WESTFORD SCHOOL DAYS HANDBOOK

PRE-SCHOOL – GRADE 5
2016-2017

Westford Public Schools
"Shaping the Future,
One Child at a Time"

http://www.westfordk12.us/

Westford Elementary Schools

August 2016

Dear Families,

We extend a warm welcome to you as the new school year begins. The purpose of this handbook is to share important general information about Westford's elementary schools. The procedures in this handbook are consistent throughout the system and are based upon the policies of Westford Public Schools, which are noted with reference numbers. The complete text of policies can be accessed online at http://westfordk12.us/pages/sc/policy. Policy manuals are also available for reference in each school office. In addition to this handbook, principals will send home information about school procedures and Codes of Conduct, which reflect the unique culture and character of each school.

Please take a few moments to read the contents of this handbook and review pertinent information with your child. The handbook contains many answers to questions you may have about day-to-day procedures and policies and is a useful reference to keep on hand. Once you have reviewed the handbook, return the signature page to your child's teacher. Please note permission for community and world publishing require check-off and parent signature as well.

As partners in your child's education, we look forward to a successful and rewarding 2016-2017 school year. Please do not hesitate to call us if you have questions or concerns beyond the scope of this handbook.

Sincerely,

Elementary School Principals
Kevin LaCoste, Robinson School
Susan DuBois, Nabnasset School
Sharon Kennelly, John A. Crisafulli School
Donna Pobuk, Rita Edwards Miller School
Nichole Burroughs Cailler, Coordinator, Millennium Pre-School
Kevin Regan, Norman E. Day School
Kathy Huntley, Abbot School

RECORD OF TRANSMITTAL

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

SCHOOL: Please Circle
Millennium Nabnasset Robinson Miller Abbot Day Crisafulli
Please detach this page and return it to your child's teacher by September 9, 2016.

I have read and am familiar with the contents of the Westford Public Schools' Elementary Student Handbook. In addition, I have reviewed the contents with my child. I feel that I understand it and will carry out my responsibilities accordingly.

_____

Student Signature Date

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

All student work and photographs may be used, displayed, or published in the classroom/school setting unless you notify the school in writing to withhold permission. The following levels of publishing expand the basic level of classrooms/school publishing. Westford Public Schools needs written permission for publishing beyond the classroom level. Please check one of the following levels if you want to agree to expand the level of publishing beyond classroom/school for your child.

____ Community Publishing - I give my permission for the student work and/or photograph for the student listed above to be used in community publications (e.g. *Eagle, Sun*). I understand that the the student work may be credited with the student's first name and last name. This level of publishing includes classroom publishing.

____ World Publishing – I give my permission for the student work and/or photograph of the student listed above to be be displayed on the School District Website, Westford Cat and Local News Stations and District Social Media Sites. The student work or photograph may be credited with the student's first name and first initial of the last name. This level of publishing includes classroom and community publishing.

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

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GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Westford Elementary schools operate under the following schedules:

Millennium Pre-School	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Abbot, Day and Crisafulli	8:25 AM - 2:30 PM
Robinson, Nabnasset and Miller	9:05 AM - 3:10 PM

Kindergarten Hours – Monday - Friday

AM Kindergarten	9:05 AM – 11:35 AM
PM Kindergarten	12:40 PM – 3:10 PM

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding the information in this handbook, please contact the administrator of your child's school.

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

School	**Phone**	**Secretary**
Millennium Pre-School	978-692-5560x2111	TBD
Nabnasset School	978-692-5583	JoAnn Webster Chris Roberge
Rita E. Miller School	978-392-4476	Sandra Brake Debi Baranauskas
Robinson School	978-692-5586	Joann Beliveau Jayne Locke
Abbot School	978-692-5580	Sarah Edgecomb Chris Roberge
John A. Crisafulli School	978-392-4483	TBD Jayne Locke
Norman E. Day School	978-692-5591	Gina Kelly Debi Baranauskas

VISITORS

All visitors to school must ring the bell to gain access to the building. They must report to the office, sign in and obtain a visitor's badge so that personnel will be able to identify all who enter the building. Parent volunteers should follow the same procedure. This procedure more fully provides for the safety of students. Visitors to classrooms must have prior permission to enter the classroom from the classroom teacher and school administrator.

CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION (CORI)

All school visitors who have not completed a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check must be accompanied by a designated school representative at all times. All Westford Public Schools volunteers must complete a CORI check annually, no later than 12/21/16.

FINGERPRINTING

On January 10, 2013 the national criminal background check regulation was signed into law. As a result of this law, in addition to staff, Westford Public Schools requires all field trip chaperones and volunteer athletic coaches to abide by the fingerprinting obligation. Instructions on scheduling an appointment may be found at http://westfordk12.us/pages/hrm/fingerprinting. **Fingerprint reports are sent directly to the Office of the Superintendent. You will only be notified if you are not approved for volunteering.**

PARENT INFORMATION

Home/school communication is a vital component of the success of the elementary student. Parents will receive three Progress Reports to communicate student performance. Other communication vehicles, established at each school, such as newsletters, email messages, automated telephone messages, web sites, parent nights, etc., will help make the home/school communication a success.

Should sensitive information need to be conveyed to parents in a timely manner, an automated telephone message and/or message through email from the Superintendent of Schools will be used to alert parents that important information has been sent to the email address listed on the student's emergency card. Parents can update their email address through the following email: iparent@westfordk12.us or by contacting the school office.

SPECIAL EVENTS

At different times during the school year, enrichment experiences are scheduled for students. Programs such as plays are presented by various grades during the holiday period, in the spring, and on commemorative days such as Memorial Day. These activities provide self-expression opportunities and are learning experiences. Parent groups sometimes schedule enrichment programs to further help children learn.

To help all enjoy the important qualities of these programs, children should:

- listen without disturbing others
- be polite and ask questions by raising hands
- show appreciation by applause
- answer when called on

Children are the judges of a good performance and the performers and teachers are the judge of a good audience.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Grade 4 and 5 students in the Instrumental Program and children in grades 3 - 5 involved in the Strings Program will participate in lessons or rehearsals at some of the following times: before school, recess, specialists' blocks, academic classes.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are learning experiences organized to enhance the school curriculum. Written parent/guardian permission is required for all children to participate. Donations are appreciated for field trips. Schools look for volunteers to chaperone some field trips. All chaperones must be approved through the CORI process. The behavioral expectation for these activities is the same as in the classroom. The expectation is that children will:

- Remain with the teacher or other adult assistant
- Walk, not run to exhibits
- Be polite and wait turn to ask questions
- Follow all bus rules to and from the field trip, no eating on the bus
- Not bring cameras or hand held electronic devices
- Not bring money for souvenirs
- Ask permission from the adult chaperone/teacher to leave the group
- Have medication dispensed by the nurse and volunteers cannot dispense medication, such as Tylenol, Advil, Benadryl, etc.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Westford Public Schools complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to student records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's/guardian's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

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

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, school sponsored extra-curricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven years after the student leaves the school system.

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

Inspection of Record – A parent/guardian, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon written request. The record must be made available to the parent/guardian or eligible student within ten days of the request, unless the parent/guardian or eligible student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/guardian or eligible student requests copies of a student record, the District may charge the parent/guardian/eligible student for said copies at the District rate. This request must be made in writing.

Confidentiality of Record – With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent/guardian, eligible student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student.

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

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

Transfer of Records - It is the practice of the Westford Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who transfers to another public school district upon request of the receiving district.

Non-Custodial Parents – Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the child) of any public school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-

custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty one calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and any other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION (WPS Policy #6111) -

Directory Information is defined as information contained in the student record which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory Information may be disclosed without prior written consent. The following categories of information has been designated by the Westford School Committee as Directory Information:

First name, Last initial
Dates of attendance
Grade level
Extracurricular activities
Awards or honors

Parents or legal guardians can notify the school in writing of any restriction to the release of Directory Information as it applies to their child. Authorization to withhold Directory Information will remain in effect until the beginning of the next school year or until the parent/guardian submits written notification to the school office.

Third Party Access – Authorized school personnel, to include (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in

the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Complaints – A parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901, telephone number (202) 260-3887. If you have any questions regarding this notice, or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are loaned for student use and will be checked for damages at the end of the year. Students are responsible for textbooks. If books are lost or damaged, students or parents must pay for replacement.

SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The mission of the Westford Public School Library Media Centers is to foster academic excellence by providing services and instruction to students that support the school's curriculum. Library Media Specialists collaborate with faculty in designing learning opportunities with quality resources, information, and technology to help students become effective life-long learners.

Program Goals:

- To encourage a love of reading and an appreciation of good literature
- To provide students with access to a variety of information, which enables them to define a problem, locate, apply, synthesize and evaluate information throughout the research process
- To ensure that students achieve the necessary skills to ethically, creatively and critically use information and technology to acquire knowledge

The following guidelines are listed for your information:

- Children may borrow books or magazines for a one-week period Materials should be returned or renewed on the date due
- Reference materials are only used in the library
- Students are responsible for all library materials in their possession. Care should be given not to lose or damage borrowed materials
- Please report any lost or damaged materials to the Library Media Specialist and a bill will be sent home indicating the replacement cost
- Students will be unable to borrow library materials until all fees are paid or materials are returned

LOST AND FOUND
Any lost clothing should be placed into the lost and found box where it will be held temporarily. All other articles should be turned into the office. If not claimed, all usable articles of apparel will be contributed to a social agency.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS
Party invitations should not be brought to school. Student birthday invitations should be distributed to other children beyond school hours. School personnel are prohibited from releasing student information for this purpose.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
The increasing number of food allergies and medical conditions related to diet pose serious ramifications when food is brought into school. For that reason, all classes will celebrate student birthdays without food. Teachers will recognize student birthdays in a variety of ways with observances that acknowledge each student's special day in a consistent and thoughtful manner.

CLASSROOM REWARDS
Food will not be used as an incentive or as a reward.

SNACKS
Nutritious snacks can be provided from home, and should be easy to eat. Refrigeration and microwaving are unable to be provided.

ENROLLMENT AGE
Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5101
A child, who is of school age and resides in the town of Westford, may attend Westford Public Schools. A child must be five years of age before September 1st of the year in which he/she enrolls before he/she is eligible to enter kindergarten. Eligibility for first grade is the age of six on or before September 1st of the entering year, for second grade, eligibility is the age of seven years, etc. Families experiencing homelessness should contact the WPS Homeless Coordinator, Courtney Moran.

KINDERGARTEN EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM
The Extended Day Program provides supervised daycare for kindergarten students and the opportunity to remain at school for the length of the school day. This program is fee-based and registration is required. Non-payment of fees could result in exclusion from the program.

EARLY ARRIVAL OPTION PROGRAM
Westford Public Schools offers an early arrival option for K-5 students. For a nominal fee, students enrolled in the program participate in adult supervised activities until the start of the school day. Please note the drop-off times below:

Grades K-2 - 7:00 AM-8:30 AM

Grades 3-5 - 7:00 AM -8:15 AM

Children not participating in this option must wait to enter the building no sooner than 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian while waiting. There is no Early Arrival Program or before school activities (Band, Chorus, Orchestra, etc.) in the event of no school, or a delayed opening, due to inclement weather.

Arrival:

Because supervision is not provided to children until ten minutes before starting time, students must not arrive at school before that time. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian while waiting to enter the building.
When arriving in a vehicle other than a school bus follow the speed limit, traffic pattern, keep all children inside vehicle until supervisor greets child to exit, and follow the no idling regulations while on school property.

ATTENDANCE

Tardiness: Being on time is a responsibility for everyone. Children are tardy if they arrive after the start of the school day and must report to the office before entering classrooms to sign in as tardy (see p. 5 for start times).

Absence: If a child is not attending school, the parent or guardian must call or email the school office. If a telephone call is not received, school staff will telephone the home. This procedure assures the safety of all children. When calling the school, please note the reason for absence and whether the absence is due to a religious holiday. Parents/guardians can call the school communicating a student absence twenty- four hours a day. Voice mail will take the message when office personnel are not available to answer the telephone. In the event of excessive tardiness and unexcused absences, parents may expect to meet with the school principal.

Returning to School after an Absence: When a student is absent from school five consecutive days or more due to illness a note from a physician stating the reason for absence should be forwarded to school upon the child's return.

TRUANCY

Students absent without legitimate excuses are considered truant. Truancy and leaving the school building without permission are serious offenses and will be discussed with the parent or guardian.

ABSENCE DUE TO FAMILY VACATION

Families are strongly discouraged from taking vacation while school is in session. A packet of work from the teacher cannot replace what happens in the classroom; therefore, it should not be requested. Should scheduling make a conflict unavoidable, we recommend students keep a journal with writing, dictation, and drawings. Students are encouraged to read and practice

mathematical concepts while away from school. Missed assignments and assessments should be made up upon return to school.

Prior to any planned travel which will result in a student's absence for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, a parent/guardian must: (a) un-enroll their child from school; and (b) either complete a Homeschool Application, or identify the school in which they will enroll their child during said absence.

OBSERVANCE OF A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy P5114

Observance of a religious holiday shall be viewed as valid justification for student absence, late homework/project submission and delayed testing, only when the teacher has been notified of the observance date no later than two weeks in advance. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to notify the teacher of these dates at the beginning of the school year.

DISMISSAL

If a parent does not want a child to take the bus home, and plans to drive him/her at school closing, the following procedure should be followed:

- A note should be written to the teacher indicating that the child is not to take the bus and will be driven home at school closing. The note will be sent to the office for record keeping. This note should indicate whether it is a school lobby or car pick up
- The note should indicate who will be driving the child home
- Children who are dismissed will wait inside the building by the office area. The principal will outline specific dismissal procedures for each school
- Vehicle Identification Cards (VIC) must be visible during car pick up

Children are encouraged to remain in school until dismissal. Early dismissal is discouraged. When necessary to dismiss a child early, the following applies:

- Children should not be dismissed from school at a time when it would interfere with children who are en route for regular bus departure (no later than fifteen minutes before normal dismissal time)
- Children can only be dismissed from the school office
- The school secretary will contact the child's room, and he/she will be sent to the office area
- Parents are requested to meet their child at the **office area**, because that location provides the best supervision for early dismissal
- Parents must sign-out their children
- Parent should indicate in writing, who will pick up if it is other than parent
- Any special circumstances (court orders) regarding child safety must be shared with the school principal

DELAYED OPENING SCHEDULE

Pre-School	Millennium	1 hour delay	(10:00 AM)
Elementary	Robinson/Nabnasset/Miller K-2	1 hour delay	(10:05 AM)
Elementary	Day/Abbot/Crisafulli 3-5	1 hour delay	(9:25 AM)
Elementary	Robinson/Nabnasset/Miller K-2	2 hour delay	(11:05 AM)
Elementary	Day/Abbot/Crisafulli 3-5	2 hour delay	(10:25 AM)

DELAYED OPENING/EARLY RELEASE DAYS

During the course of the year, there are delayed openings and early release days to provide time for teachers' professional development, planning and parent/teacher conferences. A calendar, which specifies the designated days, is available electronically at http://www.westfordk12.us/pages/about/documents/wpscal16-17.pdf . Delayed opening and Early Release times at the elementary level will also be found in the district-wide school calendar. On these days, instruction continues as always. It is important for students to attend school every school day. If changes in dismissal are needed on early release days the school must be notified in writing.

If special arrangements have been made for a student at dismissal, the school must be notified in writing.

EARLY RELEASE SCHEDULE

AM Pre-School	9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
PM Pre-School	No School
AM Kindergarten	9:05 AM - 12:20 PM
PM Kindergarten	No School
Grades K-2	9:05 AM- 12:20 PM
Grades 3-5	8:25 AM -11:40 AM

Morning Kindergarten is extended on Early Release Days with students riding home on the regular bus.

SCHOOL CLOSING

If bad weather forces the cancellation of school, the decision is announced on radio stations WCAP (980), WLLH (1400), WBZ (1030), WRKO (680). The following television stations will also announce decisions: WBZ (4), WCVB (5), WHDH (7) and Westford Cable Channel 8 and on the web at http:// www.westford.com. Click on "School Info and Closings".
In the event of a one hour delayed start, AM Kindergarten will be delayed by that time. In the event of a two hour delay, AM Kindergarten will be cancelled for that day. In the event of a delay or snow day the Early Arrival Program is not offered.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

If it is necessary to dismiss students before regular dismissal because of a building or weather emergency, the following procedure will be followed:

- Afternoon kindergarten will be cancelled
- Local radio stations and local cable television will be notified to announce the decision
- Emergency School Closing announcement will be transmitted through the use of our automated telephone system as well as the email list serve.
- Each school has an evacuation plan that relocates all occupants to another school if the emergency affects just one school
- All parents are encouraged to have a back up plan in case of emergency school closing

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

- All students, as they enroll in WPS, are required to complete a Home Language Survey.
- If a language in addition to English is spoken at home, or if a student's first language is not English, the student will be assessed for English language proficiency.
- Students scoring below expectations on the English language proficiency testing and recommended for ELL services will receive ELL support services during the school day.
- Students receiving ELL support are required to participate in state-wide assessments.
- If parents elect to exclude their child from ELL services, they must check the box marked, "No" on the Permission for Services form or contact the principal in person, via telephone or email.
- Students will exit the ELL Program after passing statewide testing, and based on the results of standardized testing, classroom performance and teacher recommendation.

HOMEWORK

Homework times are meant to be a general reference and not to mandate the time spent completing homework.

Homework Policy 6112 – Rationale

Homework is an integral part of the learning process in the Westford Public Schools. It is a valuable contributor toward the development of good study habits, individual responsibility, and time management skills, all of which are necessary for success in school, the workplace and in students' daily lives.

Considerations for Homework

Homework traditionally provides for some very basic purposes:

- To supplement and reinforce skills and work done in class

- To provide opportunities to use skills and knowledge learned at school in creative ways outside of school
- To promote independent study and research skills
- To help develop individual responsibilities by teaching students how to budget time and organize materials

Beyond these provisions, the Westford Public Schools believe that truly effective homework includes the following considerations:

- It should be meaningful for students by having real world connections when appropriate
- It should contain problem-solving activities and assignments to challenge the critical thinking abilities of students
- It should include project oriented, long-term assignments to enable students to integrate their learning
- It should be differentiated in accordance with needs, skill deficits, strengths and interests of students
- It should provide challenge and extensions to further expand opportunities for learning

Homework – Student Responsibilities

At grades K-2 homework is a cooperative effort between parent and child. For grades 3-5:

- Homework is the student's responsibility
- Students are encouraged to use a homework assignment book or some organized method to record assignments
- Students should make every effort to clarify homework assignments before leaving school
- Students should complete homework assignments independently. Cooperative initiatives, however, can be beneficial when appropriate for instruction. If difficulties develop, a student should seek guidance from a teacher or parent
- Students should complete homework assignments on time and according to teacher guidelines
- Students are responsible for obtaining from their teachers any missed assignments

Homework – Parent Responsibilities

- Homework is a responsibility that rightfully belongs to the child, not parents
- Direct parental participation should be minimal; the younger the student, the more likely the need for parental involvement
- Parents should provide a place to study, free from distractions, and provide appropriate materials, such as pencils, pens, erasers, ruler, etc.

- Parents should monitor the time spent on homework and confer with the teacher if the amount of time appears to be consistently excessive or too little
- Parents should confer with the teacher if assignments seem consistently unclear or too difficult
- Parents should notify the teacher if an unforeseen occurrence prevents the student from completing the assignment
- Parents should make every attempt to schedule vacation time during those blocks provided within the school calendar
- Missing classroom instruction cannot be replaced with homework assignments as homework is designed to reinforce classroom instruction

Homework – Teacher Responsibilities

- Assignments will be at the students' level of understanding
- Assignments will be purposeful and related to the curriculum
- Assignments will not be given until expectations have been explained
- Consideration will be given to balance long-term assignments as well as tests
- The teacher will make homework an integral part of the assessment process. Grade level teams will strive not to exceed the time related guidelines
- Teachers will communicate with parents about homework expectations as well as any problems that arise
- The teacher should provide timely feedback to students

Homework – Guidelines for Time and Frequency

The following guidelines provide an approximate amount of time students should spend completing homework. Homework time will vary from student to student and day to day. Teachers generally assign homework four times per week. Additional assignments such as reading independently, writing journals or keeping up with current events, could also be required. Please note that children who are participating in general education support programs, such as Reading Recovery will receive additional daily work in reading. Parents will be given written notice of participation in these programs and must indicate their approval in writing. Homework will also include additional opportunities for a student to practice Math Facts. Teachers may also give long-term assignments, such as research reports or book related projects. The total daily time for homework at each grade level is as follows:

Grade Level	Time
Kindergarten	Approximately 10 minutes
One	Approximately 15 minutes
Two	Approximately 20 minutes
Three	Approximately 25 minutes
Four	Approximately 30 minutes

Five Approximately 45 minutes

PROGRESS REPORTS / GRADING

Formal parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year. Our progress report provides parents with more in-depth information and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework and Common Core and will reflect assessment of standards. Refer to the Progress Report Handbook on the district website http://westfordk12.us/

BEHAVIOR/CODE OF CONDUCT

Each school has a written Code of Conduct outlining expected behavior of the school community. This Code of Conduct will be distributed at the beginning of the school year and is considered part of the elementary school handbook.

GENERAL GUIDELINES WHILE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Behavior

Consideration of others and cooperation with adults will help all children to have an enjoyable time at school. Problems are to be solved through discussion rather than through physical contact. An adult is always nearby to assist in conflict resolution.

Through pupil and staff discussion, reasonable and appropriate guidelines for self-control and good citizenship will be reinforced. The majority of students are well behaved and rarely require disciplinary action. Teachers, administrators and staff will make every effort to resolve problems informally.

If rules are disregarded, appropriate action will result through teacher and/or administrative involvement. The following actions are considered when school rules have been violated at the elementary level. The following consequences could result in:

1. Change of seating
2. Discussion involving the school administration, child, teacher, supervisor and/or parent/guardian
3. Recess period adjusted
4. Lunch/Recess in the office
5. Detention after school
6. In-school suspension. The student is allowed to attend school, but is suspended from all classes and activities during the designated suspension
7. Out of school suspension, this process includes short-term suspension:
    - Notice that a serious offense has occurred.
    - The administrators and the student will discuss the events leading to the offense.
    - The school superintendent will be called and the parents/guardians notified. A parent conference will be scheduled to discuss the decision.

• The Westford School Committee will be alerted when a child receives a third short-term suspension. This may result in a review of the case by the School Committee with parents present. Long-term suspension for severe or egregious violations of school rules may, in some instances result in a long-term suspension or exclusion from school
• Prior to the imposition of any long-term suspension of more than ten consecutive school days, the student will be provided with written notice of a formal hearing and shall be provided with the opportunity to present evidence in the student's defense.
• An administrator's decision to impose a long-term suspension may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.

Students with disabilities attending school under a special education placement may be disciplined following established guidelines listed above, but shall be provided with the additional procedural protections required by federal laws and regulations when a suspension may result in a disciplinary change in placement as defined under federal laws.

CELL PHONE SEARCH

School officials do not have to obtain a warrant in order to conduct a search of student property. Elementary school administration is authorized to seize the cell phone of a student based on reasonable suspicion that the possession or use of the cell phone was in violation of the law and/or school rules. Additionally, school administrators have the right to conduct a search of the contents of the cell phone when there is reasonable and individualized suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school. Examples of when a search is justified at its inception include, but are not limited to, when the school receives reliable information that a student has used his or her cell phone to: (1) text during a test (suspected of cheating); (2) take a picture which is suspected to harass or bully a classmate; (3) send a picture to others or post a picture online with the intention of harassing or bullying a classmate or staff member; (4) text a threat regarding a classmate or staff member; (5) and/or where there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that a student's cell phone will contain evidence related to an immediate health or safety emergency.

Even if the search of the contents of the cell phone is justified at its inception, school administrators will limit the scope of the search to only the contents of the cell phone that are reasonably related to the objectives of the search. This means that the search will be limited to those areas of the cell phone that could contain the evidence sought. Additionally, the search of the contents of the cell phone will not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the alleged infraction.

PLAYGROUND

The playground is a place to have fun. There is always at least one adult outside supervising. Teachers will talk with students about the rules for their play area and playground rules are to be reviewed in each classroom.

These rules generally will be used:

1. Students are to report all injuries to the nearest adult.
2. The following types of games are encouraged:
Kickball, Basketball, Four Squares, Relay Games, and Soccer
3. Good sportsmanship helps all to enjoy the recess period.
4. Students must ask permission to enter the building before the end of recess.
5. All trash must be thrown in a barrel, in order to maintain the beauty and safety of our playgrounds.
6. Appropriate footwear is required to play on all playground surfaces and structures.

The following playground behaviors are not allowed:

1. Fighting, shoving, tripping or knocking others down
2. Tackle games
3. Jumping off or standing on swings, or improperly using monkey bars
4. Sitting or standing on parallel bars
5. Standing or walking up slides
6. Profanity or name-calling
7. Removing other's hats and gloves or taking other's property.
8. Winter: Throwing snowballs, sliding on icy patches or playing on snow-banks adjacent to driveways or roads.

OUTDOOR RECESS/ACTIVITIES

It is important to dress appropriately for outside activities/recess. Outdoor activities/recess is held whenever possible except if inclement weather or when the outside temperature exceeds 90°F or is below 20°F, which includes humidity and wind chill factors. Any child not well enough to be outdoors for recess during acceptable weather conditions should remain at home unless we have a communication from the child's physician recommending that he/she remain in the building. Playground boundaries are established for all play areas. In addition to staying within the assigned area, children must also stay within sight of the playground supervisor. The final decision as to outdoor recess/activities will be at the discretion of the building administrator.

INDOOR RECESS

When indoor recess is announced, the teacher will suggest activities that children can enjoy.

1. Students are to remain in designated areas and cooperate with the teacher or supervisor
2. Running around the room and loud noises are unacceptable behaviors

CARE OF THE BUILDING

To help maintain a clean and attractive school, students should follow these simple rules:

1. Student desks, chairs and lockers are school property and are to be kept clean and unmarked
2. Throw trash daily in wastebasket or recycling container
3. Gum chewing is not permitted in the building unless otherwise required

BICYCLES / SKATEBOARDS / SCOOTERS

Riding a bike/skateboard/scooter to school is a privilege that has a responsibility for the rider's safety and the safety of others. Parents will decide if a student is ready for that privilege.

Bicycle/Skateboard/Scooter Rules

1. Bikes/skateboards/scooters are to be walked in the schoolyard coming to school and going home. The school driveway is too busy for riding bicycles, skateboards or scooters.
2 Immediately upon arrival at school, bicycles are to be parked in the rack or other designated place.
3. All bicycles are to be locked. The school is not responsible for any bikes, scooters or skateboards lost.
4. Students riding bicycles, scooters or skateboards to school are dismissed with riders and pick-ups.
4. Students are to ride on the right side of the road at all times.
5. Helmets are required for students riding bicycles.

Any students not following these and other rules for bicycle safety may lose their privilege to ride a bicycle, scooter or skateboard to school.

THE FOLLOWING SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

- Jackknives, weapons or any dangerous objects
- Matches and lighters
- Toys which resemble weapons
- Any other objects that might be a safety concern in a large group situation
- Handheld electronic devices such as eReaders, Gameboys, iPads, iPods, cameras and any other electronic devices
- Cell phone use during school is not permitted
- Any item(s) for sale or exchange such as trading cards
- Bats or hard balls - the physical education teacher has this equipment and will distribute and use under his/her supervision
- Toys that become a distraction may be banned by the administration
- Pets are not permitted in the school building

DRESS CODE

The basic premise for the governing of student appearance should be based upon the rules of common sense. The rules relate to the common good of all students. The common good of all students is best served through personal and group safety.

1. Health and Personal Hygiene– Students should observe the basic rules of good personal hygiene and health and appearance of body and clothes should be neat and clean.
2. Decency– Students should be dressed appropriately for the school environment. Clothing that may be offensive to others or disruptive to the educational process is prohibited. This may include (but is not limited to) clothing upon which any of the following is displayed: obscenities, language that promotes alcohol and/or drugs, words or symbols that will predictably upset others, or words or symbols which defame the beliefs or heritage of others. Students should refrain from wearing the following: midriff shirts, low-cut shirts, tube tops or off-the-shoulder shirts. Under-garments should not be visible under any articles of clothing such as tank tops, shorts or pants. Skirts and shorts should be of an appropriate length; it is recommended that the length not rise above the end of the fingertips when the student's arms are placed by his or her sides. Students not adhering to the dress code may be sent to administration and asked to change or cover his or her clothing. While this is not intended to be an issue of discipline, it is viewed that these rules relate to the common good of all students.
3. Safety– Students must dress so as not to endanger themselves or other students.
4. No excessively loose clothing, long cords or dangling chains should be worn.
5. Footwear that can be dangerous should not be worn to school.
6. No hats or bandanas of any style should be worn in school.
7. Outdoor clothing, such as coats and snow boots should be removed in school.
8. Clothes that can mar floors or damage furniture should not be worn.

STUDENT INTERACTION

During the school year students may encounter conflict with other children. The levels of student conflict ranges from difference of opinion, arguing and perhaps inappropriate verbal or physical confrontation. Ongoing conflict is not necessarily bullying. Students experiencing behavior that violates the school Code of Conduct should tell the other child/children to stop the specific behavior. If the behavior doesn't stop the offended student should communicate this to the nearest adult, as well as their classroom teacher. School staff will determine all facts of the situation and make a decision on consequences for each student violating the Code of Conduct. Students should be encouraged to communicate directly with adults at school when concerned about how others are treating them. If children communicate information about Code of Conduct

violations to a parent, rather than school staff, the respective parent should contact the classroom teacher. All conflict isn't necessarily a Code of Conduct infraction. Students witnessing violations of the Code of Conduct have a responsibility of reporting this behavior to the nearest adult.

BULLYING

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5304

Bullying is unfair, one-sided and repeated. Bullying happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening or leaving someone out of activities on purpose. Bullying can happen at school or away from school. Bullying can happen face to face, behind someone's back, on-line, in a text message, repeated phone calls or a combination of each type. Examples of bullying are: hitting or kicking; name calling or threatening or leaving friends out of activities just to hurt their feelings.

WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS BULLYING PREVENTION PLAN

The Westford Public Schools (WPS) created the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, "the Plan" required under M.G.L. c.71, §37O in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The Plan is posted on the district website www.westfordk12.us.

The Westford Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying. The district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The principal or his/her designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

The district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports

and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c.71, §37O, as noted below:

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, §37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c.71, §37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying. Please refer to the district's Acceptable Use Policy.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, §37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student or staff person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, 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.

As stated in M.G.L. c.71, §37O, nothing in the Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Reporting bullying or retaliation. The district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of suspected bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or associate/assistant principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports may be made orally or in writing. The "WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form" has been developed for student, parent or other non-school or district staff use to report incidents of suspected bullying. This form can be obtained in every school office or it can be printed from the district's website www.westfordk12.us. Use of the "WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form" is not required as a condition of making a report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or associate/assistant principal.

Determinations. With the principal's receipt of the complaint of bullying or retaliation, the principal or his/her designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or his/her designee will determine what

remedial action may be required, if any, and determine what responsive and/or disciplinary actions will be taken. The principal's finding and determinations shall be documented in writing.

All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or his/her designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or his/her designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or his/her designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct. Disciplinary sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion from school.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or his/her designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or his/her designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or his/her designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. The principal or his/her designee will monitor the effectiveness of any such interventions employed and, where appropriate, recommend alternative or supplemental interventions.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c.71, §37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

HARASSMENT

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5303

The goal of the Westford Public Schools is to maintain a positive school atmosphere conducive to learning. All conduct and communication will be free from all forms of harassment due to race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, and physical or emotional challenges.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the Westford Public Schools to harass another person, student or staff member, through conduct or communications.

This policy applies to any member of the Westford Public Schools including but not limited to students, staff, outside contractors, and volunteers.

STUDENT EXPULSION

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5314

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, gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be expelled from school by the principal. This includes the possession of alcohol.
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 by the principal.
c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his 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/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

e. When a student is expelled under the provision of this section, no school within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school, the superintendent of the school 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.

EXPULSION-PRINCIPAL'S AUTHORITY

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5315

The Principal has the authority to expel student who is found on school property or at a school-related event in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.

WESTFORD POLICE DEPT. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A relationship of communication exists between Westford Public Schools and the Westford Police Department in conjunction with the Middlesex District Attorney's Community-Based Justice Program to the extent of informing the elementary administration when one of its students is involved in any incident or potential incident that would jeopardize the well-being of students, faculty, or individuals within the greater Westford community. Should such an incident or potential incident occur, the administration will receive notice from one of the above mentioned agencies, which may result in communication between the student, parent, and his/her principal/assistant principal. The outcome of this meeting may result in disciplinary action, which could affect participation in school-related events, activities, athletics and field trips.

TOBACCO USE / POSSESSION POLICY

According to Federal Regulation Massachusetts General Laws, and Town of Westford by-laws use/possession of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, by any individual, including school personnel, is strictly prohibited. Tobacco products will be confiscated. The prohibition of smoking will also apply to any contractors and/or subcontractors, working on school facilities and grounds.

Discipline Procedures for Violation of Tobacco Policy:

First Violation

Fined $25.00
(Town by-law on regulation affecting smoking, Section 10.1)
Required attendance at Westford Academy
Tobacco Education Program and parent notification.

Second Violation

Fined $50.00
Two days in-school suspension and parent notification.

Third Violation

Fined $75.00
Two days in-school suspension and meeting between Superintendent or designee and student and parents.

Fourth Violation

Fined $100.00
Three days in-school suspension for insubordination and meeting between student, parents and the School Committee, along with a recommendation for expulsion.

SAFETY

EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARDS

At the beginning of school, parents/guardians receive an emergency card to provide information concerning work telephone numbers, names and telephone numbers of doctors and dentists and telephone numbers of relatives or neighbors in the event of an emergency. It is very important that this card is completed and promptly returned to school. Complete information is necessary to ensure your child's health and safety while at school. All information is confidential. If changes in this information occur during the year, the school office and nurse should be notified so that updating can be completed.

CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 4120
As required by law, Westford Public Schools will review criminal records of candidates under consideration for employment, individuals providing school transportation for children in the district, or volunteer service and current employees. Once a CORI application is approved, an individual may volunteer within any school in the district.

FIRE AND SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills are practices for quickly leaving the building if an emergency occurs and all rooms will have exits posted.
During each fire and smoke drill, children should do the following:

- File to the next exit in a single line. If the child is not in the classroom but in a corridor, bathroom or some other area, he/she should go to the nearest exit, join his/her classroom group and announce his/her arrival to the teacher
- Refrain from talking, pushing or running. Listen and be prepared to follow directions from the teacher or another adult
- Move as far away from the building as needed to provide space for all persons leaving the building.

- Once outside, walk to designated place, turn around and face the building.
- Remain quiet at all times.
- After exiting the building, stay with the group.

Crisis Plans- Each school has a Crisis Response Team in place and a procedure for notifying parents in the event of unforeseen emergencies. School procedures are posted in each classroom. Schools will conduct safety drills to practice procedures. Safety drills may include police and fire personnel.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

School nurses collaborate with Dr. Joan Eagan and Dr. James Sheehy Email Joan M, school physicians, and the Westford Board of Health to provide confidential and prompt first aid, illness assessment, nursing care, referrals and health teaching.

MEDICATION

If a student needs to take medicine in school:

- According to WPS Policy 5503, the school nurse is the only person allowed to administer medication to students in the Westford Public Schools. For field trips/short term events, the school nurse may delegate the administration of medication to unlicensed personnel.
- If medication is to be given at school, it must be in the pharmacy bottle with the prescription label attached.
- The parent/legal guardian must complete the Medication Administration Orders and Consent Form (available on the WPS website or at the school nurse's office.) Alternately, the parent/legal guardian may send written authorization to the nurse which contains: the parent/legal guardian's printed name, signature and emergency phone number; list of medications the student is currently receiving; approval to have the school nurse administer the medication and names of persons to be notified in case of a medication emergency.
- The licensed prescriber must complete the Medication Administration Orders and Consent Form (available on the WPS website or at the school nurse's office) or send to the school nurse a medication order which contains: the student's name; name and signature of the licensed prescriber including telephone number; name of medication; the route and dosage of medication; the frequency and time of medication administration; date of the order and discontinuation date; diagnosis and other medical condition (s) and specific directions for administration. If appropriate, please have the licensed prescriber also provide the following information: any special side effects, contraindication and/or adverse reactions to be observed; any other medications being taken by the student and the date of the next scheduled visit to the physician, if known.

- Medications are kept in the Nurses Clinic.
- A Medication Administration Plan should be developed with the nurse, including plans for class trips.
- If your child takes regular medication outside of school, it is suggested you contact the school nurse.
- If your child has an allergy requiring an EpiPen, please contact the nurse to develop an Emergency Health Care Plan.
- Please telephone or meet with the nurse regarding special medication situations: a student's self-administration of medications; short-term medications; over the counter medications and investigational new drugs.
- Parents/legal guardians should retrieve medications at the end of the school year or they will be properly disposed.

MEDICATION FOUND ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

If a student finds a prescribed or over-the-counter medication on school property, the following protocol will be followed:

1. Student should NOT touch the medication
2. Student will immediately notify a school administrator and school nurse
3. Custodian will retrieve medication and deliver it to the school nurse
4. School nurse will interview and check the student who found the medication for any signs of skin contact or ingestion
5. School nurse will notify the parents/guardians of the child
6. School administrator may contact the Westford Police Department
7. School administrator may notify all parents/guardians of students via email and/or memo sent home with students

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Documentation of an up-to-date physical examination including a vision screening is required prior to a child's entry to kindergarten. Physical examination documentation is also required in the third grade and when a student transfers to the school district from out of state. School nurses can provide forms for physical examinations, but all health care provider forms are accepted.

IMMUNIZATION

Massachusetts School Immunization Law (M.G.L. 76:15) requires that students present documentation of immunization compliance in order to be admitted to school. Exceptions are made only for students with written documentation of medical or religious exemption.

Prior to entering kindergarten students must show proof of the following immunizations: 3 doses of Hepatitis B; 5 doses of DTaP/DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis), 4 doses of Polio, 2 MMR doses (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) and 2 doses of Varicella vaccine.

A single dose of Tdap vaccine will be required for students attending 7th grade if it has been more than five years since the last dose of DtaP, DT or Td. If it has

been less than five years since a student received his/her last dose of Dtap, DT or Td, Tdap will not be required, but may be administered according to the judgment of a physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
Students entering all other grades must meet current Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization requirements. School health records are reviewed periodically to determine the immunization status of each student. If it is found that immunization updates are needed, school nurses will telephone parents/legal guardians or send notices home.
Verification of immunizations given at a doctor's office or emergency room should be submitted to the school nurse to update the student's health record.

LEAD BLOOD SCREENING

Massachusetts law and regulations (105CMR 460.050,060) requires that children present evidence of having been previously screened for lead poisoning as a condition for entry into kindergarten. Lead testing is available at the Westford Board of Health (978 692-5509).

MANDATED SCREENINGS

School Health Services staff conduct vision & hearing and height & weight screenings annually:
Vision – grades K-5
Hearing – grades K-3
Height/Weight – grades 1 and 4
Body Mass Index (BMI) grades 1 and 4
Postural screening is conducted annually for all students in grade 5.

Parents/legal guardians will be notified of screening results by letter or telephone only if the student failed a screening examination or requires further care from their health care provider. Findings of these referrals for follow-up should be returned to school to update a child's health record.

In collaboration with the Westford Board of Health, dental screenings are offered in school for students with parental permission. Free dental screenings are offered to kindergarten, grades one, three and five. For grades two and four dental screenings, cleanings and fluoride treatments are offered for a small fee. Permission slips are sent home to all eligible students.

MEDICAL EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

A student may be dismissed or excluded from school for any of the following reasons:

- Temperature over 100.4° F (oral temperature)
- Disruptive cough or cough with fever
- Severe abdominal pain or headache
- Suspected communicable disease
- Suspected pediculosis (head lice)

- Suspected fractures or any severe or disabling injury
- Questionable need for sutures
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Head injury
- Antibiotic therapy started less than 24 hours before returning to school
- Immunizations which are not up to date

WELLNESS: EXCUSES FROM INSTRUCTION

Physical education is required of all students unless excused by a physician's written excuse. This written excuse must be given to the physical education teacher.

Proper dress is required for all wellness classes. This includes comfortable clothing and sneakers for all students.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

The Westford Public Schools recognizes that physical restraint by trained staff may be required to protect the safety of school community members from serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint is defined as the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall only be used in emergency situations, in the judgment of the school staff member, when other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. The Westford Public Schools complies with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations governing the use and reporting of physical restraint and time outs in schools. 603 CMR 46.00. and 603 CMR 46.04(1)

SCHOOL ACCIDENTS

If a student is hurt at school, the teacher or playground supervisor will make certain that the child is seen by the school nurse who will determine the appropriate care and contact the parent or guardian if necessary. Students must report accidents and injuries to the nearest supervisor immediately.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES - CHAPTER 766

Current I.E.P's (Individual Education Program) are housed at the student's school. The Director of Pupil Services maintains cumulative Special Education files.

WESTFORD FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM

Students are encouraged to eat a nutritious lunch in the cafeteria. There are many choices for a well-balanced meal available to all students. School lunch menus are available in the main office for students to take home and are published on the Westford Public Schools website. Costs for lunch are announced in September. Through the Nutrikids POS system all students have lunch accounts. You may add

money to your child's account on-line, at myschoolbucks.com or you may send cash or a check made out to Westford School Lunch Program to school with your child. The cafeteria manager will be happy to add the funds to your child's account. Students with an account balance which exceeds negative $10.00 will not be allowed to buy the regular lunch, dessert or any A la Carte items. A nutritious substitute lunch will be served until the balance is paid. Your child's account will be charged for the substitute lunch.
Applications for Free and Reduced Meals are sent home with every student the first week of school and should be returned immediately to the school office. Completed applications are automatically approved for foster children and households receiving Food Stamps or AFDC support for children. Applications are approved as determined by income eligibility and number of persons in the household. Eligibility may be checked at any time during the school year, and school officials may ask for verification of information reported on individual applications.
All meals served must meet patterns established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. However, if a child has been determined by a doctor to be handicapped and the handicap would prevent the child from eating the regular school meal, each school will make any substitutions prescribed by the doctor at no extra charge. In the operation of the Child Feeding Programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or handicap. Please call 692-5560 x2109 or 2110 with any questions about the Food Service program.

During lunch and recess, adult supervisors watch over children. Students are required to listen to their directions and follow what they are asked to do. As a result, all can enjoy a safe time.

Here are a few simple rules to help:

1. Walk in the cafeteria or other eating area
2. Talk normally at lunch. Speaking loudly makes it difficult for others to hear
3. Remain in seats until the supervisor gives instructions to line up for recess
4. Clear the table following lunch and throw trash in containers
5. Pick up any trash that might have fallen on the floor
6. All food and drinks must remain in the cafeteria upon completion of lunch

TRANSPORTATION

SCHOOL BUSES

So that all children enjoy a safe bus ride to and from school, the following guidelines are in place:

1. Any student riding a bus to or from school should display a bus pass.
2. The "Code of Conduct" for your school will apply while on the bus.

3. The bus driver will give a signal to students to board the bus after it comes to a complete stop.
4. Students will board and leave the bus in single file and in an orderly manner.
5. If the student misses the bus, do not drive after the bus. In this situation, please drive the child to school. To ensure the safety of all, adults should not board the school bus.
6. While on the bus, students should keep body parts and objects inside the bus. Throwing items inside the bus is strictly prohibited.
7. Damaging the bus, smoking, or use of matches will result in a severe consequence determined by the school administrator.
8. Food and drinks are not allowed on the bus.
9. Only the driver or his/her designee will open bus windows.
10. Students will not open the emergency door for other than emergency reasons as directed by the driver.
11. Students should have written permission to leave the bus at bus stops other than the one for their neighborhood. The note should be given to the bus driver for verification.
12. Talking between the driver and any passenger should be kept to a minimum.
13. Students, who refuse to promptly obey the direction of the drivers or aides, or refuse to obey regulations, may forfeit their ride on the bus for a specified period of time.
14. It should be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure safe passage of their child to an established bus stop.
15. Students should ride their regular bus home. Written permission from the parent or guardian is required for a change in the regular bus schedule. In this case, parents should include the bus number in their written permission. Space must be available on the bus before a bus change is approved.
16. Musical instruments should remain in their instrument cases while students are on the bus.
17. Students should report bus incidents to the driver for documentation.
18. Students should remain seated and not touch others.

PROCEDURES FOR BUS DIFFICULTIES

For all routine disciplinary matters, bus drivers will follow the progressive discipline approach below:

1. A first offense referral for misbehavior on the school bus will result in a student conference with the building Administrator. At that time appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, and parents will be notified regarding each written report from the driver.
2. A second referral may result in bus suspension of up to three days.
3. A third referral may result in bus suspension of at least five days.

4. Chronic or severe behavior may result in permanent bus suspension or loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year. The Superintendent of Schools will be notified.

BUS STOP SAFETY REVIEW – CHANGING A BUS STOP

The Superintendent is responsible for establishing proper standards of safety in the operation of buses and shall ensure their enforcement by the bus contractor.

The Superintendent is responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, and stops in cooperation with the bus contractor. For updated transportation information, refer to the Westford Public Schools Transportation Website, which is updated regularly. http://www.westfordk12.us /transportation

Authorized bus stops shall be located in places where pupils may be loaded and unloaded, cross streets and roads, and safely await arrival of the buses.

CRITERIA USED TO EVALUATE BUS STOP SAFETY

Evaluation of bus stop safety is done by the Superintendent, a safety officer from the police department and a representative from the bus company.

When a parent requests a change in the assigned bus stop, the following safety review criteria is used to evaluate the safety of a bus stop:

1. Site lines of the traffic from all directions in approaching the bus stop.
2. Speed limit and traffic conditions at the location of the bus stop.
3. Hills or turns that impede traffic visibility of stop and proximity to the bus stop.
4. Ability of a school bus to navigate in an area.
5. Width of a road.
6. Grade level (age) of students.
7. Ability of the school bus to safely pull out of a side street onto a main road.
8. Time constraints.
9. Number of students involved at a bus stop.
10. Any other unique conditions.

All requests should be made in writing to the Superintendent, who will make the final decision after consultations with safety officers, and the Bus Company. Kindergarten – second grade students will be brought back to their school if an adult is not present at the bus stop to greet them.

RESTRAINING AND COURT ORDERS

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the school office with the copy of the restraining order when it impacts student safety. A copy of the restraining order will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Westford Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, homelessness, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities. The Westford Public Schools complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws c. 71B; c. 76, §5; c. 151B; and c. 151C.

At the district level, the Title VI, and Title IX Coordinator is:
Kerry Clery, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Westford Public Schools
23 Depot Street
Westford, Massachusetts 01886
978-692-5560 Ext. 2105
At the district level, the Section 504 (disability pertaining to students) and ADA (students) Coordinator is:
Courtney Moran, Director of Pupil Services
23 Depot Street
Westford, Massachusetts 01886
978-692-5560 Ext. 2112

TITLE IX - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

In accordance with the regulations of Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, every person shall have the right to attend the public schools of the town where she/he actually resides. Subject to the following section: No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion or national origin.
Furthermore, in accordance with Title IX, of the Educational Amendments of 1972, United States of America, no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Under both Chapter 622 and Title IX, provision for grievance procedure is made. Any student, parent, guardian or other person or group who believes that these regulations have been or are being violated may so notify the Principal, Superintendent of Schools and Chapter 622/Title IX Coordinator. The school department will respond promptly, but no later than thirty days in writing to the party filing the grievance. Should non-compliance be found, procedures for making changes will be immediately initiated both to correct the non-compliance and to provide particular remedies to the person or group affected. All Title IX inquiries may be directed to Title IX Coordinator, Assistant

Superintendent of Schools, Kerry Clery Title VI Coordinator is also Kerry Clery.

At any stage in the complaint process, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491 (617) 289-0111, or with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 727-3990. For complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability the complainant may also file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, (617) 338-3300.

NOTIFICATION OF MATERIALS CONTAINING ASBESTOS

Asbestos containing material is present in some buildings in the Westford Public Schools. All such material is encapsulated and does not present any health risk to building occupants. A copy of the asbestos survey for each building is on file in the school office for review.

The Westford Public Schools follows a management system as set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency for the continuous monitoring and containment of any asbestos containing material. This system involves:

1. Notification of building occupants.
2. Periodic re-inspections of any asbestos containing materials.
3. Careful documentation and record keeping.

POLICE QUESTIONING

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 1401

Schools have the responsibility to parents/guardians for the welfare of students while they are in school.

If the police department needs to question a student, school officials have the responsibility of notifying the student's parent or legal guardian regarding the questioning. The presence of the student's parent/guardian at the time of the questioning is desirable to safeguard the self-incrimination rights of the student. Whenever possible, the questioning should be conducted away from the school to avoid any display of law enforcement activities which can lead to unfortunate misunderstandings on the part of other students and members of the faculty.

In any case where a prompt and official warning is warranted out of concern for child's safety rather than a concern for an infraction of the law, an officer may speak directly to the pupil(s) in the office of the principal without first contacting parents.

Under no circumstances may presence on school grounds or entry into a school building for purpose of surveillance be denied an officer who is on official police assignment. The police will work with school principals regarding investigations, which involve surveillance in school buildings.

In pursuit of police assignment, an officer shall take every precaution to avoid damage to a student's reputation through overly conspicuous uniformed

interrogation. Whenever circumstances permit, police contact should be made with the student's home.

LOCKERS

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 5310

Student lockers are the property of the school. The right of inspection of a student's school locker is granted to the building administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding the school community and school property. Efforts will be made to protect the rights to privacy of the student. The parents/legal guardians of any student involved in an individual locker search will be informed of the search.

DISTRICT ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE

Refer to Westford Public Schools Policy 6302

Introduction

The Westford Public Schools support student and staff access to a variety of rich information resources. The following is the Westford Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Parents and legal guardians will sign and return the transmittal form in this handbook, verifying that they have reviewed the District Acceptable Use Policy with their child.

Personal Safety (Restrictions are for students only)

1. Users of the District's Computing Environment (Users) shall not post personal contact information about themselves, or other people, that do not adhere to the publishing guidelines as stated above.
2. Users shall not agree to meet with someone they have met on-line without parental approval and participation.
3. Users shall promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
4. A parent/legal guardian must give written permission (see record of transmittal, p. 3) for their child's photograph, image, or work to be displayed on the District's web site.

Respect for Privacy

1. Users shall respect the privacy of others in the District Computing Environment.
2. Users shall not attempt to learn the password, access the files, or e-mail of other users.
3. Users shall not post private information about another person.

Illegal Activities

1. Users shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access to or through the District Computing Environment to any other computer system or go beyond their authorized access.

2. Users shall not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the District Computing Environment's performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
3. Users shall not use the District Computing Environment to engage in any other illegal act, for example, arranging a drug or alcohol purchase or sale, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of any person.

Truthfulness and Accuracy

Users shall not knowingly or recklessly post false or inaccurate information.

Respecting Resource Limits

1. Users shall limit their use of the environment to educational and professional or career development activities.
2. Users shall not post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
3. The Superintendent, Principals and/or their designees have the right to reclaim allocated resources with reasonable notice to the user.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

1. Users shall not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet. Any sources used in research must be cited and credit given to the author.
2. Users shall respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces software or another work that is protected by a copyright. If software or another work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user shall follow the expressed requirements when using the work. If the user is unsure whether or not he/she can use a work, he/she should request permission from the copyright owner.

Inappropriate Access of Material

1. Users shall not use the District Computing Environment to access material that is inappropriate to the intended educational use.
2. If a student user inadvertently accesses such information, he/she should immediately disclose the inadvertent access to the supervising staff member. This will protect a user against an allegation that he/she intentionally violated the Acceptable Use Policy.
3. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate suspension or dismissal.

Publishing

Westford Public Schools recognizes the need to differentiate target audiences to whom information is published. The Internet is a worldwide target audience and because of that audience, certain restrictions exist on personal information that may be published. At the elementary level the primary concern is to ensure the security and safety of our children by not publishing full names of students.

Student work, student first name and last initial, photos, and audio may be used with parental permission.

Classroom/School Publishing: All student work and images may be used, displayed, or published in the classroom/school setting unless parental notification to the contrary is received by the school. This is the default publishing level for K-12.

Community Publishing (Grades K-8) - Upon parental approval student work may be used in community publications (e.g., *Westford Eagle*, *Lowell Sun*). The student work may be credited with the student's first name and last name. Community Publishing requires parental, legal guardian or eligible student permission.

World Publishing (Grades K-8) - upon parental approval, student work may be displayed on the school district website and social media sites. The student work may be credited with the student's first name, first initial of last name. World Publishing requires parental, legal guardian or eligible student permission.

Please see Record of Transmittal sent home with your child for completion and return to school.

STUDENT RELEASE FOR PRINT AND ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION

During the course of the school year, members of the school staff may photograph or videotape students participating in school activities as a way of assessing learning or documenting learning activities. News photographers and cameramen may also visit our schools to take photos or videos of students engaged in school-related activities. These photos and videos may be selected to appear in school publications such as parent newsletters or student literary journals, in local newspapers, or on cable or commercial TV. In addition, written work or artwork produced by students may be selected to appear in school publications or released to the media.

Occasionally student work or photographs of students participating in school activities, or highlights of their school achievements may be displayed on the Westford Public Schools web site at: http://www.westfordk12.us. Only the student's first name and first initial of last name will be published on school department pages, K-8. Westford Public Schools will not publish student work or photographs in print or on the Internet without the parent/guardian written permission. The School Committee recognizes three levels of publishing audiences as defined in Westford Public Schools Policy #6115. Please see record of transmittal in this handbook for your signature.

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