



Jean Fitzgerald  
*Interim Superintendent*

# Watertown High School

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Steve Watson  
*Headmaster*  
Annmarie Boudreau  
*Associate Headmaster*

July, 2011

To Student/Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to Watertown High School. As a community committed to all of its members fulfilling their potential, it's important for us to have some basic ground rules. This handbook is meant to outline those expectations and answer many of the questions you might have about student life at Watertown High School. Included in this handbook are a list of important dates, attendance procedures, rules of conduct, policies, laws, and other information that will assist you. I hope you find this handbook easy to use and a helpful guide to our school community.

**Please review this handbook – student and parent/guardian together – and then sign and return the signature pages at the back to the school. The signature page must be turned in no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Please also contact me or our associate headmaster, Annmarie Boudreau, if you have any questions or concerns. Communication between the school and you is a cornerstone of our goal to make Watertown High School a community that staff, students, and parents all take ownership of together.

As we begin a new academic year, I trust that you are as eager as I am to see what good work we can do together.

Sincerely yours,

Steven Watson  
Headmaster

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# **Watertown High School Mission**

The mission of Watertown High School is to nurture lifelong learners through examination of human achievements, development of essential skills, and promotion of civic responsibility and ethics. We are committed to a rigorous curriculum designed to foster students' growth as creative and independent thinkers. We will provide a safe and nurturing environment in which students and faculty have the opportunity to realize their potential.

## **Expectations**

### **Student Expectations**

Students at Watertown High School will:

1. Exhibit proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in order to communicate effectively.
2. Foster creativity as an avenue of research and self-expression.
3. Use critical and analytical thinking skills in order to make effective decisions and solve problems.
4. Employ technological skills to meet the demands of an evolving society.
5. Understand knowledge of the natural world and contributions of diverse cultures.
6. Develop skills for active and healthy lifestyles.

### **School Expectations**

The Administration, Faculty, and Staff of Watertown High School will:

1. Offer a learning experience rich in diverse and innovative academic and co-curricular programs.
2. Strengthen partnerships, which broaden student awareness of themselves and their world.
3. Encourage all students to pursue academic excellence.
4. Continue programs recognizing the background, diversity, and life experiences of all students.
5. Recognize the achievements of all constituencies in the high school community.
6. Advocate for adequate funding of programs.
7. Expand opportunities for effective professional development.

### **Community Expectations**

Members of the Watertown High School Community will:

1. Be accountable and respectful in their behavior and actions.
2. Accept personal responsibility for pursuing their education.
3. Appreciate, understand, and respect individual and group similarities and differences.
4. Develop the skills necessary to resolve disagreements and reduce tension.
5. Participate in meaningful community and school activities.
6. Comprehend and acknowledge individual and group rights and responsibilities in the community, state, nation and world.
7. Provide input on formulating school procedure.
8. Utilize the available counseling services effectively.

## Calendar of Key Dates 2011 – 2012

*All dates subject to change. Consult the WHS website for the most up-to-date information.*

Sept. 6 .....School Opens/Freshman Orientation; 9:55 start, Grades 10-12

Sept. 7 .....Freshman Orientation; 9:55 start, Grades 10-12

Sept. 7,8 .....ID/School Pictures Taken

Sept. 15.....Coffee with the Headmaster and Guidance; 8:00 a.m.

Sept. 20.....WPS Instrument Distribution at WMS, 6:00 p.m.

Sept. 20,21,22 .....Senior Guidance in English Classes

Sept. 27,28,29 .....Freshman Guidance Orientation in English Classes

Oct. 1 ..... College Board/SAT Testing (not at WHS)

Oct. 5,6 .....Registration for PSAT Testing - Lunches in Cafeteria

Oct. 6 .....Back to School Night - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Oct. 7. ....Registration Deadline for Nov. 5 SAT Testing

Oct. 7 .....Mid-term Progress Reports Issued

Oct 10. ....Columbus Day - No School

Oct. 11 .....Full Day Staff Development – No School

Oct 13. ....WHS College Fair, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. in the gym

Oct. 14 .....ID/School Pictures makeup date

Oct. 15. ....PSAT Testing at WHS - 7:45 a.m.

Oct. 20 .....National Honor Society Induction; 7:00 p.m., Shaw Auditorium

Oct.27 .....Senior Parents' Night, 7:00 p.m. Lecture Hall

Oct. TBD .....PTSO Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 5 .....College Board/SAT Testing at WHS - 7:45 a.m.

Nov. 8 .....Full Day Staff Development – No School Students

Nov. 9,10. ....MCAS Math Retest

Nov. 10 .....End of Term 1

Nov. 11 .....Veteran's Day – No School

Nov.14-16.....MCAS ELA Retest

Nov. 17. ....Coffee with the Headmaster and Guidance – 8:00 a.m.

Nov. 17 .....Financial Aid Night - 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Lecture Hall

Nov. 23 .....Thanksgiving Holiday - begins at Noon

Nov. 28 .....School reopens

Dec.1 .....Evening Conferences

Dec.3 .....SAT Testing (not at WHS)

Dec.14 .....Winter Concert - 7:00 p.m.

Dec.14 .....Mid-term Progress Reports Issued

Dec. 23.....December Vacation Begins at the Close of School

Jan. 3 .....School Reopens

Jan. TBD.....PTSO Meeting 7:00 p.m. (TBD)

Jan. 16 .....Martin Luther King Day - No School

Jan. 17 .....Full Day Staff Development – No School

Jan.28 .....College Board/SAT Testing (not at WHS)  
 Jan.24-27 .....Mid –Year Exams  
 Jan.27 .....End of Term 2

Feb.1-2 .....MCAS Biology Retest  
 Feb.7-9 .....Classroom Guidance Workshop for Sophomores in Social Studies Classes  
 Feb.13 .....Course Selection Materials Distributed at Middle School  
 Feb.14-17 .....Course Selection Materials Distributed at WHS  
 Feb.16 .....Coffee with the Headmaster and Guidance 8:00 a.m.  
 Feb.20-24 .....February Vacation  
 Feb.29 .....Early Release Day for Professional Development  
 Feb. 29-Mar.6 .....MCAS ELA & Math Retest

Mar.1 .....Program of Studies Night for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents, 7:00 p.m.  
 Mar.1-3 .....WHS Spring Musical  
 Mar.7 .....Band-a-Rama - 7:00 p.m. Gym  
 Mar.9 .....Mid-Term Progress Reports Issued  
 Mar.10 .....SAT testing (not at WHS)  
 Mar.14 .....Distribution of WHS Scholarship Booklet for Seniors  
 Mar.14 .....Distribution of SAT Testing Materials to Juniors  
 Mar. TBD .....Mr. WHS Contest  
 Mar.20-22 .....ELA MCAS, Composition and Reading Comprehension, Grade 10

Apr.5 .....End of Term 3  
 Apr.4 .....Junior College Planning Night - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
 Apr. 6 .....Registration Deadline for May SAT Testing (at WHS)  
 Apr.10 .....Deadline for WHS Scholarship Applications  
 Apr.10-12 .....Junior Guidance/English Post High School Planning  
 Apr. TBD .....All School Art Show Watertown Mall  
 Apr.12 .....Coffee with the Headmaster and Guidance 8:00 a.m.  
 Apr.16-20 .....April Vacation

May 2 .....WHS Strings Chamber Music Concert/Art Show - 7:00 p.m. in Lecture Hall  
 May 5 .....SAT Testing at WHS – 7:45 a.m.  
 May 7-18 .....AP Testing  
 May 15-16 .....MCAS Math Testing, Grade 10  
 May 16 .....Spring Concert - 7:00 p.m.  
 May 16 .....Mid-term Progress Reports Issued  
 May 23 .....Early Release Day for Professional Development

May 24 .....Awards Night - 7:00 p.m. Shaw Auditorium  
 May 25 .....Memorial Day Assembly  
 May 25 .....Seniors Last Day of Regular Classes  
 May 28 .....Memorial Day - No School  
**May TBD .....Senior Prom - 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. (TBD)**  
**May TBD .....Senior Class Wall Painting Victory Field 10:00 a.m. (TBD)**

**May TBD .....Senior Outing (Kimball Farm)**

- June 1 .....Graduation Practice - 10:00 a.m.
- June 1 .....Graduation Ceremony at 6:00 p.m.
- June 1-2 .....All Night Party for Graduates
- June 2 .....SAT Testing (not at WHS)
- June 5-6 .....MCAS Science Testing
- June TBD.....Junior Harbor Cruise
- June 14-19 .....Final Exams
- June 19 .....180<sup>th</sup> Day of School End of Term 4 and Final Day (TBD by School Committee)
- June 26 .....185<sup>th</sup> Scheduled Day – potential End of Term 4 and Final Day (TBD by School Committee)

## **General Information**

### **Marking Periods for 2010 – 2011**

- Term 1      Sept. 6 – Nov. 10
- Term 2      Nov. 14 – Jan. 27
- Term 3      Jan. 30 – Apr. 5
- Term 4      Apr. 9 – June 19/26\*

May 25 - last day of regularly scheduled classes for seniors  
\*Date to be determined at April School Committee meeting.

### **School Hours**

School day: starts at 7:55 AM and ends at 2:30 PM.

Half day schedule (early release): school starts at 7:55 AM and ends at noon.

Delayed opening:

**One hour delay of school: start time 8:55 AM.** All students report to period 2 classes.

**Two hour delay of school: start time 9:55 AM.** All students report to period 3 classes.

### **Health Clinic**

The school nurse's office is in Room 163 on the first floor. Clinic hours are 7:45 - 2:30. If the nurse is not available, students should report to Room 222 or the Main Office. Every student must have a pass to go and see the nurse.

**Medication:** Parents must notify the school nurse if their child is to take medication during the day. All medications must be properly labeled and kept in the clinic.

***Refer to Appendix 1: Administering Medicine to Students***

### **Student Lockers**

Upon entering Watertown High School every student is given a padlock and assigned a specific locker. Students are prohibited from using non-school issued locks. If a student loses his/her lock the replacement cost is \$6.00. Lockers are for students to store their clothing, sports equipment, musical instruments, books etc. Sharing a friend's locker or using unassigned lockers

is strictly forbidden. No illegal items may be stored in lockers at any time. **Lockers and locks are the property of the high school, and are subject to searches by school officials.** In some instances, the police may be requested to help in the search. These rules are for the safety and protection of the students and staff.

### **Physical Education Lockers**

Students are assigned lockers for physical education classes. They are required to purchase and bring in their own locks which are used only for physical education lockers. These lockers should be kept locked at all times to secure the students clothing and valuables.

## **Academic Information, Requirements, and Eligibility**

### **Graduation Competency Requirements**

All students must demonstrate the following competencies:

**Reading / Writing / Speaking Skills** demonstrated by successful completion of four years of English courses, which include a written thesis paper, at least six pages in length, and oral presentation and defense of a written thesis/project in any discipline or department.

**Self-Assessment • Establishing Goals** demonstrated by completion of specific activities for grades 9-12 as part of the Developmental Guidance Program. For students in the Class of 2015 and later, this will include successful completion of two years of advisory. For students in the Class of 2014, this will include successful completion of one year of advisory.

**Problem Solving and Respect / Concern for Others** demonstrated by completion of community or school service project.

### **Graduation Credit Requirements**

All students must earn 134 credits. Students are required to successfully complete the equivalent of the following courses in each discipline:

English	4 yearlong courses, or equivalent
Social Studies	3 yearlong courses (2 years of U.S. History)
Math	3 yearlong courses, or equivalent
Science	3 yearlong courses, or equivalent
Fine & Performing Arts/	
Occupational Ed	1 yearlong course or 2 semester courses
Physical Education	3 semester courses
Wellness	1 course in Grade 9
Foreign Languages	(depends on University guidelines)

**MCAS:** In addition, all students must pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in Science with a score of 220 or higher; and Mathematics and English Language Arts with a score of 240 on each test.

## **Credits Required for Grade Promotion and Graduation**

All students are required to take the equivalent of at least six full credit courses each semester. This does not include directed studies, work as teacher aides, or resource/special education support classes. Exceptions to this requirement need written approval of the Headmaster.

### **Freshmen: Class of 2014**

Freshmen must earn thirty (30) credits which includes successful completion of Freshman English before being promoted to the Sophomore year and assigned to a Sophomore homeroom.

### **Sophomores: Class of 2013**

Sophomores must earn a minimum of sixty (60) credits which includes successful completion of Sophomore English before being promoted to the Junior year and assigned to a Junior homeroom.

### **Juniors: Class of 2012**

Juniors must have earned a minimum of ninety-four (94) credits which includes successful completion of Junior English before being promoted to the Senior year and assigned to a Senior homeroom.

### **Seniors: Class of 2011**

134 credits and passing scores on MCAS exam are required for graduation. Seniors must fulfill both requirements to participate in the graduation and be awarded a diploma.

## **Schedule Changes**

Students are expected to choose preferred courses and alternates carefully. Alternates will be chosen for students if they do not do so themselves during the course selection process.

Should a student desire to change a course after the first day of the semester, they may do so only under the following conditions:

1. The student must get written permission from the parent/guardian, the teacher of the course, and the department chair or headmaster.
2. In order for a change to be made, students must see guidance for the appropriate form, which must be completed and returned to guidance. Students must follow their original schedule until a new schedule is issued.
3. Changes to core academic courses will not be allowed after the first day of class unless a recommendation for a level change is made by the school, an error has been made in inputting a student's course choice, a change is necessary for a Grade 12 student in order to meet graduation requirements, or an authenticated health issue necessitates the change.

**Students may not withdraw from or change a course after two weeks into the term. Students may not withdraw from a full year course after the first week of Term 3.**

## **High Honor Roll**

The student carries a minimum of 30 credits in subjects producing letter grades, A, B, C, D or S, and receives no grade below an A-, except in one subject, which may be a B+, B or B- only.

## **Honor Roll**

The student carries a minimum of 30 credits in subjects producing letter grades, A, B, C, D or S, and receives no grade below B-.

Honor Roll is announced at the end of each term for students demonstrating high scholastic performance.

## **Cum Laude**

The Cum Laude Society is the most prestigious academic honor society at Watertown High School. Senior students are selected for this honor after earning a 4.0 GPA after the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of their junior year in challenging course work. Students must have attended Watertown High School for one full year to be nominated for the Cum Laude Society. All members of the Cum Laude Society are required to uphold the principles of virtue, justice and order. Induction to the Cum Laude and National Honor Society will be held at a special ceremony in the fall of the student's senior year.

## **National Honor Society**

The National Honor Society, unlike the Cum Laude Society, is an active society of students supporting other Watertown High School and community programs throughout the year. Students nominated for the National Honor Society on the basis of academic performance must also qualify on the basis of character, service, and leadership. Membership in the National Honor Society is a privilege.

To be eligible for nomination to the National Honor Society a senior student must earn a 3.5 GPA after the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the junior year. Candidates must have attended Watertown High School for one full year prior to their nomination. Students nominated for membership demonstrate high standards of academic achievement, good character and citizenship, leadership and community service. Suspension from school or inappropriate behavior in any grade (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, excessive tardiness, or fighting) is sufficient reason to exclude or remove a student from membership in the National Honor Society.

**Selection Process:** The process begins with the determination of academic eligibility.

The names of all senior students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher after the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the junior year are distributed to the Watertown High faculty for review. All Watertown High School students are reviewed one time only at the start of their senior year. Members of the faculty can express their opinion about a student's eligibility on the basis of leadership, character, and service.

Once the faculty screening takes place, nominated students are invited to complete an application in September of their senior year to the National Honor Society. Students must provide evidence of their service and leadership in the form of written documentation from coaches and activity advisers. Failure to complete a written application and return it to the faculty adviser by a set deadline will prevent a student from membership. A Faculty Selection Committee composed of 5

teachers and the National Honor Society adviser then reviews each application with supporting documentation and makes a final assessment. If a student's eligibility is in doubt, the Faculty Selection Committee's decision will be final. No student is denied eligibility on the basis of a negative statement by a single faculty member.

The Faculty Selection Committee performs the following functions:

1. Determines the selection procedure for chapter membership
2. Selects students for membership after all faculty have been consulted.
3. Hears the dismissal cases if needed. No member may be dismissed without having the opportunity to appear before the Faculty Selection Committee.

### **Rank in Class**

Rank in Class at Watertown High School is a weighted ranking which includes Advanced Placement, Honors, Level 1 and Level 2 courses in English, Math, Social Studies, Science, Foreign Language, Art and Computer Science. Pass/Fail courses, Summer School courses, unlevleed courses and courses taken at institutions other than Watertown High School are **not** included in the rank. Virtual High School courses (VHS) are included in rank using levels L1, Honors, and Advanced Placement. In order to be ranked, students must have attended WHS a **minimum of five quarters** and have accumulated a minimum of **twenty term grades** to be eligible for Rank in Class inclusion.

Rank in Class is computed at the middle and end of junior year and at the middle of senior year. The cumulative, weighted GPA is calculated using term grades from each of the four quarters. WHS gives students a standard 4.0 - based GPA. There will not be any conversion of grades from schools other than Watertown High School in the calculation of class rank.

The Headmaster selects the Class Valedictorian and Salutatorian after the **final class rank is calculated following the close of grades for second term senior year.**

#### 4.0 Grading Scale for Class Rank and Extra-Curricular Activities

A+ 4.3	B+ 3.3	C+ 2.3	D+ 1.3
A 4.0	B 3.0	C 2.0	D 1.0
A- 3.7	B- 2.7	C- 1.7	D- 0.7
			F 0.0

### **Mid Term Progress Reports**

Students are issued Midterm Progress reports at the mid-point (5<sup>th</sup> week) of each term. As there are 5 weeks still remaining in the term, this grade could change by the closing day of the term (45<sup>th</sup> day). This is the only academic report issued to students prior to the close of each term. A student's grade is subject to change at any time up to the close of the term.

### **Academic Warnings**

Academic warnings may be issued any time the teacher feels the quality and/or quantity of a student's work is below acceptable expectation. **The teacher may give the report directly to the student or mail the report.**

## **Student Records**

Watertown High School adheres to the provisions of the law 603 CMR (Code of Massachusetts Regulations) 23.00 on parent and student rights regarding confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records.

*Refer to Appendix 2: Student Records and Confidentiality*

### **Destruction of Student Records**

After graduation, seniors can collect their temporary Cumulative Record Folder from the Guidance Office. Temporary student records will be destroyed no later than seven years after a student graduates or transfers from Watertown High School.

*Refer to Appendix 2: Student Records and Confidentiality*

### **Release of Information/Images**

During the course of the academic year, photographs, interviews, videotapes and/or audiotapes produced and/or authorized by the Watertown Public Schools may be taken. The photographs may be used to publicize school events in newspapers, public displays, websites and town reports. The videotapes/audiotapes/interviews may be used for public communications, teacher-training, or teacher recruitment. Students may be photographed in groups or individually, and may be identified by name.

If you do not approve of your child appearing in publications such as photos, audiotapes, videotapes, or interviews you must notify the school's headmaster no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. This notification should be written on the back of the Signature Page.

*Refer to Appendix 2: Pictures, Names, or Quotes in the Media*

# **Student Government**

There are a number of opportunities for students of Watertown High School to participate in student government. The candidate with a plurality of the votes will be the winner of the election. All elections are conducted in the fall.

## **Class Officers**

Each class elects the following class officers:

- 1 President
- 1 Vice President
- 1 Secretary
- 1 Treasurer
- 5 Executive Committee Members

## **Student Council**

The entire student body participates in electing five members from each class to the Student Council. Those twenty members elect the following officers:

- 1 President
- 1 Vice President
- 1 Treasurer
- 1 Recording Secretary
- 1 Corresponding Secretary

The president will appoint committee chairs from among the Student Council members to head various committees and will seek other students to assist those committees in their work.

## **The Advisor to the State Regional Advisory Board**

Each year, two students, one as a delegate and one as an alternate, selected by the Faculty Advisor, represent the school on the Greater Boston Regional (State Department of Education) Advisory Board. Students from many area high schools share information and ideas concerning student rights and opportunities. The delegate and alternate report back to the Student Council.

# Attendance Rules and Procedures

Attendance is the most important aspect of educating students. When students are not here, they do not have access to instruction. Understandably, there will be times when students will need to take time away from school for a variety of excused reasons. The following procedure is in place to ensure good attendance, support our families, and follow state and federal law.

## Absence Limits

We expect regular and punctual attendance in all classes. Grades reflect attendance, effort, classroom participation, and academic progress. We recognize that occasional absences are unavoidable.

EXCUSED absences are those reported to the attendance office by phone, by letter, or in person by a parent or a guardian. Otherwise, a child is considered truant.

- Parent call-ins and/or notes from home are required for an excused absence.
- All notes to excuse an absence need to be turned in within two school days of a student's return to school. Any questions/concerns should be addressed to the Associate Headmaster.
- Students with more than three excused absences in a quarter may be asked to produce formal documentation (see *exempted absences*, below) to excuse further absences that quarter.
- Please note: for seniors in the fourth term, no more than three unexcused (3) absences are allowed without penalty.

EXEMPTED absences:

- Death of a student's family member
- Court appearances
- Religious observances and holidays
- College visits
- Extended Illness (requires a doctor's note)
- School related activities, such as field trips, peer mediation, assemblies, job shadowing, IDS Town Meeting, etc.

UNEXCUSED absences:

- Cutting class (not being where you are scheduled to be)
- Family vacation
- Work
- Pre-event preparation, such as prom, dances, athletic events, etc.
- You may NOT make up work missed due to an unexcused absence from school, class, or study hall.

## Parent/Guardian Notification of Absence

Parents are directed to call in their child's absence from school to the attendance office before 8 a.m. of the day of the absence: 617-926-7730. Parents will be notified with an electronic telephone message of their child's absence if they have not yet called in the absence.

## **Dismissals**

There are three acceptable ways to dismiss a student from school.

- 1) A student must submit a signed note from his/her parent or guardian to the associate headmaster's office by the start of the school day.
- 2) A parent or guardian can dismiss a student by coming to the associate headmaster's office or by phone.
- 3) The Nurse may dismiss a student due to illness or other medical reason.

A student who is dismissed will be marked absent from any missed class. The absence is unexcused until documentation is provided.

## **Penalties for Tardiness and Absence**

Each two tardies to class counts as one absence toward the allowed limit of five absences per term. Missing more than half a class (30 minutes) counts as a full absence, NOT a tardy.

A student with more than five unexcused absences from a class in a particular semester will receive an "N" for the term. The "N" equals no grade and no credit earned for that class for that term. (See Graduation Credit Requirements).

Students who are at risk of losing credit may attend three hours of Saturday school, at the time and date designated by the attendance office, in order to compensate for three unexcused absences in a single course. Students will be required to arrive punctually, attend the full three hours, and bring sufficient academic work.

## **Classroom Attendance Procedures**

After the third unexcused absence, the teacher warns the student verbally or in writing and confirms that warning to the attendance office. After the fifth unexcused absence, the teacher will notify the parent or guardian that the student is in danger of losing credit for the class. Notification will be documented and made in writing, by telephone, e-mail, progress report or at a parent conference. Current attendance can be found through iParent.

## **Appeals**

Decisions about loss of credit may be appealed to the associate headmaster's exemption committee by 8:00 a.m. on the last day of the term, prior to exams. Appeals should be filed only in the event that the application of this procedure results in loss of credit for a class. The decision of the committee is final. **No appeals may be made in a term in which the student has cut a class or study.**

## **Suspension**

Since suspension is a school mandated absence, work missed during the suspension may be made up for credit. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with his/her teachers before or during the suspension to make arrangements to complete the missed work. Any work missed during a suspension is due within two school days of student's return.

### **Makeup Requirements for Missing School Work Due to Absences**

Any student with an excused/exempt absence from class must submit missing work within four school days upon his/her return to school.

### **Makeup Requirements for Mid-year Exams, Final Exams, and Term Tests**

Mid-year and final exam periods have built-in conflict and make-up times. This allows students who are unable to take the exam at the regularly scheduled time to reschedule. If the exam cannot be rescheduled during the make-up time, the student should arrange another time with the teacher and get administrative approval from the curriculum coordinator. For term tests when there is no formal make-up or conflict schedule, the student must take responsibility for rescheduling the exam. All incomplete grades must be completed two weeks from the close of the term.

### **Incomplete Marks**

Due to excessive absences, a student may receive a grade of incomplete in a course. Upon return to school, students will have no more than two weeks to provide documentation for excused absences and to make up any missing work. Otherwise, students risk failing or receiving no credit for the course. Any exception to this timetable will only be considered if requested in writing, to the headmaster, upon return.

### **Attendance and Student Activities**

A student must be in compliance with attendance requirements in order to participate in athletic and other extra-curricular activities. (See Student Activities)

# Student Activities

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in school activities. This is a way to meet other students, contribute to the school, and have fun! WHS has a great variety of sports, clubs and activities and all students should consider getting actively involved. Colleges and employers are interested in students who have a good academic record and who have participated in extra-curricular activities. Read the list below and get involved! If you want to start a new club, see the Headmaster for details.

## Class Advisors

Class of 2012 ... Mr. Brewer

Class of 2013 ... Ms. Hoffman and Ms. Balian

Class of 2014 ... Ms. Kraemer

Class Of 2015 ... Ms. O'Grady

## Clubs/Activities

Ambassadors for Change

Band

Cheerleading

Drama

I.D.S. (Interdepartmental Studies Program)

Robotics

Student Council

Word Painter

International Club

*The Annual* (Yearbook)

Biology Club

Chorus

Gay-Straight Alliance

National Honor/Cum Laude Society

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

Service Club

Science Team

## Procedures for Student Activities, Groups and Clubs

1. Before it can be recognized as a school group and given use of school time and facilities, the group must be approved by the Headmaster or his designee.
2. Membership must be open to all students except where the purpose of the club requires special qualifications such as a French Club or Honor Society.
3. Before club activities are permitted, a faculty sponsor or other advisor must be selected according to established procedures.
4. School groups, both permanent and ad hoc, must not use the school name in participating in public demonstrations or other activities outside the school unless prior permission has been granted by the Headmaster.
5. Students must pay a user fee of \$25.00, and the faculty sponsor must be authorized by the headmaster and/or the WPS Business Office to handle receipt of these fees.

If a club fails to abide by the terms under which it was approved, or its activities present a clear threat to the health or safety of the members of the school, it may be banned only after a full hearing before the Headmaster.

## **Athletics**

<b>Fall Teams</b>	<b>Winter Teams</b>	<b>Spring Teams</b>
Cross Country	Basketball (G)	Baseball
Field Hockey	Basketball (B)	Softball
Football	Ice Hockey [B]	Tennis (G)
Soccer [B]	Ice Hockey [G]	Tennis (B)
Soccer [G]	Indoor Track (G)	Track (G)
Golf	Indoor Track (B)	Track (B)
Volleyball [G]	Wrestling	Lacrosse (G)
		Lacrosse (B)

## **Activity Fee**

The cost of the Activity Fee per student, per year, is \$200.00 all-inclusive for athletics and clubs and other extracurricular activities. If a student chooses only to participate in a club or other extracurricular activity, the fee is \$25.00 per student per year. There is a waiver process for those with financial hardship. Contact the Headmaster for assistance.

## **Student Eligibility Requirements for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities**

### **Ineligibility for Terms Two, Three, and Four**

- Any student receiving two or more Fs in any course on a quarterly report card is ineligible until the next quarter's report card.
- For the purposes of eligibility, an incomplete should be treated as an F until the change of grade is made. (*See section regarding **Incomplete Marks.***)
- Grades are considered official as of the date when report cards are issued to all students.

### **Eligibility for Term One**

- Eligibility for the beginning of the school year will be based on the final grades from the previous school year. Students receiving two or more Fs in any course for their final grades on their report cards are ineligible until the next quarterly report card.
- Eligibility for the fall marking period will also be based on a student passing and receiving full credit for four courses equivalent to a traditional year long English course from the previous academic year (total of twenty-four credits from previous academic year). (MIAA rule 58.3)
- A student cannot count any subject taken during the summer for eligibility, unless that subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year. (MIAA rule 58.7)

## **Discipline**

- If a student fails to complete his/her disciplinary obligations he/she will be ineligible to participate in any athletic or extra-curricular activity, including, but not limited to, athletic contests and practices, field trips, and class events. (See sections regarding **Sessions, Expulsions and Suspensions**).

## **Attendance**

- A student must attend a school day to be eligible for athletics and extra-curricular activities.
- A school day is defined as being present from: 7:55 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and/or 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

**All MIAA rules are superseded by school policy.**

# **Student Conduct**

## **Five Basic Principles of Conduct at WHS**

Everyone in the WHS community is expected to know and observe the Five Basic Principles that establish expectations for behavior. (Behavior includes participation at any school-sponsored activity on or off campus, and the behavior of guests). They are as follows:

1. Everyone will demonstrate honesty and integrity at all times.
2. Everyone will show respect for the rights and dignity of every other person.
3. Everyone will conduct him or herself as a scholar and a member of a community of scholars, which implies treating every other individual as a scholar.
4. Everyone will act with regard for the safety of persons and property.
5. Everyone will obey the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The administration reserves the right to impose disciplinary consequences for breaking the school rules, or not adhering to the five basic principles. All consequences will be explained to the student and to the parent/guardian, who have the right to appeal to the Headmaster.

**Consequences include, but are not limited to:** notification of parents/guardians, being required to change an item of clothing, sessions, recommendation for a mediation program, a zero grade, exclusion from after school activities, referral to an anger management program, out of school suspension, notification of police, exclusion from school, and/or expulsion.

**If a student fails to complete his/her disciplinary obligations within a time set by the administration, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic practices and contests, field trips, and class events.**

## **Principle #1 - Honesty and Integrity**

Honest students speak the truth and speak up for what is true; they also don't misrepresent themselves or their work. Students of integrity are the same decent people in all situations, whether or not they think someone is paying attention.

Some examples of dishonesty and lack of integrity include:

- plagiarism
- cheating or lying
- falsifying signatures
- gambling

- misrepresentation of identity to staff, or not identifying oneself when asked

### **Principle #2 - Showing Respect for Others**

We show respect for ourselves and others by honoring each other's dignity and worth. **We act in ways that secure our own health and well-being and that foster the same in others.** We respect others' rights and needs and try not to unnecessarily offend them.

Some examples of disrespect include:

- defiant behavior to a teacher/administrator
- refusing to cooperate with teacher/administrator
- use of insulting language, written or spoken, directed at the race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, intellectual ability, athletic ability, size, or handicapping condition of another individual (staff or student)
- electronic harassment
- public displays of sexually intimate behavior
- harassment/humiliation of any kind
- unwelcome teasing
- intimidation
- taunting athletes, fans and/or members of another team, referees/umpires
- unsportsmanlike conduct
- inappropriate T-shirts or other apparel
- using profanity
- bullying

### **Principle #3 - Acting as a Scholar in a Community of Scholars**

Watertown High School's mission is to foster lifelong learning. We can only fully achieve this mission when we each act as a scholar in this community. This includes being present in our classes, devoting our school time to the achievement of academic excellence, and avoiding distractions to learning.

Some examples of unscholarly conduct include:

- plagiarism
- cheating
- cutting classes/sessions
- leaving school without permission
- loitering
- disruptive behavior in class or in the hallway
- tardiness to class or school
- visible possession and/or use of cell phones, headsets, iPods, beepers, or any other electronic devices in class, other than for sanctioned academic use
- wearing distracting dress [bare midriffs, revealing clothing, tube tops, tank tops, beachwear, etc.]
- wearing hats or any other headgear in class such as berets, bandannas, visors, unless for religious or medical reasons
- wearing sunglasses, gloves, sharp-pointed accessories
- inappropriate use of computers/websites

#### **Principle #4 - Respecting the Safety of Others and Their Property**

We respect others' safety and help ensure our own through positive words and actions. We also treat the school building and property with care. We pay attention to the rules for behavior in whatever setting we are in and we think before we act to make sure that we're not jeopardizing anyone's safety.

Some examples of conduct which violate Principle #4 include:

- bomb threats
- threats of violence
- false fire alarms
- hazing
- inciting others to violence and/or wrongdoing
- violations of lab or shop rules
- throwing objects
- horseplay
- reckless or careless driving on school property
- defacing/destroying school property
- misuse of school and/or teacher's property

#### **Principle #5 - Obeying the Law**

We obey the law to ensure the public safety it protects and to avoid potentially devastating consequences for ourselves and others.

Some examples of illegal conduct include:

- substance abuse including possession, use, or intent to sell, illegal substances
- possession, use, or intent to sell alcohol
- use of any tobacco products on school property
- sexual harassment or intimidation
- possession of dangerous objects, weapons, explosives, etc.
- fighting
- unwanted and offensive touching of another student
- assault by threatening violence through words or actions to staff/administration or students
- stealing
- intimidation of staff or students
- entry without permission into school (after hours), into classrooms/offices and locker(s).

#### **Sessions**

Students who are in violation of school rules will be assigned detention sessions, to be held before or after school during the week.

- Sessions must be served within two school days of the date received.
- Students who do not serve sessions will be assigned two days of sessions.
- Students who miss sessions for a second time will be at risk for suspension.

- If students do not comply with the rules on sessions they will not be allowed to participate in any school activity, including, but not limited to, athletic practices, contests, field trips and class events.

## **Expulsion and Suspension**

### ***Refer to Appendix 2: Education Reform Act***

Any of the following actions may subject a student to expulsion by the Headmaster:

1. Possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
2. Assaulting a Headmaster, Housemaster, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event including athletic games.

Any of the following actions will subject a student to suspension, expulsion, subject to School Committee action, or other disciplinary measures:

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school property; or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
2. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to private property; stealing or attempting to steal private property.
3. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
4. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution.
5. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.

School building administrators will not suspend a student, or recommend a student for suspension or expulsion, unless the student has engaged in one of the prohibited actions mentioned above while on school property or taking part in a school activity off school grounds.

## **Plagiarism**

**Plagiarism** is defined as the act of presenting someone else's words and/or ideas as your own, even if done unintentionally. Any student who quotes directly from any source or makes use of an idea from any source and does not credit the author of that source, who copies part or all of the work of another student, or who allows part or all of his/her work to be copied by another student, will be considered to have plagiarized. Information taken from the Internet or other electronic media without crediting the source is also a form of plagiarism. Students must credit all sources that provide useful information and enclose any word or words directly taken from a source within quotation marks. Failure to do so is a dishonorable act; academic theft in an academic institution is a serious matter and, as such, has serious consequences. A student found guilty of plagiarism may receive a grade of zero on the project, may have his course level lowered, and may also forfeit membership in the National Honor and/or Cum Laude Society. Other consequences, such as a letter of reprimand in the student's file, exclusion from

consideration for academic honors, or notations on college recommendations may also follow from an incidence of plagiarism.

Students and faculty should follow guidelines consistent with those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) (such as the *MLA Guide to Documentation*), our single school-wide standard. These guidelines are available from classroom teachers and departments, the school library, as well as on the Watertown High School Library's web page (<http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/whs/library/lib/citations.html>).

## **Personal Electronic Devices**

Personal electronic devices (PEDs) include technology such as cell phones, ipods, and handheld computers. To better protect students from misuse of PEDs the following guidelines have been established:

In class, personal electronic devices (PEDs) should be off, unless specified otherwise by the teacher. PEDs may be used for educational purposes during school hours under the supervision of the teacher only.

Disciplinary action will be taken if a student does not follow these rules. Faculty or staff have the right to confiscate a PED and turn it into the associate headmaster's office. The device may be picked up at the associate headmaster's office by the student at the end of the school day. Repeated offenses may require the parent to pick up the device.

PEDs should not be used during the school day for communication between students and parents. Urgent messages between parents and students should be communicated via the main office.

The school is not responsible for the maintenance, loss, theft or damage of any personal electronic device.

All use of personal electronic devices is commensurate with the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

## **Dress Code**

Student attire **should not** disrupt the educational environment and/or serve as a distraction to other students. While in school, students will dress appropriately.

***The standard should be attire that is acceptable in the workplace.***

*Students CAN NOT wear:*

- shorts/skirts that are shorter than fingertip length
- revealing tops/visible cleavage/visible midriffs/abdomen
- back-less shirts
- Clothing that displays words (in whatever language)/graphics that are obscene, vulgar, violent, sexist, racist and/or promote the use of drugs/alcohol/tobacco
- low-waisted or droopy pants/clothing that reveals undergarments
- sandals or flip flops in science lab/shops

## **Anti-Bullying Procedures**

In compliance with MGL c 71, Section 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, which was enacted May 3, 2010, the Watertown Public Schools have passed a Student-to-Student Harassment/Bullying policy, which provides definition for harassment and bullying and emphasizes their prohibition. Furthermore, the school district has established training, programs for procedures for preventing and responding to student harassment and bullying.

All schools, under the direction of the principal and the guidance department, continue to provide professional development and training to the staff on student harassment and bullying. Specifically, Watertown High School has established an anti-bullying task force and is implementing anti-bullying curriculum for students. Ninth and tenth grade students will use the Olweus anti-bullying curriculum in student advisories. Eleventh and twelfth grade students will access the messages of the curriculum during scheduled class assemblies.

The school has developed a common set of expectations for students and will communicate these again to parents at the annual Back to School Night and through other venues. Teachers have received training to become more aware of the signs of bullying, so that they can quickly notify the school administration. A quick response and investigation of any alleged bullying incident will be conducted. This will include notification, resolution, consequences and other necessary steps depending on the exact nature of the situation.

The Watertown Public School District is working to ensure that this new law quickly helps build upon the positive culture of our school. It is important that our children and staff work to create a school where all children are respected, cared for and encouraged, and capable of achieving their fullest potential.

### **Definition and Prohibition of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as **repeated** use of written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another student that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property;
- placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

This law further specifies a prohibition against bullying:

- At school and at all school facilities;
- At school-sponsored or school-related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- On school buses and school bus stops;
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device;
- At non-school-related locations if the bullying affects the school environment.

Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means.

### **Procedures for reporting**

Teachers and staff are now **required** by law to report incidences of bullying to the principal or his designee in their building. Watertown High School's procedure includes the following steps:

- Completion of an Incident Report Form;
- Determination by the Headmaster or designee that this is an incident of bullying;
- An interview with the target of peer aggression;
- An interview with the child accused of some type of aggression,
- Plan for intervention and notification of parent(s) or guardian(s).

The law specifically prohibits retaliation for reporting an incident of bullying. Whenever an incident of bullying is determined to have taken place, the parents of all students involved will be notified of the incident and of the actions being taken by the school to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

### **Alcohol/Drug Use**

*Refer to Appendix 2: Education Reform Act*

Students in possession or determined to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol on school property or at school sponsored activities will be punished as follows:

1. 5 day suspension from school
2. M. I. A. A. rules enforced regarding athletes
3. No attendance at school sponsored functions for the remainder of the academic year (proms, banquets, graduation, dances, athletic events, etc.)
4. **Meet with parents/guardians and administration before returning to school from suspension**

### **Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products**

All Watertown Public School property is a **no smoking area** per state law. Students who do not smoke have the right to breathe clean air and no student should infringe on that right.

Students caught smoking on school property, or when within the jurisdiction of the school, will be penalized by suspension from school.

No more than one person per stall is allowed in the high school lavatories. Students who congregate with more than one person per stall and/or where there is smoke in the air in the lavatory, will be considered guilty of smoking whether or not they actually have a lighted cigarette in hand, and will be subject to suspension. High school administration and staff maintain the authority for determining if a student is guilty of smoking on campus.

### **Behavior on Buses/Vans/Cars Used for School Related Activities**

Disruptive behavior may affect the safe operation of the vehicle. The driver will report any student who acts in a disruptive manner to the school administration. Consequences may include written notification to parents/guardians, warnings, probation, suspension, and loss of transportation privileges. Disruptive behavior include use of unacceptable language, hanging out of the windows, smoking, standing up while the vehicle is in motion, destruction of any part of

the vehicle, possession/use of weapons, alcohol, tobacco products, or any controlled substances, and violations of safety procedures.

### **Possession of Illegal Weapons**

*Refer to Appendix 2: Education Reform Act*

Any student in possession of a dangerous or illegal weapon will be subject to immediate suspension. The student will not be allowed back into the school without a parent/guardian conference and if the school administration feels that the severity of the situation warrants it, disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, will be taken. The police will be notified for criminal action.

## **APPENDICES**

These Appendices are included in each school's handbook, for all grade levels.

1. District Policies

2. Federal and State Regulations

3. Summaries and Signature Page

# APPENDIX 1 – District Policies

## **Acceptable Use Policy – Technology**

The Watertown Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the system/network, including access to external networks, for limited educational purposes. *Educational purposes* shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be utilized to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

### **Availability**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the District's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

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

Access to the system/network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Watertown Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Watertown Public Schools.

### **Acceptable Use**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Watertown Public Schools as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

### **Monitored Use**

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

### **Liability**

The Watertown Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Watertown Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

The School Department shall disseminate a computer and Internet acceptable use policy.

## **Administering Medicine to Students**

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician. When the school nurse is not present, a student who needs medication during the school day may be called to the office at the scheduled hour and reminded by the designated school employee to take the appropriate medication and dosage. This provision only applies when the nurse, physician and the parent agree that the student can self-administer. In addition, the student must be able to recognize the medicine that he/she is taking. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

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

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

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:54B  
Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00

## **Asbestos Management**

In compliance with the regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency the Watertown Public Schools has an ongoing Operations and Management Program for monitoring the condition of asbestos in the school buildings.

## **Gang Activity**

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision

of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

**Symbols:** The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises at individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

**Prevention Education:** The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

**Secret Societies:** Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

## **Grievance Procedure for Students, Parents and Guardians**

The aggrieved party should attempt remediation through a conference with the teacher involved.

The aggrieved party, if dissatisfied, may present his/her grievances to the Principle who, after hearing the facts and after consultation with the teacher, takes any action he/she thinks is indicated. If the aggrieved party feels that the solution or decision is not agreeable to him/her, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, after consultation with the Principal, takes action.

## **Interrogations by Police**

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials.

Therefore, when law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will

be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.

If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

## **Pregnant Students**

School-age mothers, unless they receive adequate assistance, might drop out of school without acquiring the necessary education or without marketable skills.

Pregnant students will be permitted to continue in school in all instances when continued attendance has the sanction of the expectant mother's physician. The physician's approval of this continued attendance must be on file at the school. The student and her physician, in cooperation with the school staff, will develop an appropriate educational plan if it is agreed she should no longer attend school regularly.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction are offered; that return to school after delivery is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:84

## **Searches**

The Watertown Public Schools recognizes and respects the privacy of its students in their persons and belongings. However, the school administration and staff must maintain a proper, safe, and secure educational environment where learning can take place. Possession of contraband in violation of the law or of school rules is prohibited on school premises. Such items include, but are not limited to, cigarettes, drugs (without proper prescription), weapons, and other items that pose a danger to the safety of the school community or which would disturb or disrupt the process of education.

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to search an individual student or group of students and to seize contraband items. Where the school principal, or his/her designee, has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student has violated, or is violating, either the law or rules of the school, the suspected student or students may be searched for evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or rules of the school.

Searches of students, book bags, purses, clothing, and other containers, and of student lockers may be conducted when appropriate.

When the Principal, or his/her designee, has reason to believe that contraband items are present on school premises, locker inspections may take place without notice to students. A student's right to possession of a locker, or lockers, is nonexclusive as against the school and its officials. Students are hereby put on notice that they should not keep personal items in their lockers if they do not wish them to be discovered by school personnel during a locker inspection

conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section. Contraband items discovered during any such inspection will be seized.

In addition, at various times throughout the school year, school administrators may use dogs trained to detect contraband to conduct random searches for contraband in student lockers, other common areas of school buildings, and vehicles parked on school grounds. A qualified and authorized trainer and a school administrator or designee shall accompany each dog. If a dog indicates that contraband is present on school property, school administrators can conduct a further search.

Any contraband items discovered and seized during an inspection or search conducted under the provisions of this section may be turned over to the police when the possession of such items may constitute a violation of any state or federal law. In all cases where illicit drugs or weapons are discovered as a result of inspections or searches conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section, the police will be contacted and any and all items will be turned over to the police department.

If there are any questions regarding whether a particular item may be brought to school, please ask the Principal.

## **Sexual Harassment**

The Watertown School Committee affirms the policy of maintaining within the Watertown Public Schools a learning and working environment free of sexual harassment and intimidation. If you feel that you have been physically or verbally harassed you have a right to take action. There are established procedures for making complaints that are published in two booklets (one for faculty/staff, and one for students). These booklets, with details about what to do, are available in the Main Office and in the Guidance Office. You do not have to remain silent. Your voice is important in stopping, and preventing, harassment of any kind.

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his/her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.

5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86

## Suspension and Exclusion

Suspension is defined as the act of the chief administrator of a school in removing a student from school for a period not to exceed ten consecutive school days. Exclusion is defined as an act of the School Committee in removing a student from school permanently or for any period of time exceeding ten consecutive school days.

1. The Superintendent, a Principal/Headmaster, or an Assistant Principal/Associate Headmaster may suspend a student for a period not to exceed ten consecutive school days for disobedience and/or misconduct as related to Policy 711, Paragraph 3 of the Official Policy Manual and the detailed rules supporting these paragraphs as promulgated in the current student manual.

Prior to suspension, a student must be given oral or written notice of the charge(s) against him or her, an explanation of the basis for the accusation(s) and an opportunity to present his or her version of the facts.

A student may be suspended prior to notice and hearing if he or she poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process if not removed immediately. In these cases, notice of suspension proceedings must be given within twenty-four hours of the decision to suspend and the hearing must be held within seventy-two hours of removal.

In a hearing on suspension, the Principal/Headmaster (Superintendent, Assistant Principal/Associate Headmaster) is not required to give the student opportunity to secure counsel, to confront and cross-examine supporting witnesses of the charge(s), or to call his or her own supporting witnesses.

Suspension may be used as a preliminary step to exclusion from school.

Whenever possible, the student's parent or guardian will be informed of the suspension prior to the student's departure from school. Within twenty-four hours after the suspension, the student's parent or guardian will be sent a letter by certified mail informing them of the reasons for and the length of the suspension.

2. With the exception of G.L. Ch. 71 §37H and §37H1/2 the School Committee may exclude a student from school permanently or for any period of time exceeding ten consecutive school

days for very serious disobedience and/or very serious misconduct as related to policy 711, Paragraph 3 and other appropriate paragraphs in the 500, 600, and 700 sections of the Official Policy Manual and the detailed rules supporting these paragraphs as promulgated in the current student manual.

Prior to a vote on exclusion, the student and his or her parent/guardian will be informed in writing of the charge(s) and the basis for the charge(s) and will be advised of their right to a hearing before the School Committee.

On the request of the student and/or the parent or guardian, the School Committee will hold a hearing on the charge(s) prior to a vote on exclusion.

The hearing will be held in Executive Session. The student has the right to secure counsel and have counsel represent him or her at the hearing. The student has the right to confront and to cross-examine witnesses supporting the charge(s) and to call his or her own supporting witnesses.

To vote to exclude a student from school, a majority of the members present must concur providing a quorum has been established. Votes and records of Executive Sessions remain secret according to the provisions of the law.

3. In accordance with Ch. 71, Section §37H, of the General Laws, a Principal/Headmaster may exclude or suspend a student at his/her judgment for the violations of good conduct listed. The student excluded or suspended under this provision may appeal to the Superintendent in accordance with subsection (d) of Ch. 71, Section §37H.

4. In accordance with Ch. 71, Section §37H 1/2, of the General Laws, a Principal/Headmaster may exclude or suspend a student upon the issuance of a complaint charging a student with a felony. The suspension/ expulsion may be appealed to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision shall be the final decision on the matter.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 39:23A

## APPENDIX 2 – Federal and State Regulations

### Americans with Disabilities Act

The Watertown Public Schools, in compliance with the American Disabilities Act, prohibits the discriminatory assignment of students with disabilities to segregated classes or facilities based solely on the student's disability. Students with disabilities may be assigned to separate facilities or courses when such a placement is necessary to provide equal educational opportunity.

### An Act Relative to Bullying in the Schools, M.G.L. c 71, § 370

*The law requires each Plan to include a statement prohibiting bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. All acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:*

- (i) on school grounds and 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
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

See section titled "Anti-Bullying Procedures" in your handbook for more information.

### Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H

*Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:*

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- (b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or the school district by the Principal.
- (c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Under appropriate circumstances, the principal, in his/her discretion, may consider the readmission of a student expelled from school pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, § 37H. The principal shall notify the student, in writing, at the time of his/her expulsion, of the terms and conditions which the student shall fulfill in order to petition the principal for readmission, as well as the process and timelines for such a petition. The principal's decision on an expelled student's petition shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

### Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H1/2

M.G.L. c.71, § 37H1/2 allows the principal of a school to suspend a student who has been charged with a felony or is the subject of a felony delinquency complaint, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The statute also allows the principal to expel a student who has been convicted, adjudicated, or admitted guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

## **Students with Disabilities**

*The Code of Conduct applies to all students. There is a specific procedure, however, for disciplining students with disabilities. Your child's school can give you a copy of this document upon request. This procedure is also included in the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure that you receive with your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).*

In general, if a student with disabilities has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove the student from his or her current educational placement for no more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year.

If a student with disabilities possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school function; or inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event, the school district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days. If a student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless the parent or the district has initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement, or the parent and the school agree to another placement.

Any time the school wishes to remove a student with disabilities from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year, or if a student is removed for disciplinary reasons for more than a total of 10 days in any school year when a pattern of removal is occurring, this is a “change of placement.” A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These include the following:

(a) Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the student’s problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team will review it to make sure it is being implemented appropriately, and will modify it if necessary.

(b) Prior to any disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must inform the parent that the law requires that the school district consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for the student’s disciplinary removal is related to his or her disability. This is called a “manifestation determination.” Remember that you, as the parent, always have the right to participate as a member of the group of people making this determination.

**Consideration of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability:** The law provides that the school district and the parent, along with relevant Team members, must consider all evaluation information, observational information, the student’s IEP and placement; and must determine whether the student’s behavior that prompted disciplinary removal was a manifestation of his or her disability. The behavior is considered a manifestation of the student’s disability if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student’s disability, or was a direct result of the school district’s failure to implement his or her IEP.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary behavior was related to the student’s disability then the student may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use, or serious bodily injury to another) until the IEP Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and the parent consents to that new IEP and placement, or a Hearing Officer orders a removal from the current educational placement to another placement.

If the manifestation determination is that the behavior was not related to the student’s disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline the student according to the school’s code of student conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding 10 days the school district must provide the student with educational services that allow the student to continue to make educational progress. The school district must determine the educational services necessary and the manner and location for providing those services.

**In the case of a disagreement with the Team’s determination:** If the parent disagrees with the Team’s decision on the “manifestation determination” or with the decision relating to placement of the student in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, the

parent has the right to appeal the Team's decision by requesting an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA).

## **Hazing Law and Policy**

Hazing as defined in Chapter 269 under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is prohibited in the Watertown Public Schools.

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269; Section 17 Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined**

Whoever is the principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. (Added by St. 1985, c.536)

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. (Added by St. 1985, c.536; Amended by St. 1987, c.665)

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 19 Copy of secs. 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report**

#### **Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team, or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team, or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated groups, teams, or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations.

Each such group, team, or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each group, team, or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team, or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team, or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Any person(s) found engaged in hazing may be subject to suspension or exclusion dependent upon the seriousness of the hazing offense.

### McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

Every child without a permanent home has a right to an education.

If you live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground; on the street; in an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations; or with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing, then your child has certain rights and protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

Your child has the right to:

- Access the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to all other children.
- Remain in the school he/she attended before becoming homeless.
- Receive transportation to the school they attend before your family became homeless or the school they last attended if you or a guardian requests such transportation.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve disputes over enrolling your child.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children.

If you need assistance in enrolling your child into school contact: Director of Student Services

### **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)**

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is a federal education law that aims to:

- Raise accountability by measuring each schools progress every year (Adequate Yearly Progress – AYP);
- Set goals to improve student performance in math, reading/English Language Arts (ELA) and science;
- Improve teacher quality by providing professional development funds;
- Provide parents/guardians with information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Parents/Guardians can request this information from the school principal, and
- Make schools safer and drug-free.

## **Nondiscrimination**

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX non-discrimination compliance officer(s). This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of School Committee intent to:

- 1.0 Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
- 2.0 Encourage positive experiences in human values for children and youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic groups.
- 3.0 Support a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
- 4.0 Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
- 5.0 Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
- 6.0 Ensure continual process of reviewing policies and practices of this school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Watertown School Committee's policy of nondiscrimination and all other pertinent Federal and State laws will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; and will apply to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

### **Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap**

- 1.0 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its accompanying regulations and amendments apply to all school systems receiving federal funds. Under this act the Watertown Public Schools:
  - 1.1 May not discriminate against qualified handicapped persons in any aspect of school employment solely on the basis of handicap.
  - 1.2 Shall make facilities, programs, and activities accessible, usable, and open to qualified handicapped persons.
  - 1.3 Shall provide appropriate education at elementary and secondary levels, including non-academic and extracurricular services and activities, to qualified handicapped persons.
  - 1.4 May not exclude any qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap from participation in any preschool education or day care program or activity or any adult education or vocational program or activity.

- 1.5 Shall provide each qualified handicapped person with the same health, welfare, and other social services that are provided others.

Accordingly, employees of this school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee and all other pertinent Federal and State laws to ensure non-discrimination on the basis of handicap.

## **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The Watertown Public Schools in keeping with the regulations set out in the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment requires notification to parents and/or students under the following conditions:

- Instructional materials are made available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with a federal U.S. Department of Education or other publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and
- That schools obtain prior written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education or other publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
  2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
  8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students. This term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.
- The right to prior knowledge and consent if the school district administers physical examinations or screenings. This does not include hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.
- The right to prior knowledge of the school district's collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.
- The right to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of personal information.

*The Watertown Public Schools will notify parents, guardians, and/or eligible students the specific or approximate dates during the school year if and when these activities are scheduled. Such notification will be provided through specific notices, newsletters, and/or the Watertown Public Schools website.*

This federal requirement is not intended to preempt applicable provisions of State law that require parental notification. The law does not apply to any physical examination or screening that is permitted or required by State law, including such examinations or screenings without parental notification. The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The requirements under PPRA do not supersede any of the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **Restraint of Students**

The Watertown Public Schools complies with the Department of Education (DOE) restraint regulations, 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. (“Regulations”), to the extent required by law. According to their terms, the Regulations apply not only at school but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. A brief overview of the Regulations is provided below.

### ***Methods and Conditions for Implementation***

School staff may use physical restraint only:

1. When non-physical interventions would be ineffective and the student’s behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious harm to self and/or others.
2. Pursuant to a student’s IEP or other written plan developed in accordance with the State and Federal law and approved by the school and parent or guardian.

Physical restraint may not be used as a means of punishment or as a response to property destruction, disruption of the 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. Chemical and mechanical restraints may only be used if explicitly authorized by a physician and approved by a parent or guardian. Seclusion is prohibited.

The Regulations do not prevent the teacher, employee, or agent of the District from using reasonable force to protect the student, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent serious harm, or from restraining students as otherwise provided in the Regulations.

### ***Reporting Requirements and Follow-Up***

In instances when a physical restraint (1) lasts more than five minutes or (2) results in an injury to a student or staff member, the school staff must report the physical restraint to the principal or a designee. The principal/designee must maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances, which will be made available in accordance with State and Federal law and regulations. The principal/designee must also verbally inform the student’s parent or guardian of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report postmarked no later than three school working days following the use of the restraint. The written restraint report must be provided to the parent or guardian in the language in which report cards and other necessary school-related information are customarily provided.

In the event that a physical restraint (1) lasts longer than 20 minutes, or (2) results in serious injury to the student or staff member, the school must, within five school working days of the reported restraint, provide a copy of the written report to the DOE along with a copy of the school's record of physical restraint covering the thirty-day period prior to the date of the restraint.

For students who require the frequent use of restraint because they present a high risk of dangerous behaviors, school staff may seek and obtain the parent/guardian consent to waive reporting requirements for the restraints administered to an individual student that do not result in serious injury to the student or staff member or constitute extended restraint (longer than 20 minutes).

Follow-up procedures for restraint include not only reporting requirements set forth above, but also reviewing the incident with the student, staff, and consideration of whether follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

A copy of the Regulations can be obtained at [www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html).

## **Sex Education (MGL Ch. 71 §32A)**

Schools are required by law to notify parents/guardians about any classes that will be held on human sexual education or sexual issues. The notice must tell the parent/guardian how he/she can review the content and materials of the classes.

While parents/guardians do not have to give permission for their children to take sex education classes, parents do have the right to exempt their children from such classes. Please read and **return** the sign-off page entitled "Commonwealth of Massachusetts: An Act Relative to Sex Education" to your building principal.

## **Student Record Regulations and Confidentiality**

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Watertown Public Schools to amend a record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Committee; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The parent/guardian has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

FERPA requires that the Watertown Public Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Watertown Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Watertown Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's, guardian's, and/or student's prior consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two Federal laws require school districts receiving Federal funds to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses, and telephone listings - unless parents/guardians, and/or students have advised the school district that they do not want their information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want the Watertown Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school district in writing by September 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year. The Watertown Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student's name
2. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
3. Address
4. Telephone listing
5. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
6. Electronic mail address
7. Photograph
8. Degrees, honors, and awards received
9. Date and place of birth
10. Major field of study
11. Dates of attendance
12. Grade level and the most recent school attended

## Massachusetts Student Records Regulation

State regulations governing student records are briefly summarized below. These regulations are available at each public school and the superintendent's office for review. Parents may access the student records regulations through the Massachusetts Department of Education website.

A student's record consists of his or her school transcript and temporary record. The temporary record includes all information, which is organized on the basis of the student's name, is relevant to the educational needs of the student and is kept by the school. A student's parent or guardian or an eligible student (who is 14 years old or has entered the ninth grade), has the right to inspect all portions of the student's record upon written request to the principal. The record must be made available to the parent, guardian, or eligible student not later than two consecutive workdays after the request is made, unless the parent or guardian, or eligible student consents to a delay. The parent/guardian, or eligible student may request copies of any part of the record. A fee may be charged for the cost of copying.

### Confidentiality of Records

*No individual or organization other than the parent/guardian, eligible student, or school personnel working directly with the student is allowed access to a student's record without the specific written consent of the parent/guardian, or eligible student except in limited instances as specified by the State or Federal regulations governing student records.*

### Amendment or Deletion of Records

*The parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written material to the student's record. In addition, the parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to request that information contained in the record be amended or deleted except for information inserted in the record by a special needs or Section 504 evaluation. The parent/guardian, or eligible student has a right to a conference with the school principal for the purpose of information contained in the school record. Within a week after such conference, the principal must render a decision in writing on the objection. If the parent/guardian or eligible student is not satisfied with the principal's decision, he or she may appeal such decision to the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately, to the School Committee.*

### Destruction of Records

A student's temporary record shall be destroyed no later than seven years after the student leaves the school system. The school system may offer the student, parent, or guardian the temporary record upon graduation or leaving school as long as the student, parent, or guardian acknowledges and accepts the temporary record by written consent. A student's transcript may be destroyed no sooner than 60 years after the student leaves the school system. A school principal or his or her designee may destroy misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record during the time the student is enrolled in the school district, provided the parent/guardian, or eligible student has been notified in writing and given the opportunity to inspect and copy any of the information prior to destruction.

All parents/guardians of children in the Watertown Schools have the right of inspection of their children's records in accordance with [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34D](#), and [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34E](#). Also, a student, eighteen years of age or older, has the right of access to all records relative to him/her in accordance with M.G.L. Ch.71, Sections 34D, 34E.

M.G.L. Chapter 71, specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the principal.

*Courtesy and the need for maintenance of order suggest that anyone interested in exercising the above right make his/her request in writing for an appointment with the principal so that possible questions may be answered.*

### **Non-custodial Parent Access to Student Records**

The Massachusetts Board of Education has amended Student Records Regulations concerning access to student records by non-custodial parents. As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records *unless* the school or district has been given documentation that:

1. The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent;
2. The non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation;
3. The non-custodial parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the order or any subsequent court order specifically allows access to student record information.

**If you have any questions or need further information regarding any of the above named District Policies, Federal Laws, or State Laws, please contact the Watertown Public Schools Central Office.** Watertown Public Schools, 30 Common Street. Watertown, MA 02472. 617-926-7700 (phone)

**The Watertown Public Schools is required to collect signatures to ascertain that parents/guardians and students have read and understand the following:**

1. Content of the Student Handbook (including Media Release, Directory Information, Transfer of Records, and Student Publication on the Internet)
2. Information concerning an Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)

*To assist you, please refer to the following summaries.*

**Complete and return the signature page to your child's school no later than one week after the receipt of the Student Handbook.**

## **Pictures, Names, or Quotes in the Media**

Sometimes media (such as newspaper, television, radio, or cable) reporters or photographers would like to be involved in activities in the schools. Having a picture in the paper for participating in a program is usually acceptable to parents, but occasionally, for legal reasons, it is not prudent. **If you do not wish your child's name to be used or picture to be taken for the media, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

## **Directory Information Notice**

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

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees, honors, and awards received; and post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the School System's discretion, without the consent of a parent/guardian of a student or an eligible student. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student, or otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

**Any parent/guardian or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file a written notification to this effect with the school's**

**principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. You can write this notification on the bottom of the Signature Page.**

In the event a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither parent/guardian nor eligible student objects to the release of directory information.

### **Notice on Transfer of Records to Another School**

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

### **An Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)**

#### **Parent Notification**

The Health Education and Science programs of Watertown Public Schools contain comprehensive PreK-12 curricula. The goal of the program is to help students acquire appropriate content background to develop the life skills, including problem solving, communication, and decision-making abilities, to prepare for a healthy and productive future.

The Health Education and Science programs have been designed by our professional staff, using their own research based programs as well as programs developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Red Cross, Operation Lifesaver, and other health and science education resources.

During health and science classes, student questions will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be required to answer questions or reveal personal information. Material is presented factually.

Under Massachusetts law and the Watertown School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. If you would like to exempt your child from a particular class, please send the request in writing.

The Director of Health Education or the Principal are available to meet with you to review curriculum and materials. To review these materials, please call to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions regarding the exemption process for the Health and Science Programs, please call your school's principal.

**To exempt your child from any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

### **An Act Relative to Bullying in the Schools, M.G.L. c 71, § 370**

Please read section "Anti-Bullying Procedures" in this handbook.

*Signature Page*

PLEASE CUT OUT AND DELIVER TO SCHOOL OR HOMEROOM TEACHER  
*Complete and sign both sides of this page.*

**Student Information:**

Last Name  
First Name  
Home Address  
Date of Birth  
Age

School/Grade

**Parent Information**

Parent/Guardian  
Name  
Home Phone& Cell  
E-Mail Adress

**Student Handbook**

I acknowledge that I have read and we have discussed the preceding rules and regulations of this SCHOOL HANDBOOK.

An Act Relative to Sex Education

I acknowledge that I have read the information concerning parent notification of any classes that will be held on human sexual education or sexual issues as related to Sex Education M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A .

**Student Signature**

**Date**

**Parent/Guardian**

**Signature**

**Date**

**If you do not want to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed, please write a note here. Let us know what information you would NOT like disclosed.**

An Act Relative to Bullying

I acknowledge that I have read the information concerning parent notification on bullying as related to An Act Relative to Bullying in the Schools, M.G.L., c 71 § 370.

**Student Signature**

**Date**

Parent/Guardian Signature  
Date

***Parent/Guardian Permission for Student Publication on the Internet***

During the school year, students attending Watertown Public Schools will be creating many different projects, some of which will appear on district, school, and classroom websites. These projects will pertain directly to the curriculum. These give students the added incentive to produce excellent work that is published for others to see. These projects may include: photographs/video of the student, the student's voice, student work such as illustrations and writing. We will only include a student's first name with his or her published work.

If you have any objections to your child's work being published on the Internet, check the options for which you do not give permission, sign, and return this page to your child's teacher.

If you have no objections, leave the boxes empty and sign this page and return it to your child's teacher.

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I **do not** give permission for the following to be published on the Internet:

- Student's Photograph/Video
- Student's Voice
- Student's Work

By signing below, I verify that I understand the above release about publishing my child's curriculum project work on the District's, School's, or Classroom's websites and that I have indicated my preferences. By checking a box, I am withholding permission to publish my child's photograph/videos, voice, or work on the District's, School's, or Classroom's websites. If my preference changes during the school year, I will contact the principal.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade & Classroom Teacher/English Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please let us know if you have access to the Internet at home. This will help us in our plans to have Internet available before and after school.**

We have access to the Internet at home:            YES            NO

