

**WESTFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**2023-2024**



*Home of the Wolves!*  
**30 West Silver Street**  
**Westfield, MA 01085**  
**(413) 568-1900**  
**Jesse McMillan, Principal**  
**Karoline Kells, Assistant Principal**  
**Jennifer Leveille, Assistant Principal**  
**Lauren Paret, Dean of Students**

**This handbook is provided to parents/guardians and students as an informational guide.**

**Translation Information**

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

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

:ARABIC اذا تحتاج مساعدة لفهم هذه المعلومات, الرجاء الاتصال بمدير المدرسة لتقديم خدمات الترجمة

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

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

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

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

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

**TWI: S1 wo hi a boafo4 a 4te as1m yi ase1 me pawoky1 w fr1 wo panyin a 4tete wo na mo nhyeh1 nkyer1 ase1 som**

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

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## **Mission, Vision, and Core Values**

### **Mission Statement**

Westfield Middle School's vision is that all students will become critical thinkers and be prepared for their secondary education as independent and successful learners. The climate of WMS will foster mutual respect and support students in setting high aspirations for the future and inspiring them to achieve their goals.

### **Vision Statement**

At Westfield Middle School, all students will be provided high quality educational opportunities in a school climate that fosters positive relationships and mutual respect among students, staff, and families. All learning experiences must be relevant to our students and focus on higher order thinking skills. Building upon these learning experiences, students will be able to generate original ideas, evaluate information, and communicate their thoughts effectively through Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Critical Thinking.

### **WMS Core Values**

The core values of Westfield Middle School lay the foundation for the development and implementation of student-centered course offerings and co-curricular programs. Furthermore, these core values define who we are and what we are about. At Westfield Middle School, we believe that:

1. Our primary focus is on all students' academic achievement and equipping them with skills to be critical thinkers and successful learners.
2. All students can and will learn educational skills to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
3. To reach their fullest potential, children and adults need to have high aspirations for their future and be inspired in the present to achieve them.
4. Our school climate must be child-centered and support the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of middle school children.
5. Families are our partners in their child's education.
6. The use and integration of current technologies and media should enhance learning and extend it beyond the school day.
7. Learning and professional growth is an on-going process.
8. All programs and educational services at WMS need to be aligned with our Vision, Mission, and Core Values.

Westfield Middle School's structure, programs, and activities are intentionally designed for the developmental needs of children in grades seven and eight. Both students and teachers are divided into teaching "teams" that consist of approximately 110-125 students and five academic area teachers. Educational programs expand upon skills acquired at the elementary level by emphasizing the core academic areas. Within each grade level, the academic areas of math (including Algebra for high-achieving eighth grade students), language arts (reading and writing), social studies, and science are explored. These core subjects are enriched through exploratory experiences in Spanish, art, music, physical education, health, technology education, media literacy, band, and chorus.

## **II. ATTENDANCE**

### **Absences, Tardies, and Excuses**

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school and required by state law. The School Committee recognizes that parents/guardians of students attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their students attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of their character. Parents/guardians can help their students by not allowing them to miss school needlessly. Accordingly, parents/guardians will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of their student. This will be required in advance for any types of absences or tardies where advance notice is possible. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

### **Attendance Policy**

Westfield Middle School expects good school attendance, as only through regular attendance can a student take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. It is the student's responsibility to be in all classes on time every school day. According to Chapter 76, Section 1 of Massachusetts General Law, more than seven absences per semester is considered excessive.

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- Notification of excessive absences will be provided to the parent/guardian, student's school counselor, and team unless absences have been excused by administration.
- The Principal's designee will investigate the reasons for the absences and may excuse school-related business, illness, or absences due to unusual circumstances. Vacations do not count as excused absences.

- Students with excessive absences may be prohibited from attending school-sponsored extracurricular activities including dances and field trips.
- If the student's attendance does not improve, the Principal's designee will arrange a conference with administration and the student's family to create and implement a plan to ensure better attendance for the remainder of the school year and discuss the potential consequences for non-compliance with this plan.
- Legal intervention may be initiated by filing a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the Westfield Juvenile Court, and/or the possibility of non-promotion may be considered.

### **Absence Notification**

If students are going to be absent or tardy, parents/guardians should call school before 8:00 a.m., and follow the prompts to report the student's absence. When a student is absent for more than one day, parents/guardians should call to report their student absent each day of the absence. Administration will notify a student's parent/guardian within three days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

### **Excused Absences and Tardies**

Students are expected to arrive at school and to classes on time. Time missed from class constitutes absenteeism, whether in part or in whole. Students who demonstrate a pattern of unexcused tardiness may be subject to disciplinary measures. If for any reason there is a pattern of tardiness, a parent/guardian may be required to bring them to the main office and sign them in. If there is no parent/guardian with the child when they arrive at school after the 8:00 a.m. start, a phone call may be made to the family informing them when their child arrived at school.

Students must be in their first period seat when the 8:00 a.m. tone stops ringing, otherwise students are tardy. If a student reports to school after 8:05 a.m., he/she must report to the office and sign in. The student will be given an admit slip which must be given to the first teacher to whom he/she reports. Parents of students who are chronically tardy will be contacted to inform them of the consequences of further tardiness.

Occasionally absence from school is unavoidable and legitimate. The following absences may be excused with proper verification (including absence from school all day, tardy to school, or early dismissal from school).

Examples of excused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Illness or injury (physician verification is required- physician verification must specifically address legitimate medical reason(s) supporting the student's absence from school and specific day(s) that the student was seen in the physician's office. The Principal will review all documentation and may request additional verification in the event the physician verification does not meet this standard.)
- Quarantine because of contagious disease
- Severe storm or impassable roads
- Religious observance
- Death in the family or other family emergency
- Documented legal responsibilities
- Issues related to bus company transportation
- School-sponsored activities

Any student who has been absent from school due to contagious illness, accident, or hospitalization is requested to present a doctor's certificate to the main office upon returning to school, stating the student is capable of returning to school and also listing any restrictions, which will be sent to the nurse. In addition, students who have been absent from school for five or more school days because they have been sick or in an accident are requested to give a doctor's note to the nurse when they return to school. This note should include any instructions the doctor might order, including restrictions, if any.

All medical excuses for exclusion from any physical education class must be brought to the Health Office, where it will be attached to the student's health record. The nurse will present an authorized form to the student, which

indicates the period of medical absence from Physical Education. This form will be forwarded to the Physical Education teacher.

Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family trips/vacations\* (see below)
- Babysitting
- Shopping
- Doing errands
- Personal transportation and/or traffic problems
- "Running late"
- Oversleeping

Families should make every effort to schedule routine medical, dental, and orthodontic appointments outside of the school day. Appointments that require students to miss school will only be excused for the time listed on the physician's verification note. If a time is not listed, the administration may call the physician's office to confirm. Students are expected to return to school after a routine medical appointment.

*\*Vacations:* A parent or guardian wishing to remove their student from school for a vacation must notify the office and each individual teacher no later than two weeks prior to the departure date. A parent or guardian assumes the responsibility to ensure that their student makes up all work that is missed. A parent or guardian contemplating absences of this type should consider the need for private tutoring upon their student's return to school. It is not the responsibility of the classroom teacher to re-teach missed lessons due to family vacations scheduled during the school year.

Due to classroom activities and dynamics, teachers will not provide students with work prior to a vacation. Teachers are under no obligation to provide special help as a result of this type of absence as it is disruptive to a student's educational process.

### **Excessive/Chronic Absenteeism**

The Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

The American Academy of Pediatrics defines chronic absenteeism as a student who misses more than 10% of school. They recommend pediatricians be aware of a student's attendance rate because it can give an indication of other health and mental health issues that would normally go untreated. Students who are absent from school more than 10% of the time can have their attendance record sent to their primary care provider if they completed the opt-in form at the start of the school year. Absentee reports will be run during second, third and fourth quarters and physicians notified at that time. If families would like to exempt their child from this public health initiative, a parent/guardian should not complete the opt-in form.

### **Dismissals**

All dismissal notes must be brought to the main office prior to 8:00 a.m. Students should not leave class to bring down dismissal notes. The time before school or passing time should be utilized for this. The student must report to the office before leaving. Telephone calls for early dismissal are discouraged unless it is unavoidable.

Dismissal notes should include the following information and be signed by a parent/guardian:

- Student's name
- Parent's signature and phone number
- The specific time of the student's dismissal and whether or not the student is returning to school. If so, the approximate time the student will be returning.

Parents who wish to dismiss their student and have not submitted a written dismissal note to school with the student should come in person to sign their student out of school. Upon returning to school from an appointment,

students must sign in at the main office. The nurse may dismiss students for medical reasons only. No student is dismissed without parent/guardian approval.

### **Tardiness to School/Class**

Promptness to school is important. Students will be limited to three tardies per quarter. Students may be assigned one of the following consequences for each tardy after the first three.

- Required to make up the academic time at a time determined by staff or administration
- Detention assigned by administration or staff

Additionally, a student who arrives at school later than 11:15 a.m. may be subject to the inability to attend any school-sponsored event later in the day. Students with extenuating circumstances will need permission from the Administration to attend any school event. If a student comes to school after 11:15 a.m. without a medical note or prior administrative approval, the student will be marked absent for the entire day. If a student is late to a class, they should **not** report to the office for a pass. It is their responsibility to obtain a pass from the teacher or staff person they were with previously. Teachers have the discretion of assigning a teacher detention to students with unexcused tardiness to class.

### **Make-Up Work**

It is the student's responsibility to make up for missed academic work. A student may make up tests or other academic work missed because of short-term absences. The number of days a student has to complete make-up academic work is equal to the number of days absent, unless the teacher extends this time. It is expected that students will make arrangements to remain after school to complete make-up work. The school will provide make-up work upon request for a student who is out ill for three or more days. Students ill for one or two days should get assignments from Google Classroom or a classmate or from the teacher upon their return to school. In the case of lengthy absences due to illness or other legitimate reasons, the Administration must be notified of the reasons before any extension may be granted for make-up privileges. A student who is suspended has full make-up privileges; a truant student loses such privileges.

## **III. ACADEMICS**

### **Daily Schedule**

During the 2023-2024 school year, Westfield Middle School will operate on an 8-period rotating schedule. All students will have the following: reading; writing; math; social studies; science; special; special; and What I Need. The "What I Need" period will be a building-wide approach to targeted intervention for all students. All classes will be 42 minutes in length.

7TH GRADE									
MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR
8:07-8:49	A	8:07-8:49	B	8:07-8:49	C	8:07-8:49	D	8:07-8:49	E
8:51-9:33	B	8:51-9:33	C	8:51-9:33	D	8:51-9:33	E	8:51-9:33	F
9:35-10:16	C	9:35-10:16	D	9:35-10:16	E	9:35-10:16	F	9:35-10:16	G
10:18-11:00	D	10:18-11:00	E	10:18-11:00	F	10:18-11:00	G	10:18-11:00	H
11:02-11:44	E	11:02-11:44	F	11:02-11:44	G	11:02-11:44	H	11:02-11:44	A
11:46-12:14	Lunch	11:46-12:14	Lunch	11:46-12:14	Lunch	11:46-12:14	Lunch	11:46-12:14	Lunch
12:17-12:59	F	12:17-12:59	G	12:17-12:59	H	12:17-12:59	A	12:17-12:59	B
1:01-1:43	G	1:01-1:43	H	1:01-1:43	A	1:01-1:43	B	1:01-1:43	C
1:45-2:29	H	1:45-2:29	A	1:45-2:29	B	1:45-2:29	C	1:45-2:29	D

  

8TH GRADE									
MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR	7:50 - 8:05	HR
8:07-8:49	A	8:07-8:49	B	8:07-8:49	C	8:07-8:49	D	8:07-8:49	E
8:51-9:33	B	8:51-9:33	C	8:51-9:33	D	8:51-9:33	E	8:51-9:33	F
9:35-10:16	C	9:35-10:16	D	9:35-10:16	E	9:35-10:16	F	9:35-10:16	G
10:18-11:00	D	10:18-11:00	E	10:18-11:00	F	10:18-11:00	G	10:18-11:00	H
11:02-11:44	E	11:02-11:44	F	11:02-11:44	G	11:02-11:44	H	11:02-11:44	A
11:46-12:28	F	11:46-12:28	G	11:46-12:28	H	11:46-12:28	A	11:46-12:28	B
12:30-12:58	Lunch	12:30-12:58	Lunch	12:30-12:58	Lunch	12:30-12:58	Lunch	12:30-12:58	Lunch
1:01-1:43	G	1:01-1:43	H	1:01-1:43	A	1:01-1:43	B	1:01-1:43	C
1:45-2:29	H	1:45-2:29	A	1:45-2:29	B	1:45-2:29	C	1:45-2:29	D

### Promotion Policy

- Seventh and eighth-grade students who pass four or more required year-long courses will be unconditionally promoted to the next grade.
- Seventh and eighth-grade students who pass three year-long courses will be promoted, but advised to attend summer school approved by the administration or be tutored in the course(s) failed, both at the expense of the parent/guardian.
- Seventh and eighth-grade students who pass only two of the year-long courses will be required to attend and pass one of the failed courses at summer school approved by the administration at the expense of the parents/guardians. Students will need to earn a grade of 70 or higher in order to be promoted. Students who do not attend summer school or credit recovery may not be promoted to the next grade.
- Seventh and eighth-grade students who pass only one or none of their year-long courses may not be promoted to the next grade.
- The Principal will make decisions concerning students with unique circumstances (e.g. extended illness) after consultation with the school counselor and the students' teachers.
- A passing grade in a course for the year is 60. If a student does not earn at least a 60 in their year-long classes (Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies, Science), they will be recommended or required to take the summer school class based on the number of classes that they earned a grade less than 60.

### Grades

Report cards are issued three times a year at the end of each trimester. Westfield Middle School's grading system is designed to measure the level of students' attainment of our curricula objectives. The school year is divided into three marking terms. Students receive grades each term for every course taken. Students receive a numerical grade of 50 and above, a P for passing, or an F for grades of 49 and lower. A grade of 60 or above is considered passing.

Our numerical grades represent the following level of achievement:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
90 - 100	Demonstrated Advanced Mastery of the Curriculum
80 - 89	Demonstrated Mastery/Proficiency of the Curriculum
70 - 79	Demonstrated Understanding of the Curriculum
60 - 69	Demonstrated Partial Understanding of the Curriculum
50 - 59 or F	Failed to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Curriculum

- **Advanced Mastery** – At this level, students are able to apply the curriculum objectives and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems.
- **Mastery/Proficiency** – Students demonstrated a solid understanding of the curriculum objectives and can use them to solve a wide variety of problems.
- **Understanding** – Students demonstrate a basic understanding of the course objectives and are able to use them in solving simple problems.
- **Partial Understanding** – At this level, students have demonstrated a partial understanding of the objectives and are beginning to use them to solve problems.
- **Failing** – Students failed to demonstrate an understanding of the course objectives and cannot use them to solve simple problems.

### **Honor Roll**

At the end of each marking period, Westfield Middle School recognizes students who have attained Honor Roll status. The Honor Roll is divided into two levels: Maximum Honors and Honor Roll. Students not earning Honor Roll status may also be recognized for Honorable Mention. Requirements for achieving either Honor Roll or Honorable Mention are listed below:

- **Maximum Honors:** 1) An overall grade point average of 93 or higher and no grade less than an 80. All conduct comments on report cards should reflect positive behavior and conduct. “Unsatisfactory Conduct”, “Unsatisfactory Work” and “Negative Attitude” comments may make students ineligible for Maximum Honors.
- **Honor Roll:** 1) An overall grade point average of 85 or higher and no grade lower than a 77. All conduct comments on report cards should reflect positive behavior and conduct. “Unsatisfactory Conduct”, “Unsatisfactory Work” and “Negative Attitude” comments may make students ineligible for Honor Roll.
- **Honorable Mention:** At the end of each marking period, the middle school recognizes students who have not attained Honor Roll status but who have achieved academic growth and success. Requirements for achieving Honorable Mention are: 1) A overall grade point average of 80 and no grade lower than a 73. All conduct comments on report cards should reflect positive behavior and conduct. “Unsatisfactory Conduct”, “Unsatisfactory Work” and “Negative Attitude” comments may make students ineligible for Honorable Mention.

### **National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)**

Westfield Middle School participates in the National Junior Honor Society program to recognize the academic and civic accomplishments of our students. All inductees into the NJHS are selected on the basis of outstanding performance in all five criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character.

Students fulfill the scholarship component for NJHS by attaining the minimum GPA as determined by the faculty council prior to the start of the 7th grade school year. Candidates must maintain the minimum NJHS GPA throughout their duration at WMS once accepted. Not meeting the requirement of the citizen component, an unsatisfactory conduct mark or suspension from school, may prevent a student from becoming a member of NJHS. Requirements for the service, character, and leadership requirements will be fulfilled throughout the remainder of their time at WMS. Additional information is available by contacting our NJHS advisors.

### **MCAS Requirements**

In order to receive a high school diploma, students must meet the Competency Determination standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering.



Prior to the distribution of MCAS testing materials, all non-approved personal electronic devices (cell phones/tablets/laptops/etc.) will be collected from students by an MCAS proctor and returned to students at the completion of all testing.

All students in grades 7-12 are required to fully comply with the school schedule on MCAS days.

#### **Section 504**

Any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment may be eligible for a 504 Plan. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

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

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

Eligibility for services under Section 504 must be determined at a 504 eligibility meeting.

#### **Academic Appeals**

If a student does not believe that their work was graded fairly, they may request that the teacher review their assignment again. With this request, students should submit a written appeal as to why they believe their grade is not reflective of their work. Students and families should follow the chain of command outlined in the beginning of this handbook to appeal an assigned grade. All academic appeals **must** be made within 30 days of the grade being posted for consideration.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Westfield Middle School students are expected to follow the commonly accepted standards of honesty and ethics with regard to academic integrity. Students must assume responsibility for maintaining the principles of honor and truthfulness for all school-related work.

#### *Definition of Cheating*

Westfield Middle School defines **cheating** as seeking to obtain (or aiding another to obtain) credit or improved scores through the use of any unauthorized or deceptive means.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Presenting information collected, organized, or envisioned by someone else as your own (with or without the author's permission).
- Lending and/or copying or attempting to copy from another student's homework, quiz, test, essay, lab report, project, assignment.
- Allowing another student to copy answers during a test situation or verbally disclosing answers to another student.
- Taking shortcuts (such as unauthorized use of study aids and/or apps such as PhotoMath, online translators such as Google Translate) that allow you to bypass steps of an assignment.
- Using forbidden material to "help" during an exam, such as cheat sheets, graphing calculators, artificial intelligence, or cell phones.
- Asking about or sharing questions and/or answers to quizzes and exams.
- Submitting the same work for more than one assignment without express permission from your teacher(s).

- Altering or interfering with grading (forging signatures, changing, or inserting answers on work after grading).
- Attempting to obtain or successfully acquire test questions (including all types of writing prompts), and/or copies of tests outside the classroom setting.
- Misrepresenting yourself in any way to your teachers in regard to the work you have done, such as saying you have turned in an assignment when you did not, or that you have worked hours longer than you actually did to complete an assignment.
- Fabricating information to try to earn more time, more credit, or grading leniency on an assignment, project, or exam.
- Missing class in order to gain time to finish an assignment or prepare for a test.

#### *Consequences for Cheating*

Consequences for cheating will be determined by the classroom teacher that may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- A grade reduction on the assignment in question
- A failing grade for the assignment in question
- A substitute assignment
- Teacher detention (lunch or after school detention)
- Notification to the family, administration, and student's core teachers
- Disciplinary referral to administration
- Suspension and/or exclusion from extracurricular activities, including suspension or removal from the National Junior Honor Society

#### *Definition of Plagiarism*

Westfield Middle School defines **plagiarism** as taking work or ideas from the Internet, books, magazines, television, movies, any person or any other source whatsoever and deliberately passing it off as one's own work. Plagiarism is not limited to a student submitting a verbatim copy of the work of any source as his or her own. Plagiarism also includes submitting ideas and/or conclusions generated by another source as one's own work.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Copying material from the source, including the internet, without citing the source, or citing the source but omitting quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing the source without proper citation.
- Copying stories, in whole or part, which appear in books, magazines, television, or video.
- Copying directly, without making any changes, alterations or adaptations from a drawing, painting, illustration, photographic/digital image, or graphic symbol without citing the source.
- Submitting papers written in whole or part by someone else, including those found on the internet.
- Submitting papers on which the student has received substantial assistance from peers and/or adults that dramatically changes the character of the work so that it is no longer the student's own.
- Submitting a paper purchased from a research or term paper service, including, but not limited, to the internet.

*Consequences of Plagiarism* will be similar to those under cheating.

## IV. STUDENT LIFE

### Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the **right** to:

- A quality education.
- Expect school personnel to be qualified and professional.
- Be respected by others.
- A safe and secure school environment.
- Equality of educational opportunity.
- Be treated fairly by all members of the school community

Students have the **responsibility** to:

- Respect and promote the rights and wellbeing of all members of the Westfield Middle School community.
- Attend school daily, be on time, attend all classes, and arrive at each class prepared with the proper materials.
- Demonstrate their best effort at all educational endeavors.
- Observe the rules and regulations governing Westfield Middle School.
- Maintain a clean and pleasant atmosphere in the building and on school grounds.
- Accept responsibility for their own behavior.
- Accept consequences for their actions.

### Before/After School Supervision

School is officially open for students at 7:50 a.m. Students must stay outside before this time and will be let into the building promptly at 7:50 a.m..

Students and families are reminded that all students are expected to leave the Westfield Middle School campus at 2:29 p.m., unless they are engaged in formal activities such as staying for a teacher's extra help day, intramural sports, clubs, detention, or other school-sponsored activities. After 2:29 p.m., supervision is strictly limited to school-sponsored activities and students may not remain on campus unless they are participating in one of those activities.

### Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are not allowed at Westfield Middle School and they must remain off and in their backpacks or lockers during school hours. Any electronic device will be confiscated by a staff member or administrator. If a student refuses to turn over their electronic device when directed to do so, the student will be considered insubordinate and will face disciplinary action. Any electronic device confiscated must be submitted to the Main Office.

- First Offense: Electronic device will be confiscated and the student may pick it up at the end of the school day in the Main Office.
- Second Offense: Electronic device will be confiscated. A parent/guardian must pick up the electronic device in the Main Office.
- Third and Subsequent Offenses: Electronic device will be confiscated. A parent/guardian must pick up the electronic device in the Main Office. A meeting will be required with the Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or Principal to discuss a plan that will ensure no further violations of the school policy. Disciplinary action may be taken, including suspension.

### Dress Code (Aligned to School Committee Policy JICA)

It is largely the responsibility of the student, with the guidance of parents, to determine what is appropriate dress for school or school related activities; however, the Westfield Public School system reserves the right to prohibit clothing or manner of dress which constitutes a health or safety concern or is so unusual as to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process. This includes, but is not limited to, clothing that: has wording, pictures or designs of a graphic sexual nature; is vulgar or plainly offensive; displays, advertises, or promotes the use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or illegal substances; displays, promotes, or encourages overt violence or other

illegal activity; see-through clothing, barebacks, midriffs, exceptionally soiled or torn clothing, bandanas, low slung trousers, or muscle shirts. If such clothing is worn to school, students will be required to change or cover the clothing before returning to class or school activity. The final determination of what is not appropriate is determined by the Principal and/or the Principal's designee. Our student dress code is designed to accomplish several goals:

- To allow all students to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- To help students and staff understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal distractions without regulating individual students' clothing/self expression.
- To ensure that dress code enforcement is not a barrier to school attendance.
- To allow teachers to focus on teaching without the burden of dress code enforcement.
- To maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as chemistry/biology (eye or body protection) or PE (athletic attire/shoes).
- To prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, or encroach upon the rights of others.
- To ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, and/or socioeconomic status.

#### **Additional items that cannot be worn in school**

- Costumes
- Body armor or tactical gear
- Gang apparel or symbolism
- Swimsuits (except as required for athletics or another specific school activity)
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance or as personal protective equipment), including sunglasses and headphones
- Hats, hoods, head coverings (except for medical or religious purposes)

#### **Dress Code Enforcement**

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- Students in violation of the dress code will be provided three options to be dressed within the dress code during the school day:
  - Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - Students may be offered alternative clothing from the school if it is available.
  - If necessary, students' parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- Students with a possible dress code violation will be spoken to privately and will not be spoken to about the violation in front of others.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities. Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the Principal.

### **Extracurricular Activities Eligibility**

Westfield Middle School sponsors a variety of after-school activities offered throughout the year. These regularly include drama presentations, sports, dances, intramurals, talent shows and other school events. Activities are announced each day during morning announcements. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. Failure of students to adhere to the WMS behavior expectations such as excessive absences/tardiness, disruption of classes, insubordinate behavior to teachers and staff, as well as repeated infractions of school rules may result in the loss of privileges to participate.

#### *Attendance*

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, a student must be present in school from morning meeting until 12:00 p.m. or from 9:30 a.m. until the end of the school day. A student who is absent from school may not participate in, or attend any school activity, function, or athletic event during the day(s) or evening(s) of the absence. Only medical and legal appointments will be accepted. If a note is not submitted before the event, the student will not be allowed to participate. A student who is suspended from school may not participate in or attend any school activity, function, or athletic event until the student is allowed to return to school. For example, students whose suspensions include Fridays may not attend any weekend activities. The Principal may approve exceptions to this rule.

#### *Academic Eligibility*

Students must have passed (60 or above) the equivalent of five classes that meet daily to be eligible for extracurricular participation. Courses that are graded pass/fail do not apply to the five-class expectation unless otherwise approved by the Principal.

The following are examples of WMS school activities and clubs that could be offered from year to year:

- **Builder's Club:** Builders Club is an international student-led organization providing members with opportunities to perform community service, build character, and develop leadership. Builders Club in middle school leads to Key Club in high school. As part of the Kiwanis family, our goal is to serve our community. We participate in student-led service projects including fundraising, event hosting, and hands-on activities.
- **Drama Club:** The Drama Club produces an annual production such as a play, musical, or talent show. Under the direction of middle school staff members, students audition for positions in the club's production, and they attend after school practices. Students can also participate in technical and behind-the-scene activities. These students will be able to help produce set designs and props.
- **Intramural Program:** Intramurals meet after-school throughout the school year. Intramural activities may include basketball, volleyball, flag football, softball, wiffle ball and soccer. Activities vary based upon the desires of student participants.
- **Jazz Band:** Jazz Band is an extension of Concert Band. Membership in the Concert Band is a prerequisite for membership in the Jazz Band. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the director. Membership in the Jazz Band may be achieved through recommendation, audition, or the discretion of the director. This group rehearses after regular school hours.
- **Student Council:** The Student Council is chartered through the National Council of Student Councils. The primary function of the Student Council is to facilitate positive educational growth through planning, organizing and carrying out student-sponsored activities. Throughout the year, students acquire and utilize leadership skills to plan and implement school activities such as the talent show, dances, and fundraisers for local causes.
- **Wright Flight:** The Westfield Middle School Chapter of Wright Flight allows students the opportunity to take to the skies and pilot an aircraft by themselves. The program's intent is to introduce students to the many facets of the aviation industry including operations, manufacturing, and ground support. Students must set academic goals at the beginning of the program and meet these goals by flight day. Participating students experience a variety of activities and lessons that reinforce the program's objectives including field trips to the New England Air Museum and local aviation manufacturing facilities. Flight day takes place at Barnes Municipal Airport in Westfield around the end of May or beginning of June. Students will complete a 30-minute flight at the controls of a general aviation aircraft. Wright Flight meeting dates will be determined in the near future.

- Other Activities/Clubs: Students with interest in starting a new club can bring ideas to the Principal to help find an advisor.

### **Field Trips**

School-sponsored field trips are an extension of classroom learning. There is often a cost associated with participation in field trips to offset transportation and admission fees. Students who have violated the Code of Conduct may be excluded from participation on field trips.

For students with chronic absenteeism (more than 10% days missed during the school year) or who are failing multiple classes, the administration reserves the right to keep them in classes rather than attend the trip.

### **Food and Beverages**

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch, snack, and drink to school for lunch. Food and beverages, with the exception of water, are not allowed in the classrooms. Middle school students are allowed to drink non-carbonated, unflavored water in a clear water bottle in school. No other beverages will be allowed in the middle school. The administrative team reserves the right to disallow food and/or drinks at any time.

The sale of food or beverages (other than directly from the cafeteria or school vending machines) is not permitted during the school day.

### **Hall Passes**

Students leaving class must have a pre-approved E-Hall Pass. Students are expected to leave and return in a timely manner.

### **Lockers**

Students are assigned individual lockers that should be kept neat and clean at all times. Students will be assigned a lock by the school. A lost or intentionally damaged lock will result in a charge of \$9.00 (i.e., the cost to replace the lock). Nothing may be written on or attached to student lockers. Lockers are school property and may be inspected at any time. Students are not to share their lockers or their combinations with anyone else. If a prohibited item is found in a student's locker, it will be determined to belong to the student whose locker the item was found in. The school is not responsible for stolen items. Personal locks should not be placed on hall lockers.

### **Medications**

Students may not carry prescription or nonprescription medication with them at any time on school property. All medication must be brought to the nurse's office. The only exception is when a student is prescribed an EpiPen, inhaler, or diabetes tracking medical resources and the student has received approval from the school nurse to carry such medication. Students may request approval to carry other medication, but the administration must approve in advance before medications are carried. Middle School Teams

As a district, we have been participating in essential conversations about equity. While there are many meaningful ways to define equity in education, we define it as a student's access to resources and opportunities, ensuring they receive what they need to be successful. Westfield Middle School will approach our student placement process through the equity lens, which will enable us to provide every student with an opportunity for a successful learning experience, both academically and socially, by creating well-balanced teams and classrooms. This is an important process and one we take seriously.

As part of the student placement process, the WIS staff will provide us essential information about students' individual needs, including, but not limited to: academic; social/emotional; and peer interactions. The WMS administrative team will use this information to create grade-level teams. The objective is to place students on teams and classes that will best support their learning and growth. In an effort to remain true to our goal of equity, we are unable to honor specific parent/guardian requests for teams or teachers, as the process needs to be fair, consistent, and focused on the needs of all learners. We are fortunate to have strong, caring teachers and, regardless of placement, it is sure to be a great experience next year. If you have any concerns with specific peer interactions, please contact me and we will take this into consideration. Thank you in advance for trusting that we will carefully create classroom communities in which every student has the opportunity to succeed.

### **Student Information**

All students are required to submit the emergency contact forms, medical forms, and other application paperwork to the school at the start of the school year. Restraining orders or court custody agreements need to be submitted by families on an annual basis and when court orders expire in order for the school to keep accurate records of legal proceedings. Confidential information can be submitted directly to the administration.

### **Theft**

The school is not responsible for stolen items. If a theft of a personal item occurs, it should be reported to the adult to whom the student is assigned at the time of the theft. The student should then submit a written report listing the details of the theft to an assistant principal.

### **Student Support Services**

Guidance counselors and adjustment counselors follow the progress of all students closely and conduct activities designed to help them learn more about themselves and their potential. Psychologists, reading and writing consultants, special education teachers, and tutors all comprise an important part of the total staff, specially trained and selected to serve the needs of emerging adolescents. The middle school years are challenging times at best. Physical, psychological and social/emotional pressures are greater during this period than any other time in students' lives. The middle school itself is organized and operated to make this growing period as rewarding and successful as possible. All counselors and support staff can be contacted by calling the school's office.

### **Student-Teacher Assistance Team (STAT Team)**

The middle school's Student-Teacher Assistance Team (STAT) is a team of school personnel who meet to review and plan for students with attendance, academic, and at-risk concerns. The team is organized and led by the Principal, and it is made up of all necessary staff assigned by the Principal. The team reviews students' needs and develops a support plan with the necessary interventions, as well as a specific timeline to ensure interventions are successful. There is a comprehensive internal process that staff use to make STAT recommendations.

## **V. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Approved Posters**

Material may not be posted in the corridors or other public areas in the school without prior Administrative approval. This is to ensure fair and equal access to posting, to prevent harassment and inappropriate advertising and to maintain public standards of taste. Teachers have the same authority to determine all postings within their classrooms.

### **Care of School Property**

Students are responsible for the proper care of all school property including textbooks, materials, school equipment, and athletic equipment. Textbooks should be covered using material that does not damage the books. Students will pay for lost or damaged books or materials at a price to be determined based on the replacement cost of the lost items. Students who damage, deface or destroy school property will be required to pay for the damages.

### **How to File a Complaint**

A complaint is someone's written claim that the school district has violated legal requirements for education.

To file a formal complaint, please submit a formal letter to the principal of the school. The letter can be mailed in or attached in an email. In the complaint, details must include:

- The nature of the complaint
- The school site of the alleged infraction
- Who is allegedly involved in the situation with specific student names
- The specific regulation that has been allegedly violated
- What outcome you are hoping to accomplish
- The complainant's name and contact information

Upon receiving the complaint, the principal will immediately investigate the claim, consult with necessary parties, use school policy, the student handbook and law as a guide, and determine an appropriate outcome. The person who submitted the complaint will not be kept anonymous during the formal investigation process. Outcomes that involve student or personnel consequences will not be shared.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's actions, the complainant may direct the complaint to the superintendent of schools. Upon receiving the complaint, the superintendent will promptly investigate the claim, consult with necessary parties, use policy, the student handbook and law as a guide, review the principal's investigation and determine if the principal's outcome was appropriate.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the superintendent's determination, the complainant may go to the School Committee or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Department reviews complaints, investigates the claims, and determines whether the district has violated legal requirements for education. If a violation has occurred, the Department directs the school to correct the violation or to take other steps to make sure that it does not happen again.

Federal law requires all complaints to be in writing and to be signed by the complainant. Federal special education law and Department procedures also require you to send a copy of the signed, written complaint (the letter or the completed Problem Resolution Intake form) to the appropriate school district administrator at the same time you send it to the Department.

A complaint to the Department should include: a statement saying that the school district has violated a requirement of federal or state education law; the facts on which this statement is based; your signature and contact information (address, phone number, and/or email address); and if the alleged violation involves a specific child, the complaint needs to include:

- The student's name and address;
- The name of the school the student attends;
- If the student is homeless, the student's contact information and school the student is attending;
- Your proposed resolution of the problem (what you think can be done to fix the problem);
- The name of the district administrator to whom you sent a copy of the signed written complaint that you sent to the Department.

### **Safety, Security and Violence**

The district is committed to maintaining an orderly educational environment, and to using administrative procedures that keep schools and offices free from disruption and prevent unauthorized persons from entering school property. The purpose of this policy is to promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among employees, students, parents, and the public. It is not intended to deprive any person of their right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain a safe and harassment-free workplace and learning environment for students and staff. In seeking to have its employees be seen as positive role models for children and youth in our communities, the district seeks public cooperation in encouraging positive communication and discouraging volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions by anyone.

- Any individual who disrupts, or threatens to disrupt school or office operations, threatens the health or safety of students or staff, willfully causes property damage, uses loud or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction from others, or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be directed to leave school property promptly by the school Principal or designee.
- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demanding, loud, insulting or demeaning manner, the Administrator or employee to whom the remarks are directed will calmly and politely ask the speaker to communicate in a civil manner. If the abusing party does not correct the behavior, the employee will verbally notify the offending person that their meeting, conference, discussion, or phone conversation is terminated, and if on school property, the offending person will be directed to leave the premises.
- If an individual directed to leave under the above conditions does not do so promptly, the Principal or designee shall inform the offending party that charges may be filed for violating Massachusetts General



Laws Chapter 272, Section 40, *Disturbance of School or Public Meeting*, and that law enforcement officials will be notified.

- When violence is directed against employees or theft against property, employees will promptly report the occurrence to their Principal or designee and complete an Incident Report.
- When any attack, assault, or threat is made against employees or their supervisors on school property or at school-sponsored activities, an Incident Report must be completed and filed with law enforcement officials.
- When it is determined that a member of the public has, or is likely to violate these provisions, the employee will immediately notify their supervisor and file an Incident Report. If possible, the offending party should be given a copy of this policy at the time of the occurrence.
- Application of this policy and reporting procedure is also encouraged in any situation or circumstance where it is observed that laws are knowingly being violated in the school.

### **Safety Drills**

As required under Massachusetts law, a variety of safety drills need to be conducted on a regular basis in public schools. Westfield Middle School expects that parents and guardians will work cooperatively when safety drills are planned and not release or excuse their child from school when these safety events are scheduled. In the event that visitors are within the school during a safety drill, they are expected to follow instructions during such events.

- **Fire:** During a fire drill, students are to leave school under the direction of their teacher and relocate to the parking lot where attendance will be taken. Students should be familiar with the fire drill directions that are posted in each classroom.
- **Lockdown:** During a lockdown drill, everyone must remain where they are or enter the nearest classroom if in the hallway. All doors must be locked and the lights turned off. The door windows must be covered and all window blinds closed. Everyone in the room must maintain silence until they are released from the drill.
- **Shelter in Place (SIP):** A SIP drill is practiced in the event of an isolated incident. (e.g. toxic spill, bomb threat, drug searching dogs, hazmat, personal medical emergency, etc.) Everyone must remain where they are and continue with their scheduled activities until notified that the SIP drill has concluded.
- **Evacuation/Relocation:** An evacuation/relocation drill is conducted in the same manner as a fire drill with the only major exception being that everyone would relocate to a site off the Westfield Middle School campus.

### **School Resource Officer (SRO)**

The School Resource Officer is a certified municipal police officer assigned to Westfield Middle School to work collaboratively within the school community as a resource for safety and security issues. The SRO assists the school administration in maintaining a safe and secure environment on an as-needed basis. It is essential for the SRO to endorse high moral standards and use good judgment and discretion.

The SRO is *not* a school disciplinarian. Violations of school rules remain the responsibility of the administrative team. However, if a violation of a school rule is also a criminal offense, the SRO may conduct a concurrent investigation and take the appropriate action under the policies and procedures set forth by their police agency and the state of Massachusetts.

Parents may seek information from the SRO if they suspect their child may be experimenting with drugs or alcohol. Many times students will just want someone to talk to about problems that they are experiencing, and the SRO can act as another caring adult in the school building who works to find positive solutions for students.

### **Student Records**

The Regulations Pertaining to Student Records were developed by the Massachusetts State Board of Education to ensure parents, students and former students of their rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records. The regulations have the force of law and apply to all elementary and secondary schools.

The temporary record consists of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information may include standardized test scores, extra-curricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, or other school staff. A school health record, which gives a general profile of health, may also be

included. The temporary record shall not contain any anonymous information and will be destroyed after graduation.

Notice is hereby given: any non-essential documents in a student's file--such as school work samples, notes from families/guardians, etc. will be destroyed at the end of each school year. In addition, these documents will be destroyed when the student transitions from Westfield Middle School to any other school within the district or outside of the district. Any school will keep only information that is of importance to the educational process.

#### *Review*

In accordance with federal regulations and for the benefit of parents and students in the school district, protocol is aligned with rights regarding educational records and confidentiality. A student and a parent have the right to inspect and review educational records. (FERPA 99.4).

1. Contact the school principal and inform him/her that you would like to review your student's educational records. You must give written consent before any personally identifiable information is released about your student to anyone other than the parent/guardian.
2. You may not remove the student's file from the secure space. You may not remove any document from a student's file or add to the student's file.
3. If you feel the educational record is misleading or inaccurate, you can request an amendment to the part of the record that is inaccurate in writing with the School Principal.

#### *Obtain*

1. Contact the school principal and inform him/her that you would like a copy of your student's educational record.
2. Allow the school five days to copy and provide the requested information. There may be a small fee to cover the copying.

#### *Request a Change*

1. Inform the school principal that you have discovered inaccurate or misleading information and would like it amended or removed.
2. Allow the school district five to 10 working days to decide whether your request is valid.
3. If the school district disagrees with the request, you can file for a hearing with the school district to voice your concerns.
4. If, as a result of the hearing, the school district decides that the information is inaccurate or misleading, the school will amend the record and inform you of the amendment in writing.
5. If, as a result of the hearing, the school district decides the information is accurate and not misleading, they will notify you of the right to place a statement in the record explaining why you feel the information is misleading or incorrect.
6. The school district is obligated to place a copy of your statement in the educational record.

#### *Confidentiality*

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student.

As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records via written request *unless* the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
- The parent has been denied visitation, or
- The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or

- There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

#### *Disciplinary Records*

Upon request from a receiving school as stipulated in the Education Reform Act of 1993, Westfield Middle School will supply a student's disciplinary record to the receiving school. It is the responsibility of the student and parent or guardian to ensure that these disciplinary records are sent promptly.

#### *Disclosure of Directory Information*

Westfield Middle School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless the parent/guardian has advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Westfield Middle School to include this type of information from your student's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama position
- the annual yearbook
- honor roll or other recognition lists
- graduation programs
- sports activity sheets such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings–unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If the parent does not want Westfield Middle School to disclose directory information from their student's education records without your prior written consent, the parent must notify the district in writing.

#### **Volunteers**

M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R requires all schools to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with students. A CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) must be obtained at least **every three years** during an individual's term of employment or service. Volunteers are not subject to the fingerprint-based state and national criminal record check required for all school and contractor employees.

#### VI. DEPARTMENTS

##### **Cafeteria**

*Breakfast:* Breakfast will be free for all students during the 2023-2024 school year. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria 7:40 a.m.-7:55 a.m.

*Lunch:* School lunches will continue to be free for all students during the 2023-2024 school year. Students who would like a school lunch can choose from the regular hot lunch line for free, or the a la carte line, where students will need to pay for individual items.

##### **Counseling Center**

The vision of the Westfield Middle School counselors is that every student is actively working on clear goals in order to reach their fullest potential in their academic, career, and social/emotional development.

##### *Core Values*

1. We believe that students need to be able to function well emotionally and socially in order to be academically successful.

2. We believe that all students need to be fully aware of their options and what steps are needed to pursue each option.
3. We believe that students need the knowledge of their own interests, skills, values, and abilities in order to set realistic goals, make healthy decisions, and advocate for themselves throughout their life.
4. We believe that it is essential for the counseling staff to collaborate with teachers, administrators, and families in order to help all students reach their academic, career, and social/emotional goals.

#### *Counselor Assignments*

Students in middle school are assigned to one counselor for 7th and 8th grade. Requests for a counselor different from the assigned counselor cannot be honored.

#### *How do Students Contact their Counselor?*

Students are encouraged to visit the counseling office to arrange a meeting with their counselor. Students are advised to schedule a meeting during homeroom, lunch, and before or after school. Counselors may also contact students to meet during the day.

#### *How do Parents/Guardians Contact the Counselor?*

Counselors are available by phone or through email to answer any questions or concerns. Parents are encouraged to contact their student's counselor to request a meeting.

#### *Confidentiality and Privacy of Information*

School counselors are continuously available throughout the academic year to assist with any concerns that may arise. What is said to counselors will be held in the strictest confidence, unless the student shares that he/she is hurting themselves, he/she may hurt others, or an adult is hurting the student. Counselors are then required to report this information to appropriate authorities.

#### *Personal Counseling*

Counselors are available for students who would like to discuss personal concerns. Counselors may also speak with groups of students who share similar concerns, as well as provide mediation when appropriate. A counselor can be used as a personal resource for referrals to professionals both inside and outside the school system. Counselors are available to students who believe they have an immediate emotional need. Counselors aim to help students develop their own decision-making and coping skills.

#### **Library Media Center**

Westfield Middle School's Library Media Center is available to students throughout the school day. This facility has the resources to meet both the learning styles of students and the teaching methodologies of the faculty that are appropriate to the curriculum. The Library Media Center contains print, non-print, hardware, software and on-line networking to not only support the curriculum, but also meet the needs of the individuals who will use them. The library is for the use of all students who attend the middle school. All books are checked out for a one-week period. Although there are no fines for overdue books, students with books that are more than one month overdue may lose school privileges which include all trips and end-of-year activities. Lost or damaged books must be paid for.

#### **Nurse**

##### *General Information*

A registered school nurse works with students and their families in promoting and maintaining optimal student health while school is in session. A school physician is available as an advisor for consultation and preventive health programs.

Excuses from physical education are required for those students who cannot participate. A written note from a parent or guardian is sufficient for short-term excuses of no more than three school days. For longer periods, a note from a physician with a medical diagnosis and length of the excused period is required.

When a student requests to see a school nurse, the student should obtain a pass from a staff member unless an emergency arises. Students dismissed from school due to illness or injury will only be released to a parent, guardian

or someone identified on an emergency contact form on file. All students will remain in the nurse's office until they are dismissed.

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, first aid will be administered in accordance with policies approved by the school physician. If the illness or injury is serious, the student will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital emergency room. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

If the school nurse suspects the presence of any contagious disease, the nurse may request the student seek the advice of a physician. The nurse may require that such students be dismissed from school.

#### *Communication with the Nurses via email:*

The Attorney General has ruled that communication via email in the public domain is not confidential and is considered a matter of public record. If you are sending protected health information via email, please be aware that it is not a secure way to do so.

#### *Medication:*

Over the counter medications are not allowed to be carried by any student according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. Parents/guardians of students who need to take such medications must bring them to the nurse. Parental permission is needed for the nurse to administer over the counter medications. Students with asthma or other respiratory illnesses may possess and administer prescription inhalers. Students with life-threatening allergies may carry epi-pens. Students with diabetes may carry their own medication and medical supplies.

Medication may only be administered to students by the school nurse and other individuals listed in the medical administration plan while at school acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician.

In accordance with standard medical practice, a medication order from a licensed prescriber shall contain:

- The student's name
- The name and signature of the licensed prescriber and business and emergency phone numbers
- The name of the medication
- The frequency and time of medication administration
- The date of the order and discontinuation date
- The specific directions for administration.
- The medication must be in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container

All medications are to be administered through, and monitored by the nurse according to the following procedures:

- Written authorization from the physician and the student's parent or guardian is required before any medication will be dispensed (Paperwork is available from the nurse.)
- Medication must be delivered to school by the parent, guardian or other authorized adult
- The medication must bear the pharmacy label and instructions as well as the student's name

#### *Guidelines for Returning to School After Hospitalization*

If a student has had surgery, a serious medical emergency, or any other medical situation where the nurse or administration determines clearance for school or extra-curricular activities is necessary, a parent/guardian should provide written documentation from the physician that indicates that the student is:

- Medically cleared for return to school
- Explains any restrictions/accommodations while in school
- States any other pertinent information important to the safety and well being of the student

#### *Screenings*

Vision, Hearing, Height, Weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), Substance Abuse (SBIRT)

The school nurse will complete vision, hearing, height, weight, and body mass index screening for all students in grades 7. BMI results will be available in the nurse's office for distribution to families upon verbal or written request.

All abnormal results for vision and/or hearing will be mailed home to parents. Postural screenings will be completed for students in grades 7 and 8. The parents/guardians of any student with an abnormal result will be called and also be mailed a copy of the results. A completely confidential substance abuse risk assessment will be performed with the vision, hearing, height, and weight screening. You will not be notified of these screening results unless it is deemed that there is an imminent risk to the student.

If a parent/guardian does not want their student to participate in any screening program, they must provide the nurse with a written opt-out letter.

### **Special Education Programs**

Westfield Middle School has a range of special education and related services for students who have been identified as having special education needs. Students are identified through an evaluation process set forth in state and related federal laws. Parents/guardians and/or school personnel may initiate the process for a special needs evaluation for a student. All educational programs and services offered by Westfield Middle School are available and accessible to students with disabilities.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

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

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

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

## **VII. CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Introduction**

To promote the best possible experience at school for all, it is expected that students will behave in a manner that adheres to the policies of the school and classroom. It is expected that students will treat one another with respect and consideration at all times. Students are expected to respond to staff requests with respect, cooperation, and compliance. If cooperation is not forthcoming, the student will be referred to an Administrator for further action.

When a student's behavior is inappropriate, school personnel will intervene with that student. This intervention could involve redirection or a warning; more significant consequences may be warranted. The school is responsible for maintaining a mutually respectful climate that supports high educational values. What is best for the individual must be balanced against that which is most desirable for the total school population. All staff members, including the faculty and support staff, have the authority to enforce the rules and regulations of the school as set forth by the School Committee and the Administration. If a student has an issue with a particular request or expectation from a staff person, the student should consult with an Administrator after complying with that request.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances. The Administration will attempt to resolve disciplinary situations by every means short of excluding a student from school.

Inappropriate student behavior will result in disciplinary action. However, a wide range of consequences for inappropriate student behavior will be considered. Some situations that require disciplinary action may be resolved within the confines of the classroom with a reasonable but firm reprimand and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians. Progressive discipline will be determined by the degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident. Please note that not all possible acts of inappropriate behavior are defined or described in the Code of Conduct. If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the administrator or staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment. In the event a disciplinary consequence is appealed to the Principal, the Principal has the discretion to determine the consequence.

### **Classroom Conduct**

Since teachers are responsible for keeping order and handling misbehavior in the classroom, they will discuss with their classroom expectations and the rules which they have established so that effective teaching and learning can take place. Teachers will handle unacceptable classroom behavior in a variety of ways, including verbal warnings, conferences, family contact, and detentions.

Classroom detentions assigned by a teacher will be served outside of class time. Teachers may assign an after school detention, and must provide the parent/guardian and student with at least 24 hours notice. Any student who fails to attend a teacher assigned detention will be assigned an additional office detention by Administration. A teacher detention has priority over all school related activities. Students with legitimate after school appointments (such as work, doctor appointments or other necessary commitments) may be given consideration by their teacher for a 24 hour delay.

### **Specific Rules and Expectations**

Students are expected to comply with the terms of the Student Discipline Policy of the Westfield School Committee. Students who violate any provision of that policy are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion from school.

- 1:1 TECHNOLOGY: Students at Westfield Middle School will each have a chromebook to use daily in their classes. Students are expected to use it only for school-based activities following the District Acceptable Use Policy. Those policies and guidelines can be found here: <https://sites.google.com/schoolsofwestfield.org/one-one/home>
- BICYCLES & WHEELED VEHICLES: The use of bicycles and wheeled vehicles are not allowed after arrival on school property. These include motored cycles, bicycles, skates, skateboards, “heelies” or any such vehicle that may cause a dangerous condition. Wheeled vehicles must be “walked” on the sidewalks while on school property. Once on school property, skateboards and scooters must be carried and secured in a locker. Students riding a bicycle to school should properly lock it to the bike rack. Failure to follow the rules will result in disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
- BULLYING: Please reference the policy in the District Handbook.
- CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STUDENTS: Students are responsible for ensuring that books, technology and other materials belonging to the Westfield Public Schools are returned in acceptable condition. Lost, damaged or defaced property must be paid for by the responsible student. Any student deemed responsible for willful destruction of school property will be subject to the financial cost of repair or replacement and may also be subject to suspension from the school and potential criminal action.
- CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Use of cell phones and other electronic devices is prohibited in the school building. See section for electronic devices.
- CHEWING GUM: Generally speaking, chewing gum is not prohibited at Westfield Middle School. Non-compliance will result in consequences including the loss of the privilege to chew gum, disciplinary action, etc.
- CLASS CUT POLICY: A student’s most important responsibility is to attend all scheduled classes during the school day. Cutting a class is considered an absence. If a student cuts a class, teachers may be advised to

schedule an appointment with the student to make up missed work. Students identified as having cut a class will also be assigned an office detention.

- **EARBUDS/HEADPHONES:** Earbuds and headphones are prohibited in the school building. Earbuds and headphones must be off and away until they leave school unless they are being used for an educational purpose under the direction of a teacher.
- **FOOD AND BEVERAGES:** Prior to entering the building in the morning, students must dispose of all food and drinks in the trash receptacles located near each entrance. Food and beverages should be consumed in the cafeteria only and shall not be taken out of the cafeteria.
- **OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Students are responsible for all school materials available for their use. Students who owe money for lost or damaged books, library fines, lunches, combination locks, etc. are obligated to pay for these materials by the end of the school year. Failure to fulfill these obligations may result in the loss of privileges to participate in certain school trips, end-of-the year activities, and extracurricular activities.
- **PERSONAL CONDUCT/PROFANITY:** Students are expected to conduct themselves in a positive and socially acceptable manner. This includes demonstrating respect for themselves and others and refraining from putdowns, name calling, intimidation and/or other bullying behaviors. **Students are expected not to use profanity while in the school building.** Displays of affection between friends are not appropriate while on school grounds or at school programs and activities.
- **PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, WILLFUL DECEIT OR MISREPRESENTATION:** The students of Westfield Middle School should exemplify truth, honesty, and decency at all times. Intentionally plagiarizing material or cheating on school work or tests, may result in a grade of zero being assigned. Students failing to give proper information for the purposes of personal gain and/or dishonesty are subject to school discipline in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy established by the Westfield School Committee.
- **TARDINESS TO CLASS:** Students must be in their classroom seat when the 2-minute tone marking the end of the passing period stops ringing so that the teacher may start classwork immediately; otherwise, they are considered tardy, and teachers may assign after-school detention.
- **TRUANCY:** Truancy is defined as being absent from school or class without permission. Students are responsible for being in school and may not be absent without a confirmed, valid excuse. The truant student will be denied credit for make-up work, and after school penalties will be given including detention, loss of privileges and extra-curricular activities, parent contact, loss of appropriate credit and/or suspension. Teachers will be notified of truant students and will be instructed to give a grade of zero for that day.

### **After School Detentions**

After-school detentions are assigned to students by Administration and Staff, and they are held on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students assigned to an office detention will receive 24 hours notice prior to serving the detention. An office detention has priority over athletics (practices/games), artistic rehearsals, club meetings or any other after school commitments. Students will report to the assigned detention location at 2:35 and will remain with an assigned staff member until 3:00 p.m. for a staff detention or 3:25 p.m. for an administrative detention. It is the student's responsibility to arrange their own transportation home. Students are encouraged to work on homework assignments during detention. Failure to attend an office detention will trigger further disciplinary action.

Infractions that may warrant an office detention include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attendance issues (the attendance policy is included in this handbook)
- Disrespectful or discourteous behavior – any behavior that is socially unacceptable by present standards in a public place
- Unsafe/disruptive behavior in a lab setting
- Provoking physical conflict
- Abusive language, inflammatory language, fighting words, taunting
- Students in the locker room at inappropriate or unauthorized times
- Refusal to obey the directions of an administrator or teacher
- Forgery
- Lying
- Leaving the school building without permission
- Leaving the cafeteria without permission
- Parking in student parking lot without proper registration
- Disrespect toward a staff member
- Use of cell phones/personal electronic devices during the school day



- Use of portable gaming/video devices (these devices are not allowed in school and should not be played on any device, including cell phones, calculators, etc.)
- Opening secured exterior doors to students and/or visitors
- Failure to report to a teacher detention
- Behaviors or actions that interfere with the educational process
- Student parking in the faculty/staff lot or visitor parking before 3pm
- Initiating or participating in food throwing
- Use of profanity or vulgarity
- Repeated classroom violations
- Failure to report to the office when sent or requested

### **Loss of School Related Privileges**

Another remedy for inappropriate student behavior may be the temporary loss of school privileges, including but not limited to field trips, artistic rehearsals, sports (practices and games), clubs, groups, access to student parking, and other after school activities. However, students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any field trip or school related activity that is tied to the curriculum and/or will result in a graded assignment.

### **Restitution**

Following either a written notice or a conference with the student and parent/guardian a student may be required to repair, restore, replace, or pay for damaged, vandalized, lost or stolen school property. Payment may be required either in cash or in appropriate, agreed upon services.

### **Restorative Practices**

When determined by the Administration as the appropriate course of action, Restorative Practices will be incorporated into the consequences for inappropriate student behavior. Restorative Practice strategies are interventions in response to misconduct that involves the expectation of 'righting the wrong.' It does not replace such consequences as detention or suspension, but compliments them. Two basic concepts in this approach are reconciliation and restitution. Reconciliation involves repairing the damage done to relationships or the (class or school) community by the misconduct. Restitution is concerned with making amends for the effect of the misconduct. Such interventions stem from the belief that much misconduct affects the experience of others and the climate in class or at school. Just 'serving time', in many cases, does not provide the lessons necessary and does not adequately address the impact that the offense has on others.

### **Use of Tobacco and Controlled Substances**

#### *Tobacco-Free School Policy*

Use of any tobacco products or tobacco related products such as e-cigarettes or vaping devices by students, staff and visitors are prohibited on school property or at any school function at all times. The possession of tobacco products or paraphernalia including rolling papers, e-cigarettes or vaping devices by minors on school property or at any school function is strictly prohibited. School property includes school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots, school buses, and any other event controlled by the School Committee. It is the intention of the school district to consistently enforce this policy in order to improve the health of students, staff and visitors to its facilities.

#### *Controlled Substances*

Being in possession of, consuming, and/or distributing controlled substances at school or at a school function will result in a suspension. Paraphernalia that is confiscated will not be returned to students or parents/guardians.

### **Suspension**

Some infractions are of such a serious nature that immediate and severe action is warranted. Suspension is the temporary exclusion from the regular school program for a specified number of days. The number of suspension days assigned is determined by the administration and depends on the nature of the case and disciplinary record. Because of the administration's commitment to make discipline more effective and to keep students in classes, administration will try to use suspensions rarely.

For attendance purposes, all suspensions are excused absences from school. Therefore, a student who misses any class as the result of a suspension of 10 or fewer days will have the opportunity to continue to make academic

progress. They will have a reasonable opportunity to make up all assignments, tests, homework, quizzes, papers, and projects and will receive academic credit for all completed work. Students who miss class due to a suspension of more than 10 days are entitled to educational services during their removal. Teachers will not be required to provide extra help to students who are suspended. Students disciplined by the Administration may be asked to attend a reentry conference with their parents/guardians prior to returning to classes. Accumulation of suspension days does not carry over from year to year.

While under suspension, students are ineligible to participate in or attend any school-sponsored activities. This includes, but is not limited to, dramatic and musical activities, all club activities, dances, and field trips.

### **Notice of Proposed Suspensions**

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½, the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing.

Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- the disciplinary offense;
- the basis for the charge;
- the potential consequences,
- including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The administration shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the administration must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the administration sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension will be emailed to the email address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the administration and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

### **General Requirements Prior to Suspension under M.G.L. CHAPTER 71, §37H¾**

A student may not be suspended under M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾, unless one or more of the following apply:

- a. Alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents.
- b. There are documented specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive.
- c. The situation is such that the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

### **Short Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination**

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

### **Principal Hearing**

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

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of his/her determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

For short term suspensions, there is no appeal process available to students per M.G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4.

### **Long Term Suspension/Expulsion: Hearing and Principal Determination**

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights which will be provided in their intent to suspend notice:

- The opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not, in advance of the hearing upon request;
- The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
- The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;

- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant. The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue his/her written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

### **Emergency Removal**

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

During the emergency removal, the administration shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The administration shall not remove a student from the School until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The administration shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the administration, student, and parent/guardian.

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

### **Suspension/Expulsion Examples**

The following student conduct often carries the penalty of suspension. The administration reserves the right to determine the number of suspension days. The list is not inclusive of all conduct that may result in a suspension or expulsion. Infractions that may warrant a suspension include but are not limited to the following:

- Arson or the intentional setting of a fire
- Battery/fighting
- Physical or verbal threats to faculty, staff, students or administration

- Being under the influence of, using, possessing, purchasing, distributing or attempting to use, possess, distribute or buy alcohol or drugs, or any substance purported to be alcohol or drugs at school sponsored or school-related events, including but not limited to field trips, athletic events, and on the bus.
- Participation in a false alarm and/or pulling or tampering with any fire alarms within the building or on school premises
- Repeated provocation of physical conflict
- Vandalism, defacing or damaging school property including computers and their records, files, and systems
- Taking photos or videos of someone without their consent, and/or sharing photos or videos of someone without their consent
- Continued and willful disobedience to school and classroom regulations
- Tampering with fire extinguishers
- Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy (included in this handbook)
- Use of racial, religious, ethnic and/or sexual orientation slurs or symbols
- Profanity or vulgarity directed at a faculty member or school personnel
- Intentionally making false statements to faculty and administrators which results in wasted time and energy of school administrators
- Repeated profanity or vulgarity
- Harassment/Bullying (harassment and bullying policies are included in this handbook)
- Sexual harassment (sexual harassment policy is included in this handbook)
- Hazing as an organizer, participant and/or observer (hazing policy is included in this handbook)
- Selling food and beverages without approval from administration
- Disturbing a school assembly
- Making safety threat by any means, including, but not limited to, verbally, electronically, or in writing
- Use or possession of a bomb, fireworks, or any other explosive or incendiary device, including an object that appears to be a bomb or other such device
- Commission of an illegal act while on school grounds, school busses, or at any school sponsored event
- Actions that directly and purposefully affect safety and security issues
- Possession, dissemination or use of obscenity in any form, especially speech, writing, or explicit sexual pictures or drawings
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Other repeated violations of school rules

### **Suspension or Expulsion for Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½**

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

#### *Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff*

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. For clarity, marijuana is considered a controlled substance by federal standards and the school receives federal funding, therefore, possession of marijuana falls under this category.

The administration shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in their discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) 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 the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

#### *Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint*

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time if the Principal determines

that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

*Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency*

The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal of the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

*In-School Suspension Under 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10*

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

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

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

### **Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation**

Acts of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are prohibited:

- On school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and
- At a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on their rights at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The School Committee expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to students and staff the bullying will not be tolerated. The Principal or their designee will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment, including bullying, and will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment, including bullying. The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation may include but are not limited to suspension and or expulsion and termination for employees. Disciplinary actions shall be based on the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### *Bullying*

Bullying is defined as 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:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property
2. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target
4. Infringes on the rights of the target at school or
5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

#### *Cyberbullying*

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

Cyberbullying shall also include:

- The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying as written above.
- The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses the definition of bullying as written above.

#### *Hostile Environment*

Hostile Environment is defined as a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

#### *Retaliation*

Retaliation is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment by a current student or former student under the age of 21 directed against a person in response to an action that person has taken or knowledge that the person has.

#### *Reporting Responsibilities*

Everyone in the school community is responsible for immediately (the first opportunity and no later than within 24 hours) reporting incidents of harassing, bullying and/or retaliation, by anyone, in any form, that are directed at or witnessed by them at school or at a school sponsored event. Failure to report such incidents or failure to cooperate with an investigation of such an incident will result in disciplinary action. Further, it is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students to intervene verbally in any incident when it is possible for them to safely do so.

#### *When to report:*

- If you are a target or victim
- If you are a witness
- If you see insulting or demeaning graffiti or other visual displays
- If you have other reasons to believe that there may have been a possible incident or incidents involving harassment, bullying or retaliation.

If something is reported to any staff member that violates our student expectations, the administrative team will investigate and follow up appropriately even if the reporter requests that the school does nothing.

All reported incidents of harassing behavior will be investigated. In the event a violation of this policy is established, Westfield Middle School will take reasonable steps to stop the violation and prevent its recurrence. These steps may include actions against those who have been determined to be in violation.

#### **Searches, Seizures, and Interrogations**

School lockers are the property of Westfield Middle School. The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted administrators. This authority may be exercised in a reasonable and prudent manner as needed in the interest of safeguarding students and property.

The search of a student's person, vehicle and possessions by school officials will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process. This authority may be exercised in a reasonable and prudent manner as needed in the interest of safeguarding students and property. Students have no legitimate expectation of privacy on school property. If school officials have a reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of weapons, controlled substances and/or other illegal, inappropriate items, that student and their personal belongings may be searched. The search can include the student's person, clothing, handbag, and backpack. The school has no legal obligation to inform parents/guardians before students are searched or questioned if the administration is conducting the investigation. Students who refuse to be searched will receive appropriate consequences for insubordination, and the police will be notified. A search conducted by a school official is "justified at its inception" when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that a student has violated either the law or the rules of the school.

#### **Police Interrogations**

The school has legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school principal or designee will be present. The



student's parent or guardian will be contacted by school administration so the parent/guardian can be present and/or give permission to proceed with the interrogation.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. However, students eligible for special education are entitled to certain additional protections under state and federal law. Students eligible for special education who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten (10) school days per school year, to the extent that such removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability. Any time school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten (10) school days in a school year, this constitutes a "change of placement" and invokes certain procedural rights including but not limited to a review by the IEP Team of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is referred to as a Manifestation Determination. If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability the student's Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior intervention plan, provided that such an assessment was not already conducted before the behavior occurred. In the situation where an assessment was already conducted and a behavior intervention plan is already in place, the Team will review the plan and revise it accordingly. The student will also be returned to his or her educational placement unless the parent/guardian and the school agree otherwise. If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be removed from his or her educational placement to the same extent that a regular education student would be removed, provided that the special education student must continue to receive educational services to enable the child to continue to receive his or her special education services in order to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP. Additionally, the student should receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan to prevent the behavior from happening again.

### **Discipline of Students on 504 Plans**

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten (10) consecutive school days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for eligible 504 students are the same as those afforded to special education students.

### **Student Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting**

The District shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding in-school suspensions, short-term and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

The principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the principal shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The principal shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, or in-school or out-of-school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

### **PowerSchool Parent Portal**

Parents/Guardians may track their child's academic progress from any location that has internet access. If parents/guardians do not have internet access, the public library has computers available to access your child's records. Please keep your passwords confidential so only you can access the information. The Grades and Attendance tab will allow you to check assignments and scores by clicking on the blue percentage across from a class. To email the teacher a question or concern, please click the blue teacher's name link. The Grades History tab will show you the grades your child received in previous grading periods. The Teacher Comments tab is used to access current teacher comments for your student, and the School Bulletin tab has current announcements for our school. PowerSchool for Parents and PowerSchool for Students apps are now available for download from the Apple iTunes

App Store and the Google Play Store. These apps provide real-time access to attendance, grades, assignments, scores and more to users with an Apple iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad running iOS version 4.0 or later or an Android device. Westfield Public Schools values your privacy and will never share your data with any third parties. If you have any questions regarding the use of PowerSchool, please refer to the PowerSchool User Guide for Parents located on the district's webpage at <https://westfieldpubma.sites.thrillshare.com/o/wms>

### **Cancellation of School**

There may be days when schools will be delayed or closed because of inclement weather or hazardous driving conditions. Families who subscribe to the Westfield Public Schools' automated telephone service School Messenger will be notified by a phone call. School delays and closings are also announced on radio stations WNNZ (AM-640), WHYN (FM-93.1), WACE (AM-730), WMAS (FM-94.7/AM-1450), WTIC (FM-1080), WPIX (FM-97.9), and WAQY (FM-102), as well as on TV Channels 22 and 40 and on the Community Access Cable Channel 15. During periods of potential and actual storms, the school administration is in contact with all relevant public safety and municipal agencies. The decision to close or not close school is made as early as possible, in order to cancel all school transportation and lunch programs and to notify the media, traffic, and school personnel. On occasion, it may be wiser to have a two-hour delayed opening of school instead of closing for the full day. On these days, the starting time for Westfield Middle School will be 10:00 a.m., and bus students will board buses two hours later than their normal schedule. Dismissal will be at the normal time. There may also be weather conditions that would necessitate the closing of school during normal school hours. Every child should know what to do and where to go in case of an early dismissal. If there is school during bad weather, the final decision concerning school attendance must rest with the individual parent. Announcements of bus breakdowns or other delays will be broadcast on the same outlets whenever possible.

## SECTION II - DISTRICT POLICIES

The District Section is composed of district-wide policies. If any provisions of Section 1 are in conflict with Section 2, district policy shall prevail. To view the complete School Committee Policy manual visit our website: <https://www.schoolsofwestfield.org/page/policy-manual>

### Section A: Foundations and Basic Commitments

Provides a repository statements related to the district's legal role in providing public education and the underlying principles on which the district.

### Section B: School Board Governance & Operations

Provides a repository for statements about the school board—how it is elected, organized; how it conducts its meetings and operates. This section includes bylaws and policies establishing the board's internal operating procedures.

### Section C: **General School Administration**

Provides a repository for statements about the school district management, the administrative structure, and school building and department administration. It also is the location for personnel policies that pertain to one individual – the superintendent.

### Section D: **Fiscal Management**

Provides a repository for statements concerning fiscal affairs and the management of district funds. Statements relating to the financing of school construction, however, are filed in the F Section: Facilities Development Section.

### Section E: **Support Services**

Provides a repository for statement on non-instructional services and programs, including most of those that fall in the area of business management such as safety, buildings and their management (not construction), transportation, and food services.

### Section F: **Facilities Development**

Provides a repository for statements on school construction, remodeling and modernizing, temporary facilities, and facilities retirement plans.

### Section G: **Personnel**

Section G provides a repository for personnel policies. This section has three main subdivisions: subsection GB presents policy topics that pertain to professional personnel, including administrators, who must hold educational certification by the state to serve in their positions; subsection GD is for policies pertaining to all other personnel.

### Section H: **Negotiations**

Section H provides a repository for statements pertaining to the process of negotiating with staff units recognized by the school committee.

### Section I: **Instruction**

Section I provides a repository for statements on the instructional programs: basic programs, special programs, activities programs, instructional resources, and academic achievement.

### Section J: **Student**

Section J provides a repository for statements concerning students - admissions, attendance, rights and responsibilities, conduct, discipline, health and welfare services. However, all policies pertaining to the curriculum, instruction of students and extracurricular programs are filed in the I (Instruction) Section.

### Section K: School - Community Relations

Section provides a repository for statements on relations with the general public and with other community and public agencies except other educational agencies or groups.

### Section L: **Education Agency Relations**

Provides a repository for statements which concern the district's relationship with other education agencies – other school districts, regional or service districts, private schools, colleges and universities, educational research organizations, and state and national education agencies.

## Summary of Westfield Public Schools Safety Policies

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Emergency Evacuation Procedures

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

### Visitors and Parking

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

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

## Summer Reading

The Westfield Public Schools remain committed to the improvement of reading, a primary component of the learning process. The goals of summer reading are to reinforce the habit of reading to gain knowledge, to exercise the brain, and to provide entertainment. ~~for pleasure, enrichment and gathering information.~~ Research indicates that the more students read or listen to books, the more they will develop as readers. ~~the better they will read.~~ ~~Research also indicates that~~ Students who do not read regularly throughout the summer lose reading skills that must be rebuilt once school begins again. Our expectation is that every student will read over the summer. ~~Please refer to the Westfield Public School district webpage at under Students for detailed information about summer reading.~~ If you have specific questions about summer reading, please contact your child's school.

## Teacher Mailboxes

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

## Cancellation of School

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

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

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

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

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

If you do not want the Westfield Public Schools to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your child's school principal in writing by **September 14, 2023**. The Westfield Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information.

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

SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2023-2024

August 25	New Teacher Orientation Day
August 28 & 29	Staff Development Days
August 30	Schools open for grades 1-12
September 4	Labor Day Holiday/No School
September 6	First Day of Kindergarten & Fort Meadow Early Childhood Center
Preschool	
October 9	Columbus Day Holiday/No School
October 25	Early Release Day for Elementary Students Full Day for Secondary Students Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences
November 7	Staff Development Day/No School for Students
November 10	for November 11 Veterans Day/No School
November 22,23,24	Thanksgiving Recess/No School
December 25-29	Holiday Recess/No School (schools reopen January 2, 2024)
January 15	Martin Luther King Day Holiday/No School
February 7	Early Release Day for Elementary Students Full Day for Secondary Students Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences
February 19-23	Winter Vacation/No School
March 8	Staff Development Day/No School
March 29	Good Friday/No School
April 15-19	Spring Vacation/No School
May 27	Memorial Day Holiday/No School
June 6	Westfield Technical Academy graduation ceremony
June 7	Westfield High School graduation ceremony
June 21	Last Day of School - early release for students

\*Includes 5 emergency closing days.

A day will be deducted from calendar for every emergency closing day not used

\*\*Last day will be June 13 (if no emergency closing days are used)

## Support Resources and Hotlines

### Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Dilmira Liquori, Police Department: 562-5411 extension 5

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

New Beginnings: 562-5739 counseling and information

Safe Link 24-hours 877-785-2020

### Psychiatric Services

Westfield Crisis Intervention Program: 568-6386 24-hour service for psychiatric crisis and suicidal behavior

Individual, group and family counseling for youth and families:

The Carson Center: 572-4132

James Levine and Association: 534-7400

MSPCC, Holyoke: 532-9466

Child and Family Services, West Springfield: 737-4718

Agawam Counseling Center: 786-6410

### Substance Abuse Services

MASS Substance Abuse Information Helpline: 800-327-5050

Providence Hospital, Holyoke

Clinical Assessment Center for outpatient services: 539-2973

Clinical Assessment Center for inpatient services: 539-2981

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

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting schedule: [www.westernmassaa.org](http://www.westernmassaa.org) or listed in your local paper

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

### Hotlines and Other Support Services

United Way: 737-2691

AIDS information and support: 800-235-2331

Missing children: 800-843-5678

National Runaway Switchboard (24 hours): 800-RUNAWAY

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

Parental Stress Line: 800-632-8188

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