating the editorial control by the school administration regarding all advertising will be included on order forms or other similar correspondence.

#### **10.18 School to Home Communication**

School-related and group-sponsored notices are periodically sent home with the students.

School-related notices such as the school newsletter, notices from the P.T.A., and notices from the principal are available on the website and sent home as the need arises.



To the extent possible, school wide notices are sent home on a weekly basis to each family through the youngest Dawson student in the family. Most notices and communication will be sent home through School Messenger.

### **10.19 Field Trips**

There are two types of field trips:

- Classroom - These are planned in conjunction with an area of study and may be walking or bus trips.
- General - These field trips are planned to include more than one class and are generally bus trips.

All field trips are chaperoned by classroom teachers, parents and sometimes-other staff. In order to participate in a field trip all adults **MUST** have a valid **CORI** badge.

### **10.20 Non-Smoking Policy**

As required by Massachusetts Education Reform legislation, smoking is not permitted by any person at any time, anywhere on school property (building or grounds).

### **10.21 Wachusett Regional School District Grievance Procedure for Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 (Federal Laws) and Chapter 622 (State Law)**

#### **10.21.1 Statement of Definition:**

A grievance is any alleged violation of the Wachusett District School Committee Policy on Non-Discrimination (P#6631) on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies.

#### **10.21.2 Grievance Procedure:**

##### **Step #1**

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

##### **Step #2**

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

##### **Step #3**

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

#### **10.21.3 Statement:**

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

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

## **11. Code of Conduct (P6400)**

The Wachusett Regional School District has a comprehensive student code of conduct. WRSD policies regarding behavior and discipline can be found through the District website or requested through the school.

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

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

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

Consideration shall be given to the:

- age of the student;
- mitigating circumstances;
- previous behavior of the student; and

### **11.1. Introduction to Dawson Code of Conduct**

Dawson School strives to be a place where the optimal education can be obtained for each individual student.

We aim to create an environment:

- where people are courteous. Yelling, sarcasm and denigration are unacceptable.
- where laughter is frequently heard, not because of frivolous activity but because of genuine joy brought about by involvement with caring people engaged in relevant work.
- where communication is practiced and not preached. People talk with, not at, each other.
- that has reasonable rules, which everyone agrees on because they are beneficial to the individual and the group; and in which everyone has a democratic stake because everyone has a say in making and changing the rules as needs arise.
- where the administrators actively support and participate in an approach to discipline that teaches self-responsibility. They organize an on-going in-service program designed to support the

discipline program. They model the techniques with students they are involved with and they positively support the staff as the staff practices the techniques of the program.

It is impossible for teaching or learning to take place in a school unless good order is maintained.

Students are reminded that they must adhere to a code of good behavior not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others as well.

## **11.2. General Rules and Consequences**

Students attending Dawson School are required to:

- Practice good manners;
- Display good citizenship;
- Respect the authority of school personnel;
- Show respect and concern for the rights and property of others;
- Show respect and concern for all school property;
- Be honest and faithful in word and action.

Students attending Dawson School are forbidden to engage in the following activities during school time or during school sponsored activities:

- Display aggressive behavior or exhibit any verbal or nonverbal behaviors that interfere with or threaten the safety or well-being of another person;
- Possess drugs, alcohol, or tobacco;
- Carry or wear dangerous weapons (i.e., sharp objects, firearms, knives/ household knives, laser pointers, or any devices or objects that could be used to inflict or threaten bodily harm);
- Possess matches or fireworks;
- Deface, damage, destroy, or steal school or personal property;
- Disrupt or instigate behavior that interferes with the operation of the school, classroom, auditorium, cafeteria or school buses;
- Possess indecent literature;
- Distribute any literature in class without permission from the teacher;
- Intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury to another person, except in self-defense;
- Leave school grounds without permission;
- Use profane, offensive or vulgar language;
- Be truant or have unexcused absences;
- Forge signatures;
- Lie;
- Cheat;
- Use cell phones, MP3 players, portable radios, CD players or other devices using headphones on school property or on field trips without prior approval by administration.

Failure to comply with established discipline practices and procedures may result in:

- Verbal reprimand
- Parent notification
- Loss of recess
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension or expulsion
- Any combination of the above

### **11.3. Specific Rules and Consequences**

#### **11.3.1. Classroom and Hallway Behavior**

The administration or teacher will take corrective action, with discretion and good judgment, if a child is removed from the classroom because of disruptive behavior such as:

- Abuse to peers;
- Consistently failing to follow directions.

Corrective Action may include:

- Verbal reprimand;
- Parent Notification;
- Requirement to sit or stand outside the classroom; this corrective action is to be considered the exception, not the rule;
- Loss of recess;
- In-school suspension;
- Any combination of the above.

#### **11.3.2. Basic Conduct in the Cafeteria**

- Enter quietly;
- Walk;
- Moderate talking volume;
- Handle and eat food in an appropriate manner;
- Keep hands to oneself.

Disciplinary Action: Children not complying with the above will be seated by themselves and/or lose recess privileges and/or lose the privilege of eating in the cafeteria.

#### **11.3.3 Basic Conduct on the Playground**

- Avoid fights;
- Avoid carrying one another (piggyback rides, etc.);
- Avoid foul language and name-calling;
- Avoid leaving the playground without first getting permission of a monitor (includes use of bathroom and visits to nurse);
- Avoid picking up or kicking snow or throwing snowballs or ice;
- Bark chips may not be thrown;
- Students must obey monitors on duty.

#### **11.3.4. Use of Playground and Equipment**

Again, common sense, courtesy and respect for others are expected so that accidents may be avoided. This includes:

- No undue height on swings; one child per swing;
- No side to side swinging, spinning or jumping off swings;
- No swinging until the area is dry;
- Jump ropes are to be used only for jumping;
- Playing catch must be done away from other children;
- Touch football is allowed for grades 3 through 5- no tackling or rough play (Nerf ball only);
- Keep balls away from windows;
- Baseball bats shall not be on the playground at recess unless approved by the principal;
- No karate type fake fighting activities;
- Chalk may be used to draw hopscotch;
- No sitting under equipment platforms to avoid injury while others play on equipment.

Other reminders:

- Students are to be dressed correctly for the weather. In winter months, permission is sometimes granted for students to play in the snow if they are wearing mittens, boots, hats and snow pants.
- Socks and sneakers are recommended to avoid splinters from bark chips and avoid falls on the structure.

#### **11.3.5. Discipline at School Related Functions**

The school has the authority to discipline students for inappropriate behavior at Dawson School or Dawson School Activities.

#### **11.3.6. Tolerance (WRSDC P6436)**

The Wachusett Regional School Committee shall provide a learning environment that promotes and encourages an appreciation of diversity.

Individual differences of students are to be appreciated and respected within district policies and regulations. All students can expect to grow and learn without encountering harassment about individual differences.

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

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

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

Disciplinary Action related to District Tolerance Policy may include any/all of the following:

1. Parent notification;
2. Verbal reprimand by person in authority and/or removal from activity;
3. Loss of recess/removal from playground;
4. Loss of multiple recesses;

5. In-school suspension.

### **11.3.7 POLICY RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

The Wachusett Regional School District fosters and maintains educational environments that are free from bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. No student in the Wachusett Regional School District shall be permitted to bully another student through conduct or communication or to retaliate against any individual for reporting bullying or cooperating with an investigation of bullying. A student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation will be subject to a range of disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, reprimand, detention, suspension, expulsion, or other sanctions as determined by the school administration. Except where bullying has resulted in the student's permanent expulsion, students who engage in bullying may also be required to participate in instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying behavior(s).

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

#### **A. Definitions**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **B. Policy Jurisdiction**

For purposes of this policy, bullying is prohibited:

- 1) *on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school; and*
- 2) *at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.*

## **C. Reporting Requirements**

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

## **D. Investigations**

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

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

#### **E. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

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

##### **(i) Development of the Plan**

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

##### **(ii) Contents of the Plan**

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

- (a) descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation;
- (b) procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians, and others to report bullying or retaliation;
- (c) a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously but that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
- (d) a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action;
- (e) procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;
- (f) information regarding the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor;
- (g) a provision for assessing and monitoring the target's need and the needs of witnesses for protective interventions;
- (h) procedures for notifying the parents of a target and of an aggressor of the investigative findings and actions to be taken;
- (i) provision for the notification of local law enforcement agencies if the principal reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor;



- (j) provision for annual and ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development training shall be in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c.71,§37O; and
- (k) provision for the implementation of an evidenced-based anti-bullying curriculum in grades K-12 and for informing parents regarding the curriculum contents and strategies for reinforcing the curriculum at home.

(iii) Implementation of the Plan

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

(iv) Public Notice

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

### **11.3.8. School Bus Safety and Security Procedures P6621**

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

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

Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.

Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.

All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.

Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

Children will not be allowed to go home with another child without a written note from a parent. Convenience bussing is not allowed. In cases of day care, consideration will be given, if there is space available.

#### **While waiting for the bus, students should:**

- Stay out of the road except when they must cross the street.
- Wait in an orderly manner. Rough behavior or running is inappropriate.
- Not throw stones, snowballs or other objects.

- Avoid trespassing on private property.
- Obey all school rules.
- Line up off the road and approach the bus only when the driver has opened the door.

**While riding the bus, students should:**

- Listen carefully to the driver's instructions.
- Get on the bus quickly and be seated. Pupils may be expected to sit three in a seat.
- Help keep the bus clean. Eating on the bus is not allowed.
- Be aware of the danger of protruding arms, etc. All parts of the child's body should be kept inside the bus.
- Remain in his/her seat when the bus is moving.
- Restrict his/her talking to those children who are sitting next to him/her. Shouting will distract the bus driver.
- Not use inappropriate language.
- Not fight.

**11.3.9. Alternate Student Transportation (WRSDC P6562)**

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

Procedures for requesting alternate transportation to and from school shall be contained in the student handbook. The high school student will be responsible to inform parent/guardian on taking a late bus or alternate means of transportation

K-8 students will be required to present written permission notice to the school from parent/guardian when using alternate means of transportation.

In case of emergencies, oral notification will be an acceptable alternative with the administration making a written record of the notification.

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

## 11.3.10. Wachusett Regional School District Bus Discipline Policy and Procedure

### BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND CONSEQUENCES

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

#### LEVEL 1

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

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

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

1. The bus driver will report misconduct occurring on the school bus to the school administration. If a student shares information pertaining to student misconduct on the bus with a teacher or other staff member, the administration will be notified and speak with the bus driver.
2. A School Bus Conduct Report will be completed and submitted to the school administration and the bus company.
3. The principal or designee and the bus company will retain copies of the signed report.

### **11.3.11 Special Education Discipline**

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

1. The IEP for every special needs student will indicate if they can meet student management policies or if modifications are needed.
2. The principal (or designees) will notify the Special Education Office of any special needs student who has been suspended. The Director of Special Education will keep these suspensions on record.
3. When it becomes known that a special needs student will be suspended for more than ten days in a school year:
  - 3.1. services will be provided in order to ensure that the student receives FAPE (Free and Appropriate Education), and
  - 3.2. a functional behavioral assessment will be conducted and a behavioral intervention plan will be implemented, and
  - 3.3. the team will conduct a manifestation determination in order to decide whether the infraction related to the student's disability, and if the team finds that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the District may not suspend the student.

### **11.3.12 In-School Suspension**

The student will be isolated from the student body under the supervision of the administration. Students will be expected to complete assignments given by the classroom teachers. The amount of suspension time may range from one class to five days and may include recess and lunch.

### **11.3.13 Out-of -School Suspension/Exclusion/Expulsion - Due Process**

Out-of-School Suspension/Exclusion/Expulsion - In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend students from attending school. These instances involve serious disruptions of the school community, or when other forms of discipline do not appear to be effective.

## **Student Management Policies**

Dawson Elementary School is a superb school with a long tradition of excellence. We are proud of our curriculum instruction and education support. Our school environment can only remain strong, however, if we maintain order and proper decorum in our building. All members of the Dawson community are expected to treat themselves and other with respect. Dawson School has clean

behavioral expectations for our students; there are consequences for those who choose to disobey our rules.

### **DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS**

1. **SHORT TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS:** A student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. In the event that the Principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.
2. **LONG TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (Principal/School Committee) will issue a written decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the Committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2
3. **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline, please contact the Principal or the Director of Special Education.

#### **11.3.15 WRSD Weapons Policy 6435**

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

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

1. Any weapon found in a locker or other storage space which is assigned to a student and which has a lock or other security device may be considered to be the property of the student assigned

to the locker or other storage space for the purpose of disciplinary action under the Student Discipline Code. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored event may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.

2. Violations of this policy may lead to expulsion under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71 Section 37H. Procedures for enforcement shall be contained in the Student Discipline Code.
3. In addition to the school discipline indicated in the Student Discipline Code, provided in paragraph B., appropriate criminal action shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, Section 10.
4. The weapons policy and regulations shall be implemented in accordance with the due process provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations of the Department of Education, and the Student Discipline code.

### **11.3.16 WRSDC Substance Abuse Policy 6433**

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

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

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

The District shall provide full cooperation with legal authorities.

### **11.3.17 Procedures at Dawson School**

Drug and Alcohol Related Incidents will be dealt with as follows:

1. A student asking for help
  - 1.1. Parents will be involved and, if they so desire, school personnel will work with the student and the parent to resolve the problem.
  - 1.2. In-house or community services will be explored for possible assistance.
2. A student suspected of using drugs or alcohol within the school
  - 2.1. If there is cause to suspect that the student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, the principal shall inform the parents, a conference will be held, and the principal may suspend the student up to five (5) days.
  - 2.2. Police will become involved at this point on an informal basis.
3. A student present where a drug or alcohol is found

- 3.1. If, in the judgment of the principal, the student was aware of the presence of drugs or alcohol, the parent shall be notified.
  - 3.2. Suspension is at the discretion of the principal (up to five [5] days).
  - 3.3. Notification of the problem shall be made to the police.
4. A student in possession of a drug or selling a drug on school property or at a school function
  - 4.1. The student shall be referred to the principal or to his/her designee.
  - 4.2. Parents will be notified immediately.
  - 4.3. Police shall be notified immediately and provided with the necessary information in order to determine if the material is an illegal substance.
  - 4.4. The student shall be suspended and referred to the Superintendent for further review and action he deems appropriate. This may include further suspension and/or expulsion.
5. A student in possession of alcohol
  - 5.1. Parents shall be informed.
  - 5.2. Student shall be suspended up to five (5) days.
  - 5.3. Police will be informed of an alcohol problem on an informal basis.

## **12 PROMOTING CIVIL RIGHTS AND PROHIBITING HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE CRIMES P6437**

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

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

### **Harassment:**

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

### **Bullying:**

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

### **Student and Staff Responsibilities:**

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

### **Reporting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination or Hate Crimes:**

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

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

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

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

### **Reporting Other Incidences:**

Under General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A for purposes of reporting child abuse and neglect to the Department of children and Families (DCF). Under MGL119, Sec. 51A, a school staff member who has



reasonable cause to believe that a student under the age of 18 is suffering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, school staff member or other caretaker must immediately report the abuse or neglect either directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or to the person designated by the school to accept those reports, who then promptly reports to DCF.

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

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

### **Protection Against Retaliation:**

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

### **Ensuring Safety During Investigation:**

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

### **Determination of Proceedings:**

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

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

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

- the allegation is serious enough that it appears to place the complainant or any other person at physical risk;
- the incident has resulted in a criminal charge;
- the incident involves a referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF);
- the allegation involves a serious form of harassment, discrimination or retaliation;
- the allegation involves bullying, where the District has intervened with the alleged student offender under the Code of Conduct for bullying on two prior occasions;
- there is a pending Formal Proceeding against the subject of the complaint;

- the subject of the complaint has previously been found to have violated this Policy after Formal Proceedings, or
- that a formal proceeding is otherwise appropriate under the circumstances, the designated official must then commence a Formal Proceeding.

### **Formal Proceedings-Investigation:**

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

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

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

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

### **Violations:**

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

**False Reports:**

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

**Discipline:**

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

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

**Oversight:**

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

## **13 Policy Relating to Sexual Harassment (P6434a)**

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

It will be a violation of this policy for any student to be sexually harassed by or to sexually harass another student, any employee or volunteer or other person connected with the District through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy. Any student who knowingly violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension, and/or expulsion.

Retaliation against a student for filing a complaint, under this policy or for assisting in an investigation of sexual harassment is a violation of this policy.

Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment should report the alleged harassment as soon as possible to a teacher, nurse, guidance counselor or school administrator who must convey the report to the building principal.

### **13.1. Definition:**

The legal definition of sexual harassment is:

Unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's success as a student;

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of education decisions affecting such individual(s); or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

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

Touching (arm, breast, buttocks, shoulders, etc.);

Verbal comments (about parts of the body, what type of sex the victim would "be good at," clothing, looks, etc.);

Name calling (from "honey" to "bitch" and worse);

Starting and repeating sexual rumors;

Leers and stares;

Sexual or "dirty" jokes;

Cartoons, pictures, and pornography;

Using the computer to leave sexual messages or graffiti, or to play sexually offensive computer games;

Gestures;

Pressure for sexual activity;

Cornering, blocking, standing too close, following, and invading "personal space";

Conversations that are too personal;

"Rating" an individual - for example, on a scale from 1 to 10;

Obscene t-shirts, hats, or pins;

Showing inappropriate videos and other materials during class;

Sexual assault and attempted sexual assault;

Massaging the neck, massaging the shoulders;

Touching oneself sexually in front of others;

Graffiti;

Making kissing sounds or smacking sounds, licking the lips suggestively;

Howling, catcalls, whistles;

Repeatedly asking someone out when he/she is not interested;

Pulling down someone's pants or forcibly removing other articles of clothing;

Facial expressions (winking, kissing, etc.);

"Slam books" (lists of students' names with derogatory sexual comments written about them by other students).

### **13.2. Complaint Procedure:**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **13.2.1. Informal Procedure:**

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

The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have a conversation between you and the respondent where you can tell the respondent that the behavior bothers you and must stop.

The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have you write a letter to the respondent saying that the behavior bothers you and must stop.

The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have separate conversations with you and the respondent.

Examples of possible resolutions are as follows:

Verbal statements of apology;

Letters of apology;

Assurances that the offensive behavior will end;

Disciplinary action.

The informal procedure will be completed within five (5) school days from the date the principal/superintendent receives the complaint. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee will notify you, your parent/guardian, and the respondent of the results of the informal procedure.

Resolution of the situation may or may not occur as a result of the informal procedure. If all the parties involved in this informal procedure feel that a resolution has been achieved, this discussion will remain confidential and no further action will be taken. If any of the parties feel that resolution has not been achieved, the following formal procedure will be used.

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

### **13.3.2. Formal Procedure:**

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

You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent asks that the formal procedure be used;

The principal/superintendent or his/her designee decides that the formal procedure should be used;  
or

You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent feels that the informal procedure was not helpful or adequate and one of the parties requests, within five (5) school days that the formal procedure be used.

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

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

All facts and circumstances of the incident;

A summary of the investigation, which will include interviews with anyone reasonably believed to have relevant information, namely, the individual filing the complaint, the respondent, and if either party is under the age of 18, their parents (if appropriate), witnesses, and anyone else who may have experienced similar conduct;

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

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

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

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

### **13.3.3. Other Resources:**

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

### **13.3.4. Retaliation:**

No one may retaliate against you for filing a complaint. Further, no one may retaliate against any student, employee, or any other person because they provided information or helped in the investigation.

If any person feels that he/she has been subjected to retaliation, he/she should file a complaint with the principal/superintendent.

#### **13.3.5. Considerations to Remember:**

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

The victim may be the same or opposite sex of the harasser.

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

### **14. Dawson School Safety and Security Plan**

#### **14.1. Access to School Building**

All doors will be locked during the school day. All visitors will be allowed entry by office personnel.

All visitors must report to the office upon entry. Signs will be located at all entrances to alert visitors to this request.

School volunteers will report to the office, sign in and wear an identification badge.

Unscheduled visits to classrooms will be discouraged without authorization from school administration.

#### **14.2. Safety in Classrooms**

Fire doors will be kept closed at all times.

Evacuation plans will be clearly marked and routes to egress will be clear and accessible.

Each classroom will have an individual monitoring system for students entering and leaving the room.

Equipment including but not limited to television carts and pianos will be moved by staff only.

Student daily attendance will be monitored at the start of each school day and parents of absent children will be notified.

#### **14.3. Safety in Hallways**

Students are expected to **walk** at all times in the hallways. Running and “speed walking” are not allowed in order to maintain maximum safety.

Teachers will be located in classroom doorways at arrival and dismissal to supervise hallway and classroom conduct.

Groups of students (gym, art, and music classes) will be supervised by an adult when moving between classes.

An adult will supervise all bus lines through the building, outside and on to the bus to insure safe loading.

#### **14.4. Safety on School Grounds**

Rules will be defined and published for safe use of the playground.

The school will provide adequate adult supervision at each recess break.

The gate will be closed to prevent through traffic from the rear entrance to the school grounds.

An adult will accompany walkers until they leave school property.

In accordance with state law, any child sixteen years of age or younger must wear a helmet while on a bicycle path or public way.

#### **14.5. Responsibilities of the Staff and the Plan Implementation**

Staff will:

Be alert to student welfare at all times.

Exercise good judgment in planning and implementing any instructional or other activity.

Notify the office should any strangers be observed in or around the building.

Review the rules for school evacuation procedures with aides and volunteers.

Annually review with the school nurse the rules for proper precaution when dealing with bodily fluids.

Inspect interior and exterior grounds regularly to insure safe conditions.

### **15. Students' Records/Internet Disclosure**

The Wachusett Regional School District shall:

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

#### **Regulations: WRSDC P6910**

Regulations:

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **16. Notice to Parents of Rights of Exemption: Human Sexual Education**

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

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

During instructional time, students will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be put on the spot to ask or answer questions or reveal personal information. Material will be presented in a balanced, factual way that makes clear that people may have strong religious and moral beliefs about issues such as birth control and abortion and that these beliefs must be respected.

Under Massachusetts General Law and School Committee Policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption, simply send a letter to the principal requesting an exemption for your child. No student who is exempted from this portion of the curriculum will be penalized. An alternative assignment may be provided to students who are exempted.

Refer to Wachusett Regional School Committee Policy 3313.1

## **17. Rules for Student Use of Internet and Email**

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

The District prohibits non-educational use of its network facilities, the Internet and the Internet access.

Access and use of the District's Internet is a privilege, not a right, and access to it may be denied to students violating this policy.

The District prohibits student use of "chat" lines without the permission and supervision of authorized professional staff members.

The District shall limit student use of email to District supervised programs.

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

At the elementary school level

Student work may be displayed on the school site web pages or District web page with the student's first name only when prior written permission is received from the parent/guardian annually.

Photographs of students may be displayed on the school site web pages or District web page identified only by classroom teacher or grade when prior written permission is received from the parent/guardian annually.

## **18. Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The Wachusett Regional School District will identify, evaluate and provide an appropriate public education to students who are disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Further information may be obtained from your school's principal or Catherine Knowles, the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services.

## **19. Child Find**

The Wachusett Regional School District wishes to identify all children, ages three years to twenty-one years, who reside within the District, have not yet graduated from high school, and who are in need of special education and related services. Any child suspected of having a disability and believed to be in need of special education and related services may be referred to the Administrator of Special Education, Wachusett Regional School District, Jefferson School, 1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522, (508) 829-1670 extension 238.

## **20. Policies Relating to Communication/Public Relations**

### **Distribution of Notices by Students (P8130)**

The Wachusett Regional School District shall permit the distribution of school-sponsored, PTO/PTA-sponsored and District related notices via the District's students.

Such distribution may include notices from non-profit groups when they are related to school sponsored activities.

In addition, notices regarding Member Town events for children, such as recreation, sports, the library and the like, may be distributed via District students.

All notices to be distributed shall be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

All materials disseminated by a non-school group should not be construed as being school sponsored or endorsed, nor shall the District be considered a partner or agent or otherwise responsible for the activities of the non-school group. The Superintendent may

require that the non-school group provide a disclaimer of district sponsorship of its material.

A non-school group's material should not be distributed to students during instructional time and, if possible, should not be intermingled with official school notices. Students should not be compelled to take home or read any such materials.

No materials involving solicitation, proselytizing, or for-profit activities shall be accepted for distribution. School newsletters and notices to parents may not publicize non-school groups or recruit new members for such groups. No notices from private groups will be accepted except as specified above.

## **21. Distribution of School Committee Publications (P1523)**

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

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

This policy shall be included in all student handbooks.

## **22. Policies Relating to Education**

### **22.1. Online Education Policy (P3311.31)**

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

The course is not offered at the school;

Although the course is offered at the school, the student will not be able to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict;

The course will serve as a supplement to extend instruction to those students who would be unable to attend classroom instruction;

Students who have been expelled from the regular school setting but who are eligible for continued educational services; or

In unique situations where there is consensus among student, teacher and administrative staff that, due to the differentiating needs of the student whether it be to accelerate and reinforce learning or for advanced learning opportunities, the student would require an additional service.

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

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

## **22.2. Non-Discrimination of Educational Materials (P3450)**

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin or sexual orientation.

As such, the Wachusett Regional School District supports a consistent process whereby textbooks and instructional materials are reviewed for bias and stereotyping, with the intent of maintaining a balanced curriculum.

Materials deemed unacceptable for students will be shared with the School Committee for final determination.

## **22.3. Enrichment (P3611.4)**

The Wachusett Regional School Committee is committed to providing a high quality for all students with the goal of maximizing the performance and achievement of every individual. Staff are encouraged and expected to use innovative teaching implementing the District curriculum in creative and flexible ways.

It is recognized that students possess a broad range of intellectual skills and creative talents that can be challenged by diverse and stimulating activities.

Wachusett Regional School District shall:

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

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

## **23. Behavior and Discipline**

### **23.1. Student Handbook**

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

1. student rights and responsibilities;
2. student behavior and discipline; and
3. glossary of terms. (definitions included in each section)

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

## **23.2. Liability for Damages**

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

## **23.3. Corporal Punishment**

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

## **23.4. Searches**

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

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

## **23.5. Student Suspensions**

The Wachusett Regional School District shall ensure that each pupil has an atmosphere and an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. To that end, schools shall maintain programs that maximize opportunities for learning and minimize disruptions to the educational process. The District's first concern shall be to help maintain pupils in school so that their learning process is not interrupted.

Students who create discipline problems that cannot be resolved through less severe means shall be suspended. As a last resort, the district shall, at the discretion of the school principal, and following the required due process, deny a pupil the right to attend school for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal's decision is final.

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

## **23.6. Expulsion**

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

# **24. Policy Relating to Personnel Management**

## **24.1. Physical Restraint (P5252)**

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

### **24.1.1 Training**

To ensure the proper use of restraint and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of restraint:

All staff will receive training regarding the District's restraint policy and will be reviewed annually. Employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment. Training will include the following:

The District's restraint policy;

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

### **24.1.2. Administration of Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint may only be used in the following circumstances:

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

Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:

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

Additional safety requirements:

- A restrained student shall not be prevented from breathing or speaking. A staff member will continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color and respiration, during the restraint.
- If at any time during a physical restraint the student demonstrates significant physical distress, as determined by the staff member, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

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

### **24.1.3. Reporting**

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

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



#### **24.1.4. Special Circumstances**

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may voluntarily waive the reporting requirements as stated above for restraints that do not result in serious injury to the student or to a staff member and do not constitute extended restraint.
- The Wachusett Regional School District may seek such individual waiver for students who present a high risk of frequent, dangerous behavior that may require the frequent use of restraint.
- The Wachusett Regional School District shall not require parental consent to such a waiver as a condition of admission or provision of services.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may withdraw consent to such waiver at any time without penalty.
- Extended restraints and restraints that result in serious injury to a student or staff member must be reported as described above, regardless of any individual waiver.
- The following documentation regarding individual waiver or reporting requirements will be maintained on-site in the student's file and will be made available for inspection to the Department of Education upon request:
  - Informed written consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) to the waiver, which shall specify those reporting requirements listed above that the parent(s)/guardian(s) agrees to waive; and
  - Specific information regarding when and how the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed regarding the administration of all restraints to the individual student.
- Nothing herein shall be construed to allow a program or classroom to receive an exemption or waiver from any of the requirements of this policy on behalf of all of the students enrolled in a particular program or classroom.

#### **24.1.5. Receiving/Investigating Complaints**

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

This policy shall be reviewed annually, provided to school staff, and shall be included in student handbooks.

(M.G.L. chapter 69, section 1B, and chapter 71, section 37G; Massachusetts Department of Education Regulation 603 CMR 46.00 Physical Restraint)

### **25. Athletics**

#### **25.1. Academic requirements**

1. Students must pass all subjects as reported on the most recent formal communication with parents.
2. Waivers may be granted upon the recommendation of the principal.

#### **25.2. Behavioral requirements**

The student must demonstrate appropriate behavior according to school standards. At the sole discretion of the principal, a student may be declared ineligible for participation because of chronic misbehavior or an incident of serious or major misconduct according to school standards.

Students scheduled to attend after-school disciplinary sessions on the day of a practice or game must attend the disciplinary session before being able to participate in the athletic activity. Students who are serving a suspension (internal or external) on the day of a practice or game are not allowed to participate in the athletic program activity on that day.

#### **25.3. Physical Fitness requirements**

A note from the student's physician that the student has had a physical in the past thirteen months or 395 days and is not restricted in any way from participating in the program is required.



## WRSD Student Handbook Addendum



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### **WRSD Nondiscrimination Statement**

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

## **School Committee Policies**

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

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

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

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

This policy shall be included in all Student Handbooks.

### **POLICY RELATING TO EDUCATION**

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

The Wachusett Regional School Committee is committed to providing a high quality education for all students with the goal of maximizing the performance and achievement of every individual. Staff is encouraged and expected to use innovative teaching implementing the District curriculum in creative and flexible ways.

It is recognized that students possess a broad range of intellectual skills and creative talents that can be challenged by diverse and stimulating activities.

Wachusett Regional School District shall:

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

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

## **POLICY RELATING TO EDUCATION**

### ***Policy 3625 TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS***

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

Prevention requires education, and healthy decision-making. The objectives of this program are:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, emotional, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Wachusett Regional School District Committee.

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians in accordance with state law. Additionally, the District shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

## **POLICY RELATING TO PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **POLICIES RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. age of the student;
2. mitigating circumstances;
3. previous behavior of the student; and
4. attitude of the student.

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

1. student rights and responsibilities;
2. student behavior and discipline; and
3. glossary of terms.

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

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

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



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

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

Student Suspensions. The Wachusett Regional School District shall ensure that each pupil has an atmosphere and an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning. To that end, schools shall maintain programs which maximize opportunities for learning and minimize disruptions to the educational process. The District's first concern shall be to help maintain pupils in school so that their learning process is not interrupted.

Students who create discipline problems which cannot be resolved through less severe means shall be suspended. As a last resort, the District shall, at the discretion of the school principal, and following the required due process, deny a pupil the right to attend school for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal's decision is final.

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

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

### ***Policy 6431.1 TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED***

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school-sponsored events by any individual, including, but not limited to, school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

### ***Policy 6433.1 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED***

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away: any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance except for prescribed medical purposes within any school or on school grounds at any time. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee (WRSDC) also prohibits the use or consumption by students of the aforementioned on school grounds or school buses, or at any school-sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **Verbal Screening**

- The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 10.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified of the screening prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.
- All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the District shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

### ***Policy 6434 SEXUAL HARASSMENT***

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

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

#### **DEFINITION:**

The legal definition of sexual harassment is:

Unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

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

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

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

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

### Complaint Procedure:

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

1. Speak or send a note to any employee of the school district whom you trust, (i.e., nurse, psychologist/counselor, teacher, principal, assistant principal, superintendent, etc.). You can also speak to your parents who can then notify the superintendent, principal or assistant principal. Remember that the complaint procedure does not start until school/District personnel receive the complaint.
2. Within two school days of receipt of the verbal complaint, the employee will notify the principal/superintendent, and your parent/guardian will be notified of the pending complaint.
3. If you have not or do not want to put the complaint in writing, the employee will do so. This should be done no later than two (2) school days after you have talked, or given the note, to the employee. The complaint has to be put in writing to make sure that the employee fully and correctly understands the issue(s). A copy of the complaint, in writing, will be reviewed with you and your parent/guardian to ensure accuracy, before it is shared with the subject of the complaint.
4. The employee will refer the written complaint to the principal/superintendent. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may speak with you to get more information. In any case, the principal/superintendent or his/her designee will speak to the person who is alleged to have sexually harassed you (called the "respondent") to obtain information as well.
  - a. If the principal/superintendent feels that the complaint can be resolved without a formal investigation, he/she may use the informal procedure.<sup>1</sup> The informal procedure simply attempts to resolve the situation and can be done in many ways. Examples are:
    - The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have a conversation between you and the respondent where you can tell the respondent that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
    - The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have you write a letter to the respondent saying that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
    - The principal/superintendent or his/her designee may have separate conversations with you and the respondent

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

Examples of possible resolutions are as follows:

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

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

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

#### Formal Procedure:

1. The formal procedure is used when any one of the following occurs:
  - a. You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent ask that the formal procedure be used;
  - b. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee decides that the formal procedure should be used; or
  - c. You, your parent/guardian, or the respondent feels that the informal procedure was not helpful or adequate and one of the parties request, within five (5) school days, that the formal procedure be used.
2. The formal procedure will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the complaint being filed with the principal/superintendent, or if the informal procedure was used, within twenty (20) school days of the request to start the formal procedure.
3. The principal/superintendent or his/her designee shall investigate the complaint and complete a written report, which will include:
  - All facts and circumstances of the incident;
  - A summary of the investigation, which will include interviews with anyone reasonably believed to have relevant information, namely, the individual filing the complaint, the respondent, and, if either party is under the age of 18, their parents (if appropriate), witnesses, and anyone else who may have experienced similar conduct;
  - A description of any actions already taken and/or proposed by the principal/superintendent or his/her designee.

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

If the principal/superintendent or his/her designee finds that sexually harassing conduct has occurred, then he/she may discipline the respondent, require the respondent to apologize to the complainant,

suggest that the respondent go to counseling, or require the respondent to attend training, refer the matter for review by state or local law enforcement authorities, or any combination of the above.

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

#### Other Resources:

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

#### Retaliation:

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

#### Considerations To Remember:

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

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

#### ***Policy 6435 WEAPONS***

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

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

1. Any weapon found in a locker or other storage space which is assigned to a student and which has a lock or other security device may be considered to be the property of the student assigned

to the locker or other storage space for the purpose of disciplinary action under the Student Discipline Code. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored event may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.

2. Violations of this policy may lead to expulsion under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71 Section 37H. Procedures for enforcement shall be contained in the Student Discipline Code.
3. In addition to the school discipline indicated in the Student Discipline Code, provided in paragraph B., appropriate criminal action shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, Section 10.
4. The weapons policy and regulations shall be implemented in accordance with the due process provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations of the Department of Education, and the Student Discipline code.

### ***Policy 6437 PROMOTING CIVIL RIGHTS AND PROHIBITING HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE CRIMES***

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

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

#### **Harassment:**

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

#### **Student and Staff Responsibilities**

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

complaint, or who helps someone report or file a complaint, or for cooperating in the investigation of a report of complaint.

#### Reporting Harassment, Discrimination or Hate Crimes

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

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

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

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

#### Reporting Other Incidences

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

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



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

#### Protection Against Retaliation

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

#### Ensuring Safety During Investigation

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

#### Determination of Proceedings

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

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

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

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

the designated official must then commence a Formal Proceeding.

#### Formal Proceedings-Investigation

The designated official will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and, if a student, with their parent(s) or guardian(s), to tell them about the formal process, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the remedy the complainant seeks. The

designated official will also explain that the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible, but that the District cannot promise absolute confidentiality, and may not be able to withhold the complainant's identity from the subject of the complaint, since such a promise could interfere with the District's ability to enforce its policy, conduct a fair and thorough investigation, or impose disciplinary or corrective action.

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

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

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

### Violations

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

### False Reports

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

### Discipline

If a student has been found in violation of this policy, the District will impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action to end and prevent further occurrences of the complained of action(s). The District will take into account harm suffered by the victim(s) as well as any damage to school or District

property. The nature of any action taken must comply with District and school disciplinary policies. Any disciplinary or corrective action shall conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law.

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

### Oversight

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. Definitions

**Bullying:** *The repeated use by one or more students or by a school staff member, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional, of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.*

**Cyber-bullying:** *Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.*

*Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## B. Policy Jurisdiction

For purposes of this policy, bullying is prohibited:

- 1) *on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, at a function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a school; and*
- 2) *at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.*

## C. Reporting Requirements

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

## D. Investigation / Procedures

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

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

Steps to be taken will include:

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

E. Consequences from Findings:

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior M.G.L. c. 71 § 370(d)(v). Skill building approaches include offering individualized skill-building sessions based on our district's anti-bullying curricula, providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with our counselors and psychologists, implementing a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral support to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals, meeting with parents and guardians to engage parent support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home, adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills, and making a referral for evaluation. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance the plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

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

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

Consequences should consider these specific issues:

- a. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the target
- b. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the target
- c. Student's age, development and degree of maturity
- d. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- e. Prior disciplinary history and continuing patterns of behavior

- f. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- g. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- h. The need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.

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

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

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

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

#### F. Notification Obligations:

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

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

“A principal's notification to a parent about an incident or a report of bullying or retaliation must comply with confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00,

and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations, 34 CFR Part 99, as set forth in 603 CMR 49.07.”

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

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

#### G. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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

##### (i) Development of the Plan

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

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

The plan shall be reviewed and updated biennially.

##### School-wide Bullying Prevention and Intervention Program

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

##### (ii) Contents of the Plan

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



- (a) descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation;
- (b) procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians, and others to report bullying or retaliation;
- (c) a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously but that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
- (d) a provision that any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action;
- (e) procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;
- (f) procedures for collecting, maintaining and reporting bullying incident data;
- (g) the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.
- (h) clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection
- (i) strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets and appropriate family members;
- (j) procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation
- (k) provision for the notification of local law enforcement agencies if the principal reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor;
- (l) provision for annual and ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development training shall be in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c.71, §37O;
- (m) provision for the implementation of a research-based anti-bullying curriculum in grades PK-12 and for informing parents regarding the curriculum contents, the dynamics of bullying, and online safety and cyber-bullying and strategies for reinforcing the curriculum at home; and
- (n) the specific steps that the District shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

(iii) Implementation of the Plan

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

(iv) Public Notice

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

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

## ***Policy 6515 STUDENT PUBLICATIONS***

The Wachusett Regional School Committee recognizes and supports student publications and other literary activities that give students an experience in journalism.

The School Committee recognizes that the District must maintain a level of objectivity deemed to be in the best interest of the community and, to this end, the following procedures are in effect:

1. No school publication will accept advertising that is political, religious, or discriminatory in nature.
2. All advertising is subject to review and approval by the principal or a designee relative to content and appropriateness.
3. Final editorial control and approval of all materials intended for publication are the responsibility of, and may be subject to the approval of, the school administration.
4. This policy shall be referenced in the “Student Handbook”.
5. A statement indicating the editorial control by the school administration regarding all advertising will be included on order forms or other similar correspondence.

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

### **Section I: Introduction**

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

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

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

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

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

- Educate students, staff, and parents/guardians about the concerns and benefits of social media
- Access social media during and beyond the school day for educational purposes, social/emotional development, and other acceptable school-related uses
- Explore ways to integrate social media with classroom teaching and learning
- Integrate student publication with authentic social media environments
- Encourage the use of technology-based interventions to support student learning
- Allow for ongoing interaction between students and teachers for appropriate school-related use

- Promote student interaction with peers, outside organizations, and professionals in a global community
- Offer and encourage student use of online resources to communicate and seek support for bullying and safety concerns
- Encourage parent/guardian interaction with teachers and schools through the use of digital communications and social media environments

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

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

- All use of social media tools must comply with District acceptable use policies, inclusive of but not limited to Policy 6532 Videotaping and Photographing of District Students and Policy 6531.2 BYOD (Bring Your Own Device).
- All staff and student online communication is subject to state and federal laws, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and District policies governing communication
- All staff and student online communication is subject to policies ensuring safe environments for students and staff free from bullying, harassment, and other forms of unwanted communication that threaten well-being and productivity
- Staff and District administration are encouraged to collaborate in developing social media tools
- Staff social media accounts used to communicate with current WRSD students will be established using District email accounts and will remain separate from any personal staff social media accounts
- Educational social media accounts maintained by staff members shall not contain personal information
- District staff shall not subscribe to students' personal postings in social media platforms not controlled or monitored by District staff

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

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

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

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

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

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Device Security - As with any personal property, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that any personally-owned device is safe and secure. The District is not liable or responsible for damage, theft, or loss of any student-owned device or any information stored on a student-owned device.
- Network Security – Student devices shall have up-to-date antivirus protection. Computers or other devices infected with malicious software or lacking proper virus protection will not be allowed on school networks.
- Technical Support - The District does not have the resources to provide technical support for privately owned devices. Accordingly, District technology personnel will NOT attempt to troubleshoot or repair student-owned computers or other devices.
- Cellular Data Charges - Cellular devices may incur usage fees from cellular providers for texting or when accessing the internet without being properly connected to the school's internal wireless network. The District is not responsible for any charges related to texting or internet usage on student-owned devices.

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

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

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

Procedures for requesting alternate transportation to and from school shall be contained in the student handbook. The high school student will be responsible to inform parent/guardian on taking a late bus or alternate means of transportation

K-8 students will be required to present written permission notice to the school from parent/guardian when using alternate means of transportation.

In case of emergencies, oral notification will be an acceptable alternative with the administration making a written record of the notification.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The safety of students is a high priority for the Wachusett Regional School District. Students who sustain head injuries while in extracurricular athletic activities and those involved in their treatment must follow the protocol based on 105 C.M.R 201.000

(<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/105-cmr-201.pdf>) found online on the high school and middle schools’ websites as well as in the student handbooks.

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

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

### ***Policy 6616 INSURANCE***

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

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

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy school environment for all students that is inclusive of school-wide practices that will minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students while participating in all elements of the school day. School-wide practices along with identified accommodations, as deemed necessary by school personnel, parents/guardians and/or the student's physician, will provide all students the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities. The successful management of this policy will require a partnership among the parents/guardians, the student, and all school personnel involved with the education, extra-curricular activities and the transportation of the student.

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

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

medical orders necessary to maintain a supply of all medications, including epinephrine as well as the ability to administer the epinephrine as necessary.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### ***Policy 6631 NON-DISCRIMINATION***

The WRSDC policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. 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, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, their complaint should be registered with a compliance officer.

The compliance officer's name and contact information may be obtained through the Superintendent's office or the District website.

### ***Policy 6910 STUDENT RECORDS***

The Wachusett Regional School District shall:

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

### **Regulations:**

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

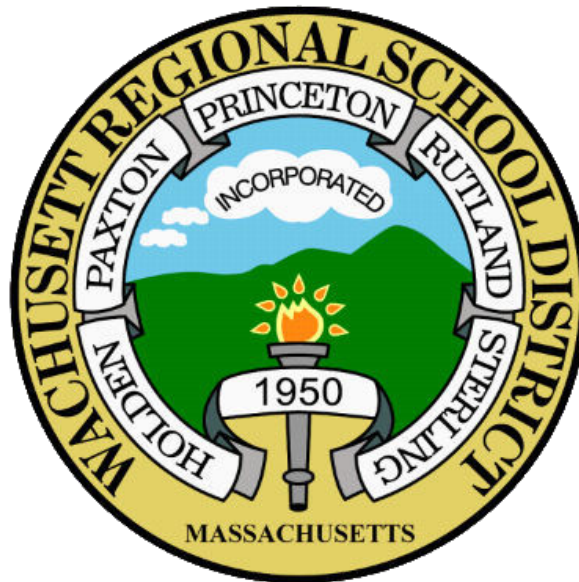
The District Administration shall not release a student's social security number or date and place of birth to anyone except as required by law.

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

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

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

# **Wachusett Regional School District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**



**Revised 3/10/20**

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# Wachusett Regional School District Mission Statement

*The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment. We will integrate the talent, experience, and knowledge of all members of our community to develop lifelong learners, equipped to think critically in an ever-changing, global society.*

## Wachusett Regional School District Core Values

### **Commitment to Excellence**

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

### **Perseverance**

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

### **Critical Thinking**

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

### **Collaboration**

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

### **Global Citizenship and Responsibility**

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

### **Creativity and Innovation**

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

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

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

# I: LEADERSHIP

The WRSD Leadership is committed to implementing the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and in conjunction with community efforts, to promote and ensure a safe and positive teaching and learning environment.

District leaders, community leaders, teachers, parents, guardians, and student leaders, have a primary role in teaching students to regard one another in a respectful, civil, and dignified manner to create an environment that improves and sustains the emotional and behavioral health of all students. These stakeholders will promote understanding and respect for diversity and differences in all venues through modeling respectful behavior and promoting and sustaining a commitment to programs that are focused on supporting social-emotional development at all grade levels.

The WRSD will provide age-appropriate anti-bullying educational experiences for all students in the district. As a school district, WRSD will enhance student achievement by creating and maintaining an educational environment where all students feel safe. In the unlikely event that a student feels uncomfortable, the school culture will strongly support student communication of their concerns to teachers, staff, administrators, parents or guardians.

## A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Wachusett Regional School District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in consultation with school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, parents and guardians.

Prior to the presentation of this plan to the School Committee, a final draft of the plan will be made available on the WRSD website for Public Comment. The plan will be reviewed biennially (every 2 years).

## B. Implementation

Consistent with applicable laws and regulations, all Principals will be implementing, with the support of the Superintendent and/or the School Committee, the following documents/ action plans:

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

## C. Planning & Oversight

The Wachusett Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including school and district administrators, school-based mental health staff, parents, school committee members, and local law enforcement. The principal or designee is

responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan, except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or assistant principals as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other related steps, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

## II: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

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

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

### B. Ongoing professional development.

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

- Effective and developmentally or age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally or age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to bullying;
- Current research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Current information on the nature of cyberbullying



Professional development will also continue to address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans.

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

- Emphasizing the importance of establishing and maintaining supportive student-teacher/staff relationships in school
- Emphasizing the importance of repairing harm (repairing relationships) in alignment with the Restorative Practices approach
- Teaching tolerance and respect for the diversity and differences that exist among people
- Focusing on building students' social-emotional learning competencies and skills
- Incorporating trauma-sensitive teaching strategies
- Strategies for promoting prosocial bystander actions

### C. Written notice to staff

The school district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Sections related to staff responsibilities will be included in the District Employee Handbook.

### III: ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting a positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying social and emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed.

Below is a summary of strategies aimed to provide supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation, these services will be available to reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and to provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors.

The Director of Social-Emotional Learning will regularly update and provide to all schools a list of mental health resources available in the community as well as community programs/partnerships that support student well-being. School administrators, staff, and parents will collaborate in determining appropriate referral services.

#### A. Identifying resources.

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

#### B. Counseling and other services

The District will work collaboratively with school mental health staff and outside agencies to maintain a list of providers that will support schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Schools may consider current tools including, but not limited to: behavioral intervention plans, restorative practices, social skills groups, and other related resources and approaches. The district will reference the American School Counseling Association for guidance on these matters.

#### C. Students with disabilities

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

#### D. Referral to outside services

The school district will use a referral procedure for referring students and families to outside services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and local policies.

## E. Student Surveys and Data Collection

At least once every four years, the Wachusett Regional School District will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools.

Additionally, the district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## IV: ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

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

- Each grade level will be provided developmentally-appropriate and evidence-based curriculum and instruction to teach pro-social skills that support academic success. Engaging Schools identifies these skill sets as follows: ([see Appendix C: Learning & Life Competencies](#))
  1. ***Self-Awareness:*** *The ability to accurately assess my feelings, behavior, interests, values, and strengths through my experiences, and name and describe the benefits of skills, behaviors, and mindsets that help me to be a good student.*
  2. ***Self-Management:*** *The ability to express emotions skillfully, manage my emotions by using strategies, sustain focus and pay attention, and accept help, feedback, correction, or consequences with good will.*
  3. ***Social Efficacy:*** *The ability to listen respectfully, make an effort to understand the emotions, words, and actions of others, and help and support others.*
  4. ***Academic Efficacy:*** *The ability to invest in quality work, organize to learn and study, and set goals and self-assess.*
- The entire school community (e.g. students, teachers, parents, bus drivers, lunchroom staff, janitorial staff, etc.) will work collaboratively to promote a caring and supportive school environment among all of its staff and students.

### A. Non-Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:

- The administration will review student behavioral expectations during assemblies during the first few weeks of school.
- The definition of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation and the protocol for handling incidents of bullying will be emphasized.
- Staff presence will be increased in areas where bullying is most likely to occur, such as bus arrival and departure locations, hallways, lunchrooms, recess, and near restrooms.
- A variety of evidence-based prevention programs to promote diversity awareness and respect for self and others will be explored and offered. District schools currently use the following programs: Second Step, Responsive Classroom, MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center), and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) ([See Appendix B for full descriptions of these programs](#))
- Schools will encourage student involvement in school events and extra-curricular activities to reduce isolation and the likelihood of becoming a target of bullying.
- Schools will promote a culture of kindness and community where students are empowered to speak out against bullying.

## B. Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:

- When possible, Learning and Life Competencies for School Success, including related target behaviors, will be incorporated into classroom activities and instruction, as well as other aspects of the school day ([See Appendix C](#))

## V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

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

All disciplinary actions will balance the need for safety and accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior and/or lagging social-emotional skills ([see Learning & Life Competencies in Appendix C](#)).

### A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation:

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing.

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the School Committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

When reporting in writing, administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians, school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, playground monitors, and any and all other staff and community members can access the “**Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Retaliation Incident Referral Form**” ([see Appendix A](#)) in the Main Office of the school, guidance/school psychologist’s office, the nurse’s office, and on the Wachusett Regional School District website.

#### 1. Reporting by Staff:

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

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

The Wachusett Regional School District believes that it is the responsibility of students, parents, guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Principal or designee.

Any individual who wishes to file such a complaint may request, and shall be provided with, assistance from a school staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff

member, or with the principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The filing of a false or fabricated complaint of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is strictly prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action ([See Appendix A for reporting forms](#)).

## B. Responding to Report of Bullying, Cyberbullying or Retaliation- Allegations of Bullying

### 1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

### 2. Obligations to Notify Others

#### a. Notice to Parents or Guardians

Once an assessment of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation has been made and been deemed valid, the Principal or his/her designee will immediately inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the target and the aggressor of the investigation determination and any actions taken to prevent further incidents. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

While prior notice of an investigation shall not be required, there may be incidents where parents are notified prior to the Investigation.

In providing notice of investigation findings, the Principal shall maintain the privacy of any child/individual who is not the child of the parents/guardians to whom the notice is provided. The Principal shall not report specific information to the target’s parents/guardians about the disciplinary action taken against an aggressor unless it involves a directive for there to be no communication between the aggressor(s) and victim(s), or another directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The Principal shall also notify the parents about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Problem Resolution System and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

#### b. Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All

communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

### c. Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

## 3. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s), student developmental factors, and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation, the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

## 4. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will:

- 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
- 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.



The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directives that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

## 5. Responses to Bullying / Consequences from Findings

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in its level of seriousness and what impact it has on the target and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying," as defined in this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, will generally warrant disciplinary action against the aggressor, whether and to what extent disciplinary actions are imposed (e.g., detention, suspension, etc.) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Building Principal or his/her designee.

District administrators will integrate a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach compensatory social-emotional skills and target behaviors. The needs and safety of the target will also be considered as part of restoring resolution to the bullying matter. Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the building Principal or his/her designee and will address the acts of the aggressor and the needs of the target, and assure the sanction against bullying behavior is enforced with the goal that the bullying behavior will cease and desist.

Consequences should be considered with the following factors in mind:

- A. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the target
- B. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the target
- C. Student's age, development, and degree of maturity
- D. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- E. Prior disciplinary history and persistent patterns of behavior
- F. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- G. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- H. The need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior and social-emotional skills.

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

- A. Report to law enforcement
- B. Referral to an outside agency
- C. Reassignment of classes
- D. Reassignment of seats in lunch, bus, class, etc.
- E. Out-of-school suspension
- F. In-school suspension
- G. Detention
- H. Loss of privileges (including before and after school activities)
- I. Temporary removal from the classroom

J. Verbal reprimand

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

- A. Reparation to the target in alignment with the Restorative Practices philosophy and model
- B. Completion of a related curricular based assignment(s)
- C. Meeting with Civil Rights Coordinator
- D. Completion of community service designed to increase the aggressor's skills in empathizing with others
- E. Therapeutic support, including counseling or referral, for both aggressor(s) and target(s)

***\*\* All completed Bullying Reports will be forwarded to Central Office for record-keeping and review. \*\****

## VI: COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Wachusett Regional School District recognizes the importance of collaboration with families in order to optimize the school's effectiveness in preventing and responding to bullying.

### A. Parent Education & Resources:

The District will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and social competency work being done in the District. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and other similar organizations.

### B. Notification Requirements:

Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

## VII: PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

All students will be afforded the same protection under this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, regardless of their status under the law.[L1] We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- A. on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, at a function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or bullying school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a school; and at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through
- B. the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. As stated in M.G.L. c.71 Sec.37O nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

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

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## VIII: PROBLEM RESOLUTION

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

## IX: DEFINITIONS:

### 1. Bullying:

The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- I. causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- II. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his/her property;
- III. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- IV. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- V. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### 2. Cyber-bullying:

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

### 3. Hostile Environment:

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

### 4. Target / Victim:

A student who has been subject to bullying or retaliation

### 5. Aggressor/ Perpetrator:

A student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation.

## 6. Local law enforcement agency:

Local police department

## 7. Principal:

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

## 8. Retaliation:

Intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

## X: RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

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



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Bullying Reporting Forms



## Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

### Bullying, Cyber Bullying, and Retaliation Incident Referral Form

Thank you for taking a few minutes to fill out this form. Our intent is to take all bullying reporting incidents seriously and to investigate them immediately. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report, however please be advised that making a **knowingly false report** may result in disciplinary consequences.

This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g.

1. Name of Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)  
☐ I would like to remain anonymous
2. Date of filing of this report \_\_\_\_\_
3. Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_
4. What type of incident was this? ☐ Bullying ☐ Cyber Bullying ☐ Online (texting / cell phone)
5. Where did the incident take place: ☐ on school property ☐ on a school bus ☐ at a bus stop  
☐ at a school sponsored activity/event ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
6. Please tell us who you are: ☐ Student ☐ Parent ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Teacher ☐ Administrator
7. If student, state your school: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom \_\_\_\_\_
8. If staff, state your school or work site: \_\_\_\_\_
9. To the best of your knowledge, did a physical injury result from this incident?  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

#### 10. Information about the Incident:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Name of target (person who was bullied): _____      | Check whether:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Name of the aggressor person who is bullying: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   |
| Name of any witnesses: _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   |
| _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   |

Describe what you know about this incident on the back side of this form. (Please be as specific as possible)  
After you have completed this form, please submit it to a school administrator.

Jefferson School  
1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522  
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680  
www.wrsd.net



## *Wachusett Regional School District*

*Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling*

### **Student Reporting Form for Bullying and Retaliation**

*Our intent is to take all bullying reporting incidents seriously and to investigate them immediately. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an initial report. Please be advised that making a **knowingly false report** may result in disciplinary consequences.*

*This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g.*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate **what** is happening, **when** it is happening and **where** it is happening.

**What:**

**When:**

**Where:**

**After you have completed this form, please submit it to a school administrator.**

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**Jefferson School**  
1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522  
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680  
[www.wrsd.net](http://www.wrsd.net)

## APPENDIX B: Research-Based Curricula

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### **Second Step: (K - 8)**

Second Step is a universal intervention designed for use with all students in a school. Second Step teaches students how to effectively manage their emotions and demonstrate self-control. Research indicates that children who learn and use these skills do better in school academically. Direct observation of student behavior in various settings (i.e., classroom cafeteria, and playground) during different stages of the intervention (i.e., baseline, two weeks after completion, and 6 months after completion) revealed decreases in physical aggression and increases in neutral and pro-social behavior.

Link for further information:

[http://www.cfchildren.org/Portals/1/SS\\_BPU/BPU\\_DOC/SEL\\_Bullying\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.cfchildren.org/Portals/1/SS_BPU/BPU_DOC/SEL_Bullying_Paper.pdf)

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### **Responsive Classroom: (K - 8)**

*Responsive Classroom* is a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning (SEL). We believe that high-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community.

Link for further information:

<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research/>

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### **PBIS:**

Positive behavior support is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occur. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining Tier 1 supports (universal), Tier 2 supports (targeted group), and Tier 3 supports (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making targeted behaviors less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.

Link for further information, Elementary:

<http://www.pbis.org/resource/785>

Link for further information, Middle / High School:

<http://www.pbis.org/resource/900>

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**MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center)**  
K-5 Bullying and Cyberbullying Curriculum

The goal of this curriculum is to educate children in grades K-5 about bullying and cyberbullying and to raise their awareness about how these behaviors impact children. It utilizes both Teacher-As-Educator and Peer Learning Models.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/Evaluation%20of%20the%20Massachusetts%20Aggression%20Reduction%20Center%20K-2.pdf>

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### **Grades 6-12 Advisory Curriculum (Bullying & Cyberbullying)**

This is a bullying, cyberbullying, and cyber-behaviors curriculum, designed for use by grades 6 through 12. The Curriculum is divided into Lesson Plans designed to be conducted in a 20-minute period of time. The intention is to enable schools to use the Curriculum either during Advisory Periods regular class periods.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/advisory-curriculum>

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### **High School Cyber-skills Curriculum**

The goal of this research-based curriculum is to increase the knowledge and awareness of children in grades 9-12 about cyber-skills.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/hscyberskills>

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## APPENDIX C: Learning & Life Competencies

### Positive **MINDSETS** that set the stage for developing Learning and Life Competencies

A **mindset** is a set of deeply held assumptions and beliefs that drive behavior and create powerful incentives to sustain prior habits, choices, and preferred ways of doing things. Mindsets set the stage for academic engagement and developing Learning and Life Competencies. Self-identification with the values of schooling and the roles of a learner will influence the attitudes and perceptions a student holds in relation to his/her learning and academic performance. When students feel that school and school work have value, when they feel a sense of belonging in the classroom, and they approach learning tasks with positive expectations, they have a capacity to sustain their effort over time and express their curiosity, enthusiasm, and personal interest in what they are learning. This boosts students' confidence about their day-to-day experiences and fires up hope in their future. The examples below provide a range of entry points for conversations with students.

#### EXAMPLES:

- School and school work have value for me.
- I belong to an academic community.
- I approach tasks with positive expectations and an open mind.
- I accept challenges, take academic risks, and push myself to excel.
- My ability and competence grow with my effort.
- I express curiosity, enthusiasm, or personal interest in what I am learning.
- I cultivate personal talents, values, and positive qualities of character.
- I have hope in a positive future I can make for myself.

Learning and Life Competencies for School, College, and Career Success		
Skill Set	Competency	Target Behaviors
Self-Awareness	I know myself.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am aware that my beliefs, mindsets, and emotions impact my capacity to learn and be skillful.</li> <li>2. I can accurately assess my feelings, behavior, interests, values, and strengths through my experiences.</li> <li>3. I know when I have done the right thing and when I make mistakes.</li> <li>4. I know when I bother others or upset them.</li> </ol>
	I am aware of skills, behaviors, and attitudes that help me.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. I can name and describe the benefits of skills, behaviors, and mindsets that help me be a good student and a good person.</li> <li>6. I know what motivates me.</li> <li>7. I know when it is important to follow rules, procedures, and norms of acceptable behavior.</li> </ol>
Self-Management	I identify, express, and manage emotions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. I name and assess emotions accurately.</li> <li>9. I express emotions skillfully even when I feel angry, frustrated, or disrespected.</li> <li>10. I manage my emotions by using strategies to cool down and regain my balance.</li> </ol>
	I exhibit self-regulation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. I sustain my focus and pay attention throughout an activity or task.</li> <li>12. I work silently without bothering others.</li> <li>13. I accept help, feedback, correction, or consequences with good will.</li> <li>14. I follow instructions, procedures and rules.</li> </ol>
	I demonstrate perseverance and resiliency.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. I persist in my effort until I "get it" and finish the task.</li> <li>16. I pursue and sustain efforts to complete long-term tasks and achieve long-term goals related to my future.</li> <li>17. I can right myself and bounce back even when I experience temporary setbacks, failure, or adversity.</li> </ol>



Learning and Life Competencies for School, College, and Career Success		
Skill Set	Competency	Target Behaviors
Social Efficacy	I communicate and problem solve effectively	18. I focus my attention on people who are speaking to me. 19. I listen respectfully and paraphrase/summarize or question before speaking. 20. I use school-appropriate language and project appropriate body language. 21. I use problem-solving strategies to work things out. 22. I resolve interpersonal conflicts constructively.
	I demonstrate empathy and respect.	23. I make an effort to understand the emotions, words and actions of others. 24. I respect the dignity of each person and their rights to be heard, to be valued, and to learn in a safe classroom. 25. I accept other viewpoints respectfully and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences. 26. I stand up for people whose rights, identity, or dignity have been violated. 27. I interrupt or call attention to incidents of bullying, harassment, prejudice, or teasing.
	I foster healthy relationships.	28. I greet and talk to people in a friendly manner. 29. I use words of common courtesy like please and thank you, excuse me, sorry about that. 30. I am dependable and follow through on what I say I am going to do. 31. I help and support others.
	I am assertive and I self-advocate.	32. I use neutral, non-aggressive language to express myself. 33. I can verbalize and present my ideas my values, and my needs to others. 34. I take initiative to seek help. 35. I can navigate across different settings in order to present my best self to others.
	I cooperate and participate.	36. I work effectively with different students. 37. I take on various roles and responsibilities to complete the learning task. 38. I take turns, listen to and encourage others, and do my fair share.
	I demonstrate civic responsibility.	39. I volunteer to take on leadership roles or extended responsibilities in a group. 40. I do positive things to make class a good place to learn. 41. I take responsibility for my words and actions and acknowledge the impact of my behavior on the community. 42. I make responsible decisions.
Academic Efficacy	I invest in quality work.	43. I attempt each part of the question, task, assignment, or test. 44. I revise, edit/proof, and correct for quality and accuracy. 45. I push myself to take academic risks. 46. I complete assigned tasks regularly. 47. I engage in critical, reflective and creative thinking.
	I organize to learn and study.	48. I attend class every day and arrive to class on time. 49. I organize myself and manage my materials. 50. I prioritize and manage my time and tasks. 51. I figure out the instructions before I begin a task. 52. I use a range of study strategies to remember and apply key knowledge, skills and understandings.
	I set goals and self-assess.	53. I make sure that I know the criteria for high quality work. 54. I set specific learning goals and identify and adjust action steps to improve my grade. 55. I monitor my academic progress through written and oral self-reflection and conferencing. 56. I can identify the evidence that shows my effort to meet my goal.