

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023



WESTFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Tammy Ward, Assistant Principal
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WESTFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

<http://www.schoolsofwestfield.org>

WESTFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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Bo Sullivan, Vice Chair

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ENGLISH: If you need assistance understanding this information, please contact your building principal to arrange translation services.

إذا تحتاج مساعدة لفهم هذه المعلومات، الرجاء الاتصال بمدير المدرسة لتقديم خدمات

الترجمة. :ARABIC

NEPALI: यो जानकारी बुझ्न सहयोग चाहिएमा कृपया तपाइको प्रधानाध्यापकलाई अनुबाद सुविधाको लागि सम्पर्क राख्नुहोस.

RUSSIAN: Если Вы нуждаетесь в переводе, пожалуйста, сообщите директору школы, и школа обеспечит вас переводчиком.

SPANISH: Si Ud. necesita ayuda para entender esta información, favor de comunicarse con el Principal para los servicios de traducción.

SWAHILI: Kama unahitaji usaidizi katika kuelewa taarifa hii, tafadhali wasiliana na kinara wako wa jengo ili akupangilie huduma za tafsiri.

TAMIL: இந்தத் தகவலைப் புரிந்துகொள்வதற்கு உங்களுக்கு உதவி தேவையானால், மொழி பெயர்ப்பு சேவைகளை ஏற்பாடு செய்வதற்கு தயவு செய்து உங்களுடைய கட்டிட முதல்வரைத் தொடர்புகொள்ளவும்.

TWI: S1 wo hi a boafɔ4 a 4te as1m yi ase1 me pawoky1w fr1 wo panyin a 4tete wo na mo nhyeh1 nkyer1 ase1 som

UKRAINIAN: Якщо Вам необхідний переклад даної інформації, будь ласка, повідомте директору школи, і школа забезпечить вас перекладачем.

Letter to Students and Parents

This handbook was developed by elementary principals to answer questions concerning general policies and practices followed in the elementary schools. For more precise statements of formal School Committee policies, consult the website www.schoolsofwestfield.org. Frequent contact and communication between parents and school personnel are essential to your child's success in school.

School Sessions 2022-2023

All elementary schools' kindergarten through grade 4: 9:15 am – 3:15 pm.

Recess Time: 20 minutes per grade level at varied times

Children should not arrive on school grounds more than 15 minutes prior to school opening.

Inclement Weather: School Closing, Delayed Openings, Early Release

By law, the school system is required to open a minimum of 180 days per school year which under the Education Reform Law must include 900 hours for elementary school students.

There will be days when the Westfield Public Schools will be closed or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, hazardous traveling conditions and/or other emergencies. We have a telephone notification system that will place calls to parents notifying them of closings, delays, or an early release. In addition, closings will be broadcast: WHYN, WAQY (FM-102), WRNX (FM-100.9), KIX (FM-97.9), Channel 40, Channel 22, CBS 3, local Channel 15 or you may call the School Information Line 572-6417.

During periods of potential and actual storms, the school administration is in contact with all relevant public safety and municipal agencies. The decision to close or not close school is made as early as possible to cancel all school transportation and lunch programs and to notify the media, traffic, and school personnel. On occasion, it may be wiser to have a 2-hour delayed opening of school instead of closing for the full day. There may also be weather conditions that would necessitate the closing of school during normal school hours. Every child should know what to do and where to go in case of an early dismissal. If there is school during bad weather, the final decision concerning school attendance must rest with the individual parent.

Attendance/Tardiness

Students are expected to adhere to the attendance policy of the Westfield School Committee. Below are set forth specific procedures applicable to the Elementary Schools.

Morning Procedures: At the elementary schools, school starts at 9:15 am. Students are allowed to enter the building at 9:00 am. Once students have arrived on school grounds they may not leave. The only exception is under special circumstances, when a principal may allow a student to leave the school grounds during the day.

Tardiness to school/homeroom: Students are expected to arrive at school and to classes on time. Time missed from class constitutes absenteeism, whether in part or in whole. Students who demonstrate a pattern of unexcused tardiness may be subject to disciplinary measures. Students must be in their classroom at 9:15 am - otherwise they are tardy. If a student reports to school after 9:15 am, the parent must report to the office and sign the late sheet. Parents of students who are chronically tardy will be contacted informing them of the consequences of their child's further tardiness.

Absent/Tardy Call-In Procedures

Each day a child is absent/tardy from school, the parent must call the school to report the absence or tardy. Notes should also be sent to the classroom teacher reading absences/tardiness.

Dismissal

Students should not be dismissed from school for any reasons except in an emergency. The following rules are observed in our schools, and your cooperation is requested.

1. No teacher will dismiss a student without the principal's authorization.
2. If the parent does not appear in person, a note must be presented to the principal or the principal must be personally acquainted with the situation.
3. No student will be excused into the custody of any person not properly identified.
4. For students that are walkers or parent pick-ups: students will be dismissed at the close of the school day and parents will assume responsibility at the time.

Scheduling Appointments During the School Day/Early Dismissal Procedures

Parents are encouraged to schedule medical and other types of appointments after school hours. Early dismissal of children results in interruptions of classes and loss of learning time. However, in cases where a student needs to be dismissed early please observe the following:

1. Provide a written request to the teacher including the date, time and the reason for dismissal.

2. A parent/guardian, or other authorized person, must report to the office to dismiss a student. Parents should not go directly to the classroom but report to the office where a staff member will contact the classroom.
3. If a student is waiting in the office to be dismissed, he /she will not be permitted to leave the school until he/she is officially signed out.

Photos and Videotaping

On occasion, the activities and/or accomplishments of students may be photographed or videotaped for the purpose of educating parents, professionals, students and community members regarding the implementation and maintenance of quality education for all students and not for any financial gain. At the beginning of the year, please complete the Release of Student Images form.

Student Dress

Students are expected to dress in accordance with the Student Dress policy of the Westfield School Committee.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Bullying is prohibited under Massachusetts Law. For detailed information, please see the district Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Use of Electronic Devices at School

Because of interruption to classroom learning, the use of cell phones, music players, personal iPads, personal tablets, and other non-Westfield Public School electronic devices will not be permitted in school. Electronic devices may be used outside of the building before school and after school. Devices must be kept in backpacks or lockers during the school day. If a student is found with any electronic device that is turned on (whether it be text messaging, ringing and/or buzzing) it will be taken to the office. The first time this occurs, a student may pick up the device at the end of the day. After that, parents will need to retrieve the device from the office.

School Council

The Education Reform Act of 1993 requires that each school establish a School Council to promote and share decision making with the school community. The council is composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members. The members assist the principal in the identification of educational needs of the students attending the school, in the review of the budget and the formulation of the school improvement plan. The make-up of the council encourages diverse perspectives in the formulation of the consensus plan.

Bus Transportation

Elementary students (K-4) receive bus transportation when their residence is 1.5 miles or more from their designated school. If in doubt, you may call the Transportation Office at 413-572-6599.

Bicycles and Scooters

Bicycles and scooters ridden to school must be parked in the designated area. Helmets must be worn in accordance with the state regulations for bicycle safety. It is the rider's responsibility to secure the bicycle. They should not be left overnight or used during the school day. Parents must assume liability with regard to the use, loss, or damage to bicycles brought to school.

Home-School Communication

Schools communicate with parents on a regular basis about school rules, student programs, homework assignments, school activities, and parent information meetings. A number of communication channels have been created to keep parents informed. These include, but are not limited to: Telephone messaging system, parent-teacher conferences, newsletters, and report cards.

Distribution of Personal Party Invitations

Party invitations cannot be distributed by way of the classroom teacher, unless all children receive an invite.

Websites

Westfield Public Schools: www.schoolsofwestfield.org

City of Westfield: www.cityofwestfield.org

Family Involvement

Families play an important role in their children's success in school. Effective schools are a result of families and educators working together. We strive to promote a strong parent-school partnership by providing parents with information about school programs and activities and encouraging family participation in their child's education both at home and at school. Parents are invited and encouraged to volunteer in the school, serve on committees, to complete surveys, to attend field trips, to attend school events, and to participate in the homework process.

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information)

Any adults, including parents, guardians, or family members MUST have an approved CORI before volunteering at school (field trips, field day, etc.). Volunteers may also be required to submit to fingerprint based background checks. The CORI application form can be obtained from the school office or the Volunteer in Public Schools office and should be completed approximately 4 weeks before an event. CORI forms need to be updated every three years.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

The Westfield Public Schools issues elementary report cards three times each year. These trimester reports, in conjunction with parent teacher conferences throughout the year, are the method for reporting your child's progress to you. The reports are curriculum based, and as such, are constructed to be directly related to particular grade levels. Teachers are always willing to confer with parents when needed regarding a child's progress in school. We urge you to maintain frequent contact with your child's teacher.

Student progress is reported through the use of standards-based report cards, that specify which standards and indicators have been targeted as essential and when they will be taught and assessed. Teachers from each grade level have identified key grade-level skills that students need to know and be able to do by the end of the school year. The skills are aligned with the Common Core Standards that may be found

at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/>

Marking Periods & Report Card Schedule

Trimester	Marks Close	Report Card Distribution
Trimester #1	November 30, 2022	December 7, 2022
Trimester #2	March 13, 2023	March 17, 2023
Trimester #3	June 14, 2023	June 21, 2023

Parental Complaints/Protocol/Standards

In cases where parents wish to express a complaint about an issue or about a staff member, they shall first discuss the matter with the staff member concerned. If they are not satisfied and sufficient time has elapsed for changes to be made, they will further discuss the matter with the building principal. If finally, the principal has been unable to satisfy the parent, the case should be reported to the Superintendent's office.

Entrance Requirements

The following must be met to enroll a student:

1. All kindergarten students must be five (5) years of age on or before September 1 to enter kindergarten. No exceptions will be made.
2. A birth certificate must be presented and a copy will be made for the school file.
3. State law mandates a pre-kindergarten screening be conducted for each student entering kindergarten.
4. Online registration forms must be completed and appropriate documentation submitted.
5. A physical, dated within the last 13 months, must be submitted within the first 30 calendar days of school. Medical exemptions must be in writing from a physician. Religious exemptions must be submitted, by parents, on a yearly basis.
6. In order to comply with state law, your child must be immunized against Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTP/DTaP), Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Polio, Hepatitis B, and Varicella (Chicken Pox) before entering school, unless exempted for medical reasons with a doctor's note or religious reasons. Proof of lead screening must be submitted and there is no exemption for this.
7. Parents of transfer students must complete a release of records form (except as otherwise provided by law).

Grade/Classroom Placement

In general, students transferring into the system will be placed in the same grade level as in the school from which they transferred. Grade and classroom placement is made at the discretion of the principal. Retention may be considered when:

1. The child is achieving significantly below ability and grade level.
2. Retention would not cause an undue social and emotional adjustment.
3. Retention would have a reasonable chance of benefiting the child.

Abuse/Neglect Reporting

School staff are mandated reporters and are required by law to file a report (51-A) with the Department of Children and Family Services of any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. Refer to WPS Policy File: JLF-R Reporting Child Abuse Procedures.

Building Utilization

A floor plan of each building is available upon request at the individual school offices.

Care of School Property by Students

It is the responsibility of students to ensure that books and materials belonging to the Westfield Public Schools are returned in acceptable condition. Students responsible for lost, damaged, or defaced property must pay for the property.

Bus Transportation

The Westfield Public Schools provides free bus transportation for all eligible students in accordance with applicable laws. The authority of the school begins and ends at the bus stops, both in the morning and in the afternoon. As such, all school rules apply to student activity during these times. Students who violate school rules may have their privilege to ride the school bus revoked in addition to any standard disciplinary action. If a student is suspended from riding the bus, it becomes the responsibility of the student and his/her parents to provide transportation to and from school. Additional rules that apply specifically to riding the school bus are:

1. Abusive language is prohibited on school buses.
2. No smoking or vaping will be permitted on a school bus.
3. Horseplay of any kind will not be allowed on the bus regardless of whether the bus is standing or moving. This means that all students will:
 - not kneel on bus seats and talk to persons on seats behind them;
 - not tamper with the bus and its equipment, especially the windows.
 - not put arms, legs, head or any part of their body out of the window;
 - not move around or change seats in the bus once it is in motion.
 - No throwing of objects, regardless of whether the bus is standing still or moving.
 - No rough or disorderly physical misbehavior will be permitted on the bus.
4. Chewing gum, eating food, or drinking beverages is not allowed on the bus.
5. No items may be carried on the bus except materials that will be held by the student or placed on the floor under the seat directly in front of the student.
6. The emergency doors of school buses are for emergency use only.
7. Students, when getting on and off the bus, shall cross in front of the bus and only upon the receiving of a signal to cross from the bus driver.

Students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver. The bus driver is required to report rule violations. Continued disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the bus driver is sufficient cause for a student to be refused transportation on school buses. A pupil may be suspended from bus transportation upon the principal's receipt of the pupil's third Bus Conduct Report, any subsequent Bus Conduct Reports may result in the loss of bus privileges.

BUS CONDUCT REPORTS and recommendations made with respect to students for the last day of the school year will be implemented in the following school year. Unfulfilled disciplinary assignments will be carried forward and continued in September of the following school year.

ALTERNATE BUSES: On occasion and with prior approval of the transportation company and the principal, a bus student may be eligible to ride an alternate bus.

1. No bus will be re-routed to provide transportation for any individual or group without directions from the transportation office.
2. Buses will only stop to discharge students at regularly scheduled stops. No additional stops will be scheduled without directions from the Transportation Office.
3. The principal should receive a written request from the parent for any alternative transportation. If there is adequate room on the bus, and items #1 and #2 above are observed, the Transportation Director may grant this request.

Field Trips

Throughout the school year, teachers organize field trips to various educational sites. Teachers organize their field trips in order to enhance the further study of a particular unit. Field trip notices will be sent home to advise parents of field trips and the amount of money that may be needed for transportation and admission. Parents must sign notification forms for trips outside the Westfield area. When children are on field trips, they are expected to behave and follow the rules that have been set up in the classroom. A child who is disruptive or endangers the safety of other children may not be allowed to continue the field trip. The parent will be contacted to come and pick up the child. A child may be excluded from a field trip if, in the judgment of the principal, he/she has shown evidence and may present a potential safety problem. Parents who volunteer for field trips are required to complete a CORI application and receive a favorable rating.

Fundraiser & Donations

PTO fundraisers take place throughout the school year.

Health Information

A nurse is on staff to assist with medical problems. Listed below are statements about several health-related topics the nurse oversees.

Emergency Information

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are requested to update their emergency information sheet for each of their children. It is important that these emergency information sheets be updated at all times. Please list all phone numbers, cell numbers, pages, etc. where a parent/guardian can be reached during the day. For emergency contact people listed on your student(s) sheet, please make sure these people know they are listed on your student(s) emergency information sheet. In case of an emergency, the emergency contact people need to be available to pick up your child at school. Please make sure that your child knows the emergency contact people. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school office and/or the health office of any changes to the emergency contact information sheet.

Physicals

Physical exams are required for all new students and for all students entering grade 4.

Immunizations

In accordance with state law, the Westfield Public Schools requires that, prior to being admitted to school, each child must present a physician's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health School Immunization Regulations which are established annually.

Medications

The school nurse shall supervise and provide for the safe administration and documentation of all medications dispensed in schools. All medications will be administered by a school nurse whenever possible. Parents/guardians of students requiring medication while at school must assume responsibility for informing appropriate school personnel of any change in their child's health or medication requirements.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Each year the following assessments will be made at school:

- Weight and height measurement
- Vision and hearing screenings

Injuries/Sickness at School

If your child is injured at school, first aid will be administered. If a serious injury occurs the student will be transported to a hospital. The cost of the ambulance transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Every effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian immediately.

If a student is sick during the school day, the teacher will refer him to the health office. Once the student is in the health office, the nurse will take his/her temperature, etc. to determine whether or not the child needs to go home. The school nurse will then contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact person listed on the emergency information sheet.

Too Sick for School

Recommended guidelines as to when you should keep your child home from school:

Fever: If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, he/she should be kept home until fever free (without medication) for 24 hours. Liquids should be encouraged as tolerated.

Diarrhea or vomiting: If your child has repeated episodes of either, he/she should be kept out of school until the illness passes (24 hours after last episode).

Sore throat: Severe sore throat could be strep, even if fever is not present. Other symptoms of strep can be headache and stomach. If a throat culture is positive, your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

If you have any questions regarding your child's illness or return to school, please feel free to contact the nurse.

Head Lice

Head Lice are not indicative of poor hygiene. Head lice are not influenced by hair length or the frequency of shampooing or brushing. Head lice are not a health hazard because they are not responsible for the spread of any disease.

Out of State/Country Student Visitors

The regulation from the Department of Public Health, regarding students visiting schools in Massachusetts is as follows: Any student visiting from another state or country must show the school nurse proof of immunizations signed by a physician. The visiting student has to follow the same immunization requirements as Massachusetts's students. If the visiting student does not have the required immunizations, the student will not be allowed to stay.

504 Plan

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities within the work and school setting. Section 504 requires regular education teachers to provide reasonable accommodations and ensures equal access to educational programs for students

with disabilities. If you feel your child is eligible for a 504 plan, or you would like to make a 504 evaluation referral, please contact the school office.

Special Education

All students are entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). In Massachusetts, students eligible for special education must demonstrate the presence of a disability that prevents the student from making effective progress in the general curriculum, and requires specially designed instruction or related services in order to progress. An initial evaluation to determine eligibility based on the above factors will be completed in order to determine any special needs. If you feel your child may be eligible for special education, please contact the school office.

Cafeteria-Breakfast/Lunch

Well-balanced breakfast and lunch meals are available to students. Menus for the month can be found on our district website under the food services department or you can visit our Facebook page Westfield EATS. Those who bring lunch from home may purchase milk. Free and reduced rates are available for those who meet the criteria. Please fill out the application, found on the website and/or school office, to see if you qualify.

Breakfast may be purchased for \$1.35

Lunch may be purchased for \$2.50 or brought from home

Milk may be purchased for 50 cents

Free & Reduced Lunch Program

To ensure that every student, regardless of his/her family's financial status, may be served a nutritious meal in the middle of the school day, the Westfield Public Schools participates in the National School Lunch program. Parents can complete an application to see if they are eligible to receive free lunch or a reduced priced lunch.

Please note: If a family's financial status changes during the school year, parents are urged to complete the Free & Reduced Lunch Application. Applications are available on our website or in the school office. Completed applications should be returned to the school office or can be mailed to the Food Services Office, 59 Court Street, Westfield, MA 01085.

School Insurance

A reasonably priced accident insurance policy is available for all children. Information regarding the options may be obtained from the main office. You should remember that the school department's only function in this matter is one of service. All matters relating to claims are the responsibility of the family and the insurance company.

Safety Drills: Evacuation/Fire, Bus Evacuation, Lockdowns, Shelter-in Place:

Several times during the school year, students will participate in fire drills. When the alarm bell rings, students are required to be silent and cooperate by following instructions from the teacher regarding the evacuation of the building. A lockdown drill is conducted twice a year, and teachers present information about the procedure in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Lost/Stolen Property

Children should not bring money or valuables to school. The Westfield Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any lost or stolen items. For easy identification of lost items, please put

your child's name inside all articles of outer clothing, lunch boxes, backpacks, boots, instruments, etc.

Lost and found items are sent to the office and placed in a box. Parents and students are encouraged to look through the lost and found items at any time. Jewelry, eyeglasses, electronic devices, instruments, etc. are usually maintained in the school office. All unclaimed items will be donated on a monthly basis to a charity of the school's choice.

School Committee Meetings

Meetings are generally held on the first and third Monday of each month. Meetings are also listed, along with other town meetings, on the City of Westfield Website. Most meetings are broadcasted live on Channel 15.

SECTION II - DISTRICT POLICIES

The District Section is composed of district-wide policies. If any provisions of Section 1 are in conflict with Section 2, district policy shall prevail.

Below please find a brief description of some district-wide policies. To view the complete listing of policies located in the School Committee Policy manual please visit our website at www.schoolsofwestfield.org. (District Section>>>School Committee>>>Policy Manual)

Administering Medicines to Students (File: JLCD) (File: JLCD-R)

This policy is designed to provide minimum standards for the safe and proper administration of medications to students in the Westfield Public Schools. Except as provided in this policy and its accompanying regulations, the Westfield School Committee prohibits the administration of any medication by school personnel, or the self-administration of any medication by any student.

Life Threatening Allergies (LTA) (File: JLCEA)

The Westfield Public Schools (WPS) understand that some students have life-threatening allergies and the WPS are committed to minimizing the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions. In order for the WPS to appropriately assist the student, parents/guardians must notify school administration (including the school nurse) about allergies and health issues with their children.

Athletic Concussion Policy (File: JJIF) (File: JJIF-R)

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities.

Policy Regarding Wellness (File: ADF) (File ADF-R)

The Westfield Public Schools promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, health education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment.

Attendance Policy (File: JE)

The School Committee requires a high level of participation in engaged learning. Regular school and class attendance enables students to benefit from classroom discussions, presentations, and interactive activities.

Student Conduct on School Buses (File: JICC)

The authority for enforcing Westfield School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the building principal.

Student Dress (File: JICA)

It is largely the responsibility of the student, with the guidance of parents, to determine what is appropriate dress for school or school related activities, however, the Westfield Public School system reserves the right to prohibit clothing or manner of dress which constitutes a health or safety concern or is so unusual as to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process.

Student Fees, Fines, and Charges (File: JQ)

The Westfield School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. While no student will be denied access due to an inability to pay fees, all students will be required to remit charges and fines.

Responsible Digital Use Policy (File: IJNDB) (File: INJDB-E)

The Westfield Public School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool.

Student Discipline (File: JIC)

The Westfield School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated.

Student Interrogations, Searches, and Arrests (File: JIH)

The storage, on one's person, in one's belongings or in school property, of contraband such as, but not limited to, illegal substances or articles or any item prohibited by district policy or building rules, is strictly forbidden. Violations will result in confiscation of such materials. The student in violation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students Prohibited (File JICH)

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids, or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property or at any school function.

Due Process for Suspensions from School

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

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

- The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.
- If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
- On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the

suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

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

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

- Send proposed short-term suspension letter
- Principal Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.
- Send short-term suspension determination letter

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

- Send proposed long-term suspension letter
- Principal Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and

- iv. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- v. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.
- Send long-term suspension determination letter
- The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
- The Superintendent appeal hearing shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.
- Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue the Superintendent suspension determination letter. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency, removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

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

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H and 37H½

1. The due process procedures above do not apply to a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) an assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony 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, as provided in M.G.L. c.71, §§37H or 37H½.
2. The principal will inform the student of the specific charges in writing, informing the student of the right to be represented by counsel (at the student's expense) and the right to provide evidence and question witnesses, on the proposed hearing date.
3. The student may appeal the principal's expulsion determination to the superintendent of schools within ten (10) days of notification of the expulsion.

4. The superintendent may uphold, reduce, or reverse the disciplinary action after the appeal hearing. Note that a failure to make an appeal to the superintendent within the ten (10) day period will exhaust any further right of appeal.
5. All students who have been suspended or expelled who remain residents of the District shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities.
6. If the superintendent upholds the expulsion decision, if the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan.

Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs (File: IHAMB)

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

Bullying and Cyberbullying (File: JBA)

Bullying of any type is prohibited in the school setting or connected with the school setting as provided below. The Westfield Public Schools will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying.

Prohibition of Hazing (File: JICFA) (File: JICAF-E)

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location.

Policy Regarding Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (students) (File: ACAC)

It is the policy of the Westfield Public Schools that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment is forbidden, whether by students, school employees or third parties subject to the control of the board.

Physical Restraint of Students (File: JKAA) (File: JKAA-R)

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the Westfield Public School District. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

Procedures Student Complaints and Grievances (File: JII-R)

The procedures apply only to situations not otherwise specifically provided by other district policy or procedure.

Student Privacy (File: JII-R)

In accordance with federal law, the Westfield Public Schools adopts, in consultation with parents, the following provisions related to student privacy.

Student Records (File: JRA) and File JRA-R)

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families.

Free Speech Policy (High Schools) (File: JFA)

The Westfield Public Schools recognize the free speech rights of high school students in the public schools.

Student Speech at Elementary and Middle Schools (File: JFAAA)

The Westfield Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to create an educational environment that encourages appropriate student expression and speech.

Parental Notification Law (File: IGAI)

The Westfield Public Schools will ensure that parents and/or guardians are afforded the flexibility to exempt their children from any portion of the human sexual education or human sexuality issues curriculum that is taught within the PreK-12 grade levels. Parents and/or guardians who wish to avail themselves of this flexibility shall do so through written notification to their child's school principal. No child so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption.

Non-Custodial Parents Rights (File: KBBA)

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

Student Progress Reports to Parents (File: IKAB)

Parents are entitled to information concerning the progress of their child. The information shall emphasize the positive aspects of a child's progress in school indicating, therefore, what he/she has accomplished.

Student Assistance Program (File: IGB)

The goal of the district is to provide students needing educational supports with the opportunity to receive educational assistance within the general education program whenever possible.

English Language Learners (File: IHBEA)

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidelines.

Nondiscrimination (File: AC)

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential.

Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff (File: GBECB)

Under MGL c. 268A, public school teachers (and other public employees) are generally prohibited from accepting gifts valued at fifty dollars or more, unless that gift falls within certain exemptions. The State Ethics Commission recently created a new exemption for “class gifts” whereby a public school teacher may accept a class gift up to one hundred fifty dollars in value if a group of students and/or parents wish to pool their contributions towards a gift.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (File: ACC)

Under Section 504, a person with a disability is anyone who (a) has, (b) has a record of having or (c) is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing hearing, speaking, breathing, working and performing manual tasks and includes major bodily functions.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The requirements regarding special education are based upon state and federal law. The relevant laws are as follows:

- A. State Law: The state special education law, Section 28, popularly known as “Chapter 766” after the session law number under which it was passed in 1972, is contained in the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) at Chapter 71B.
- B. The regulations implementing the statute are found in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), 603 CMR, Section 28.00.
- C. Federal Law: The federal special education law is known as “IDEA” (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). The statute is located in the United States Code (USC) at 20 U.S.C. §1400. In 1997, Congress reauthorized the IDEA and the amended statute is popularly known as “IDEA-2004”.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

Students may be assigned to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (I.A.E.S.) in accordance with the policy of the Westfield School Committee.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The Westfield Fire Department requires a standard evacuation procedure for all Westfield Public Schools. This procedure allows students to learn the evacuation procedure when they first enter the school and follow the same instructions until they leave the Westfield Public Schools.

Visitors and Parking

VISITORS: Our policy is to accept visitors who have legitimate business at school. Visitors and guests must register in the school office immediately upon entering the building. All visitors and guests must display, at all times, an appropriate identification badge assigned by the school office. Upon completion of their business all visitors and guests must sign out in the school office, return their badge and promptly leave the building.

PARKING REGULATIONS: Parents/guardians, students, and visitors should familiarize themselves with the parking regulations of the school and park in a legal parking space only. Violators will be subject to fines or towing of their vehicles. This applies to morning drop-off and after school pick-up as well as evening programs, workshops and conferences.

Summer Reading

The Westfield Public Schools remain committed to the improvement of reading, a primary component of the learning process. The goals of summer reading are to reinforce the habit of reading for pleasure, enrichment and gathering information. Research indicates that the more students read or listen to books, the better they will read. Research also indicates that students who do not read regularly throughout the summer lose reading skills that must be rebuilt once school begins again. Our expectation is that every student will read over the summer. Please refer to the Westfield Public School district webpage at www.schoolsofwestfield.org under Students for detailed information about summer reading.

Teacher Mailboxes

Teacher mailboxes are private and under no circumstances are students or visitors to REMOVE OR PUT ANYTHING in a teacher's mailbox.

Cancellation of School

There will be days when the Westfield Public Schools will be closed or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, hazardous traveling conditions and/or other emergencies. We have a telephone notification system that will place calls to parents notifying them of closings, delays, or an early release. Please be sure that your student's contact information is up-to-date. The decision to close or not close school is made as early as possible to cancel all school transportation and lunch programs and to notify the media, traffic, and school personnel. On occasion, it may be wiser to have a two-hour delayed opening of school instead of closing for the full day. There may also be weather conditions that would necessitate the closing of school during normal school hours. Every child should know what to do and where to go in case of an early dismissal. If there is school during bad weather, the final decision concerning school attendance must rest with the individual parent.

Summary of Westfield Public Schools Safety Policies

Criminal Offender Registration (CORI): The Human Resources Office processes all CORI checks. The CORI will be utilized only for employment purposes and not disseminated to any other party. (Contact Human Resources Office) (File: ADDA)

Emergency Procedures: Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff. Schools must be prepared to respond immediately and responsibly to any combination of events which threaten to result in an emergency and/or disaster. (File: EBC)

Fire Safety: Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions. (File: EBC)

Identification of Students and Staff: A picture identification system enhances the control and management of the school system.

Injury Reports: All injuries must be reported to the classroom teacher/school nurse as soon as possible. The injury report form must be completed.

Inspections (Playgrounds, Buildings, Buses, Etc.): Regular inspection of buildings, grounds, facilities, equipment and buses to uncover hazards and/or dangerous conditions in an ongoing effort to address any safety concerns.

Westfield Police Department: The Westfield Police Department and the Westfield Public Schools are committed to safe schools. The parties agree to meet to collaborate and establish lines of communication to support a safe, secure school and community.

Reporting requirements to the Department of Children & Families: Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A. (File: JL)

Student Interrogations, Searches, and Arrests: The School Committee recognizes the right of students to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. Nevertheless, it is the duty of the School Committee and school officials to maintain order and discipline in the schools, thereby ensuring a positive educational environment. In furtherance of these duties, inspections and searches for prohibited and/or illegal substances or items may be conducted. (File: JIH)

Reporting Requirements to Law Enforcement: It is the policy of the Westfield Public Schools to cooperate with law enforcement and social service agencies in the interest of the larger welfare of all citizens. At the same time, Westfield Public Schools have a responsibility to parents/guardians for the welfare of the students while they are in the care of the school.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) - Model Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the Westfield 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 Westfield Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised your student's building principal to the contrary in accordance with Westfield Public School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Westfield Public Schools to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

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 prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want the Westfield Public Schools to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your child's school principal in writing by **September 13, 2022.**

The Westfield Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information.

- Student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2022-2023

August 25	New Teacher Opening Day
August 26 & 29	Staff Development Days
August 30	Schools open for grades 1-12
September 5	Labor Day Holiday/No School
September 6	First Day of Kindergarten & Fort Meadow Preschool
October 10	Columbus Day Holiday/No School
October 26	Early Release Day for Elementary Students Full Day for Secondary Students Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences
November 8	Staff Development Day/No School for Students
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday/No School
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Recess/No School
December 26-30	Holiday Recess/No School (schools reopen January 3, 2023)
January 16	Martin Luther King Day Holiday/No School
February 8	Early Release Day for Elementary Students Full Day for Secondary Students Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences
February 20-24	Winter Vacation/No School
March 10	Staff Development Day/No School
April 7	Good Friday/No School
April 17-21	Spring Vacation/No School
May 29	Memorial Day Holiday/No School
June 1	Westfield Technical Academy graduation ceremony
June 2	Westfield High School graduation ceremony
June 21	Last Day of School - early release for students *Includes 5 emergency closing days **Last day will be June 14 (if no emergency closing days are used) For every day not used, a day will be deducted from the calendar

Support Resources and Hotlines

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Dilmira Liquori, Police Department: 562-5411 extension 5

YWCA ARCH Program: 733-7100 (hotline) Shelter, counseling and information for battered women and their children, sexual assault services

New Beginnings: 562-5739 counseling and information

SafeLink 24-hours 877-785-2020

Psychiatric Services

Westfield Crisis Intervention Program: 568-6386

24-hour service for psychiatric crisis and suicidal behavior

Individual, group and family counseling for youth and families:

The Carson Center: 572-4132

James Levine and Association: 534-7400

MSPCC, Holyoke: 532-9466

Child and Family Services, West Springfield: 737-4718

Agawam Counseling Center: 786-6410

Substance Abuse Services

MASS Substance Abuse Information Helpline: 800-327-5050

Providence Hospital, Holyoke

- Clinical Assessment Center for outpatient services: 539-2973
- Clinical Assessment Center for inpatient services: 539-2981

Baystate Medical Center, Central Intake for inpatient and outpatient services: 794-5555

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting schedule: www.westernmassaa.org or listed in your local paper

Al-Anon and Alateen: 782-3406/ 888-425-2666

Hotlines and Other Support Services

United Way: 737-2691

AIDS information and support: 800-235-2331

Missing children: 800-843-5678

National Runaway Switchboard (24 hours): 800-RUNAWAY

Department of Children and Families, Holyoke Office: 493-2600

Parental Stress Line: 800-632-8188

Western Mass Legal Services (Legal Aid): 781-7814