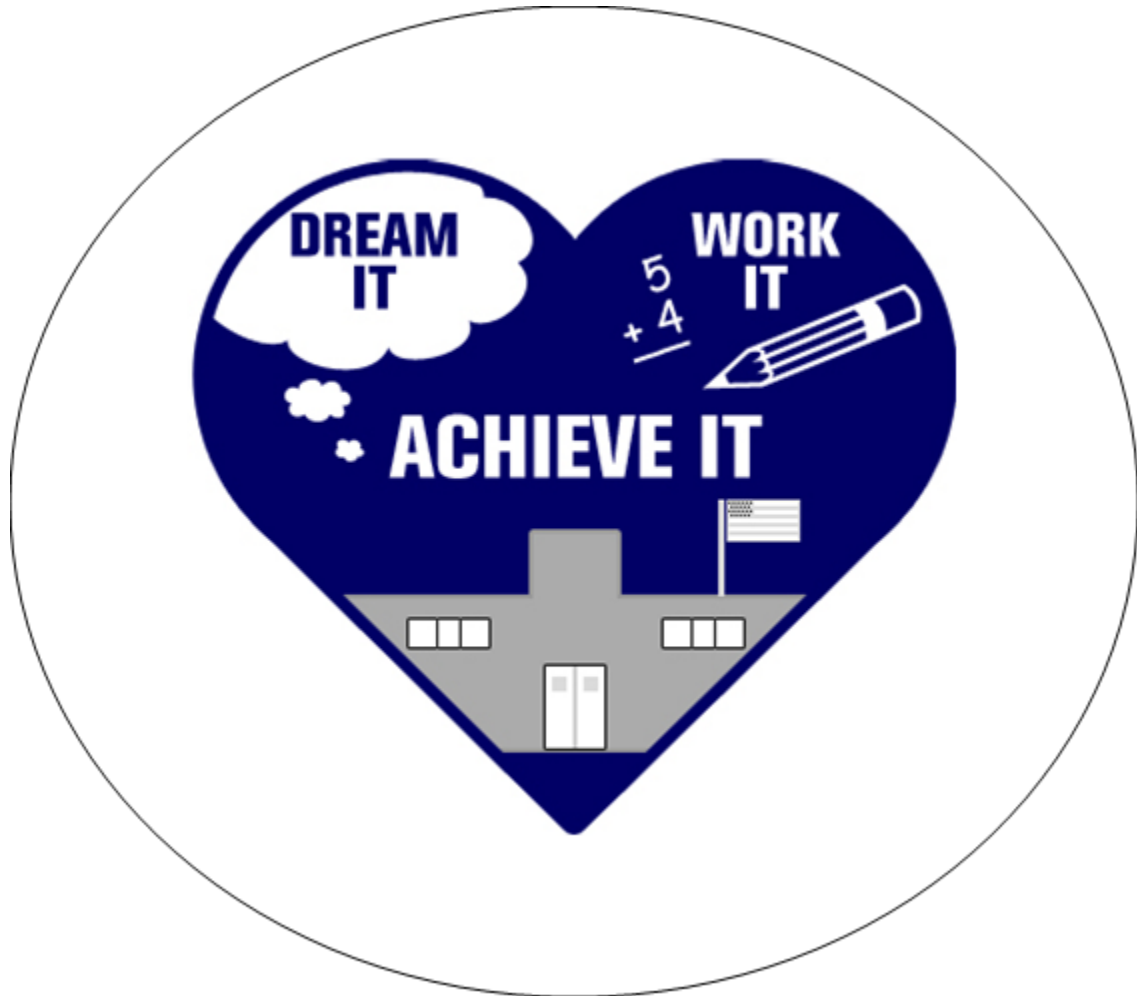


# POLK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



## 2023-2024 Student Handbook

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Oakville, CT 06779

Phone: 860-945-4840

Fax: 860-945-7113

<https://www.watertownps.org/o/polk-elementary-school>

**DISCLAIMER:** *Policies and procedures outlined in the 2023-2024 Parent Student Handbook are subject to change at any time due to state mandates, CDC guidelines, and district policy as they relate to the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

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## **PREFACE**

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents/guardians regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice. Consult the district's website or the individual school's website for any significant changes.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents/guardians. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather as "the student," "students," or "children." Likewise, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents/guardians need to be familiar with the District's Student Code of Conduct and School Safety and Security plans which are intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

## WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Watertown School District, with determination to be a world-class educational leader and a centerpiece of a dynamic and growing community, is to meet the diverse needs of each student- academic, artistic, athletic, emotional, ethical, social, and technological- to develop members of our community who embrace life-long learning and are caring and responsible citizens.

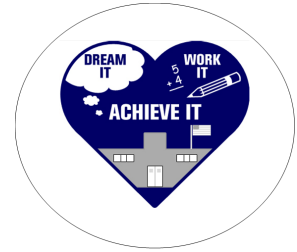


This will be accomplished by:

- Establishing high expectations for all students;
- Partnering with parents and the community as a whole;
- Providing the differentiated instruction, guidance and resources necessary to achieve these high expectations set forth for our students, staff and community.

## POLK SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Polk School community provides a nurturing and engaging learning environment dedicated to meeting the diverse needs of every child. Polk School is committed to developing respectful, responsible, and caring students who strive for excellence in all areas.



### *Safety, Respect, Responsibility*

Everyone has the right to learn in a **SAFE** environment. Please be courteous.

Be **RESPECTFUL** to adults and to your classmates.

Be **RESPONSIBLE** for your actions and words to care for yourself and your personal property, others and our school.

**WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONTACT INFORMATION:**<https://www.watertownps.org/>

Dr. Alison Villanueva	Superintendent	(860) 945-4801
Ms. Marie Kashuba	Business Manager	(860) 945-4805
Mrs. Lisa Fekete	Director of Operations	(860) 945-4812
Ms. Perri Murdica	Director of Student Services	(860) 945-4808
Ms. Emily Doering	Food Service Director	(860) 945-5010
Mr. Mike Dalton	Director of Technology	(860) 945-5097
Mr. Luigi Velardi	Director of Facilities	(860) 945-4816
Mrs. Michele Pennella	First Student Bus	(860) 274-5212

**POLK SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION:**<https://www.watertownps.org/o/polk-elementary-school>

Jennifer L. Galik	Principal	(860) 945-4840
Kimberly Keil	Dean/Social Worker	(860) 945-5169
Lori Lampron	Head Secretary	(860) 945-4840
Kaitlin Izzi	Special Education Secretary	(860) 945-4840
Georgianna Karlak	Nurse	(860) 945-5128
Steve St. Mary	Head Custodian	(860) 945-5161
Shirley Barkauskas	Cafeteria Manager	(860) 945-5129
Mrs. Michele Pennella	First Student Bus	(860) 274-5212

\*Polk Staff can be reached by phone through the school office (860) 945-4840 or via email.

\*Staff email addresses are patterned the same way:

- Full Last Name
- First Two Initials of First Name
- @watertownps.org

( For example, you would reach Jennifer Galik, Principal of Polk School, through this email address: galikje@watertownps.org)

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY and NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such a basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law.

The Director of Special Education and Pupil Services is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

District schools recognize and accept the need to prepare students to live and work productively in an increasingly diverse society. This is an integral part of the school system's commitment to offer an educational program of excellence, which includes teaching students awareness and understanding of the diverse cultures and heritages that form our society.

The school will not tolerate student behavior which insults, degrades or stereotypes any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical or mental condition or ethnic group.

## **ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS**

### Work Ethic

Students at Polk are expected to do their personal best each day, including classwork and homework. All assignments should be on time and reflect significant effort.

### Homework

Our students work hard. They show perseverance, resilience, and determination while attending school. We see and appreciate their mental efforts and energy each and every day. We also believe that after school time is for students to be with their families and become well-rounded citizens by participating in extracurricular activities. This is not to say that homework is not important, however we want to prioritize our time together.

With this said, there may be times when homework is necessary to continue the learning being done at school or to practice and reinforce skills. When homework occurs, it will be given with a due date that is rarely the next day. Time management is a skill that will serve our students well in their lives and the sooner they are able to learn and hone this skill, the more successful they will be.

Additionally, students should read on a nightly basis as research shows that the more children read, the better readers they become! While sometimes reading will be assigned, students should also read for pleasure to enhance their learning and explore interests.

If homework appears to be too difficult for the student and an excessive amount of time is being spent on homework assignments, the classroom teacher should be notified immediately.

### Forgotten Materials

During the course of the year children may forget items necessary for school (i.e. sneakers, lunches, homework, musical instruments). In order to maximize classroom time and focus, children may call home for forgotten items in the morning before announcements using the phone in the main office. Should a child forget an item and a family member brings it to school, they are to bring it to the office. Items should contain the child's full name and classroom teacher.

In the event that a student has forgotten lunch and no lunch is dropped off, children will receive a school lunch from the cafeteria.

### Make Up Work Requests

If your child is going to be absent for an extended length of time due to illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, and an emergency or other legal or exceptional circumstance, arrangements for make-up work should be made with the teacher(s). Teachers are to be given at least 48 hours' notice to prepare work. Students are expected to complete the work missed within a reasonable time period. Teachers are expected to assist the children in make-up work when necessary.

Teachers are not expected or required to prepare make-up work ahead of time for students who are missing school for an extended period of time due to vacations or other absences that are not due to illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, and an emergency or other legal or exceptional circumstance.

### Study Skills

Good study skills can help students to learn. Good study skills can become habits throughout life. The Watertown Public Schools are dedicated to improving students' demonstration of learning as reflected in student achievement and overall academic performance. It is our aim to foster the development of independence through self-motivation, self-discipline, and responsibility. With these goals in mind, parents' support and cooperation is essential. We value the partnership between home and school and appreciate open lines of communication.

## **ADMISSION/PLACEMENT**

Parents/guardians of preschool students who will be five (5) years of age by January 1, 2022 or earlier are expected to register their child for kindergarten. Parents/guardians of kindergarten- aged children who plan on holding their child back from entering kindergarten must contact their school's principal to complete a "Kindergarten Opt-Out Form".

A student seeking enrollment in Watertown Public Schools for the first time, or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student. After such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child. Nonresidents may attend school on a tuition basis provided space is available and at the discretion of the principal and/or superintendent. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law, and do not have a fixed residence, will be admitted pursuant to federal law.

Completion of immunization and health assessments are required prior to a child's attendance in school, but are not prerequisites for enrolling a child who resides in the District and is of appropriate age to attend school.

In order to determine a child's eligibility for ELL or bilingual programs, parents/guardians of all new students enrolling for the first term and all re-enrolling students who have not previously attended public school in Connecticut must complete a Home Language Survey. The student, after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

Parents of students attending District schools have the option to enroll their child(ren) in a magnet school with which the District is a nonparticipating district, if the magnet school has unused student capacity. The District will pay any tuition charge.

## **ADVERTISING**

Watertown Public Schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students.

District-prescribed standards shall be met.

## **AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensures support for individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate education (FAPE), and are accommodated and employed without discrimination related to their disabilities.

It is the intent of the District to provide a free and appropriate public education to each Section 504/ADA qualified and eligible student with a disability within its jurisdiction, as defined in 28 CFR, Parts 35 and 36, of the Amendments to Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II, and Title III.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities (both students and staff members) by school districts receiving federal assistance of any kind for any program or activity. Districts may not discriminate against any person with a disability, regardless of whether the program or activity after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

All individuals who are disabled or "handicapped" are protected under Section 504. However, individuals who have been determined to be "handicapped" under Section 504 may not be considered disabled under IDEA. IDEA, which can be viewed as a subcategory of Section 504, provides for special programming or placement, while Section 504 protects the rights of individuals with handicaps. Under IDEA, students are qualified for services under 13 IDEA disabling conditions; specially designed individual education programs are planned for each student by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams. Under Section 504, students with "handicaps" are entitled to special accommodations to ensure that they can participate in and benefit from public education and programs, and a 504 accommodation plan is designed for each student according to individual needs.

Section 504 is not an aspect of special education, but is, rather, a responsibility of the comprehensive general public education system. Unlike an eligibility system based on clinic categories of disabilities, Section 504 works on a more functional premise. Under 504 [29 U.S.C. & § 706(8)] a person is considered to have a disability if that person:

1. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
2. has a record of such an impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

While Section 504 provides a means for preventing discrimination against students with disabilities, this does not mean that 504 plans must focus on the disabling condition or on addressing the disability directly. Rather, 504 plans offer a means for focusing on students' strengths, for capitalizing on what students bring to the instruction process - not on what they lack.



Students with disabilities, pursuant to Section 504 and/or ADA will be provided a free appropriate public education which may include, but is not limited to, providing a structured learning environment; repeating and simplifying instructions about in-class and homework assignments; supplemented verbal instructions with visual instructions; adjusting class schedules, modifying test delivery; computer-assisted instructions; using modified textbooks and tailoring homework assignments.

Should you have any questions regarding Section 504, please call either your child's school Principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator- The Director of Special Education and Pupil Services for the Watertown Public School District.

Any eligible person, including any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability may submit a written complaint to the district's designated Section 504 Coordinator- the Director of Special Education and Pupil Services within 30 days of the alleged occurrence.

### **ANTI-RACISM**

The District rejects all forms of racism as destructive to the mission, vision, values and goals of this school system. All forms of racism must be eliminated from the District. Children must find school a safe and welcoming place, where they are able to achieve success, irrespective of their racial or ethnic background. Racism will not be tolerated in any form. The goal is to enable all students to thrive in a socially cohesive community within a positive, multi-cultural society.

### **ASBESTOS**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

### **ASSEMBLIES**

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or entertainment to the student community. A student's conduct in assemblies must meet the same standards as in the classroom.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Consistent and prompt attendance is of the utmost importance. Recognizing that absenteeism reflects negatively upon the quality of education received by students, the Board of Education has adopted the following policy.

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Students are required to attend school on a regular basis both in-person and/or virtually.

An absence means an excused absence or an unexcused absence.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent. If a child is absent from school for the day, he/she will not be able to participate in after-school or evening activities.

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the school between 7:30 A.M. and 9 A.M. on the day of the absence by telephoning the school.

**The parent is also required to send a written explanation to the school on the date of the student's return.** Parents should contact the principal in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10 percent of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team.

A student must remain in school until age 18, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 17.

### Reporting Absences

Please call Polk School at (860) 945-4840 between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM to report an absence each day your child is absent. If a call is not received, the school office will make two attempts to contact a student's family via an automated call. You will be requested to call the school to confirm the absence.

**It is important that upon returning to school the student brings a written note for an absence to be excused; otherwise, the student's absence will be considered as an unexcused absence.**

### Excused Absence

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" only if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials. This documentation must be sent to school within ten days after the student's return to school.
- B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absences and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
  1. Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence. (documentation required)
  2. Student observance of a religious holiday.
  3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
  4. Court appearances which are mandated. (documentation required)
  5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
  6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines.
  7. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.

**A phone call with no written follow-up to the Polk School Main Office will automatically be coded as an unexcused absence.**

### Unexcused Absence

Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences.

Absences which are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards when issued. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, secretaries, and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

### Chronic Absenteeism

A student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than ten percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child." Such students will be subject to review by the attendance review team and the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department of Education. The District will also collect and analyze data on student attendance, truancy, and chronic absenteeism for students with disabilities.

### Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students From School

Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians and school administration. In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian must send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Children of single-parent families will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. Arrangements should be made with the building administrator by the parent or guardian to pick up the student in the school office. No student may be released in the custody of any individual, not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list maintained by the school's principal as authorized to obtain the release of students.

If someone other than a parent/guardian picks up the student, the person appearing in the school office should bring a note of identification from the parent or guardian. The Board of Education does not condone/approve students leaving a school campus in third-party ride sharing vehicles; especially such service (Uber, Lyft) whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult.

### Tardiness

Please make every effort to have your child arrive at school by 8:50 am. A child's day starts in a much calmer and organized manner if he or she is not tardy. Students who are not in their homeroom/classroom by 8:50 A.M. are considered tardy and must report directly to the office. A student discovered on school grounds who has not signed in at the office will also be considered tardy.

If, however, your child is going to be late to school, a parent or guardian is required to walk their child to the main entrance of the school, ring the bell, and state their child's name and classroom teacher. Students will receive a late pass. Please do not leave students at the front door.

If your child is going to be more than a few minutes late, please notify the school office. If this notification is not received, parents may be contacted by the school stating that the child is absent.

Frequent tardiness will accumulate to be considered unexcused absences. Furthermore, chronic tardiness will be treated as truancy.

### Truancy

Truancy is defined by statute as absence(s) from school without the knowledge or approval of parents/guardians and/or school officials. A student aged five to eighteen inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant.

Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. School staff are mandated by the state to report excessive absences or patterns of concern.

Information about truancy will also be posted in the annual district report cards as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

### **AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS**

Watertown Public Schools uses an automated phone messaging system which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items, such as weather-related closures, issues of student safety and health, and threats of imminent danger. Parental consent will be sought when the messaging system will be used for other informational items.

### **BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS**

Students find it useful to carry book bags, duffel bags, and knapsacks. Students are allowed to carry/use these items to and from school only. Students do not need to carry all of their books and notebooks during the entire school day. Lockers should be used where available. Safety and comfort of both students and adults must be considered.

### **BICYCLES**

Students riding a bicycle to school are responsible to park and secure it properly at a designated area. For the best bicycle security, students should lock and chain the bicycle to one of the provided bicycle racks.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The members of the Watertown Board of Education are:

<i>Mr. Robert Makowski, Chairman</i>	<i>Ms. Elizabeth Lawton</i>
<i>Ms. Krista Palomba, Vice Chairwoman</i>	<i>Mr. Jason Malagutti</i>
<i>Ms. Karen Hosking, Secretary</i>	<i>Ms. Cathie Hillian</i>
<i>Ms. Christine Faressa</i>	<i>Ms. Cindy Phelan</i>
<i>Mr. John Gavallas</i>	

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Watertown Board of Education holds regular business meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Watertown High School Lecture Hall. Parents, students, and community members are encouraged to attend.

Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement or to express a viewpoint, not to exceed three (3) minutes in length. In addition, if they give advance notice to the Superintendent, individuals with relevant issues for discussion may have such issues placed on a future Board agenda for a more thorough discussion of the topic.

The Board's main purpose is policy setting designed to improve student learning. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

Board of Education policies are available on the district's website:

[Board of Education Policies \(https://www.watertownps.org/page/board-of-education-page\)](https://www.watertownps.org/page/board-of-education-page)

The policies are subject to modifications by the Board at any time.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
- B. places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or his or her property,
- C. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or a physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. (The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. Exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school ("cyberbullying")
7. Targeting of a student based on the student's actual or perceived "differentiating" characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on 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 the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting may be subject to disciplinary action if such bullying:

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victims,
2. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or

3. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school, are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

Students and/or their families may file a written report of conduct they consider bullying. Students may also make an informal complaint of conduct they consider bullying by verbal report to any school employee, who will promptly reduce the complaint to writing and forward it to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and action.

### **BULLYING POLICY**

(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5015](#))

Bullying behavior by any student in the Watertown Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. As provided by statute, such regulations shall:

(1) enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators and require that students to be notified annually of the process by which they may make such anonymous reports,

(2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying,

(3) require teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying to notify school administrators in writing,

(4) require school administrators to investigate any written reports and to review any anonymous reports (provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report),

(5) include a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by this policy, for school staff to deal with bullying,

(6) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying,



(7) require school administrators of each school to notify both the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed, and to invite them to attend at least one meeting,

(8) require each school within the district to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and within available appropriations, report such number annually to the Department of Education, in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education,

(9) direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline, and

(10) identify the appropriate school personnel responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint. Such personnel may include, but shall not be limited to, pupil services personnel. (Sec. 9-200)

### **COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy- [BOE Policy 5015](#) and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

#### *Formal/written complaints:*

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying.

#### *Informal/verbal complaints by students:*

Students may also make informal/verbal complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbally reporting to a teacher, administrator, or other professional employee.

#### *Anonymous complaints:*

Students and parents are permitted to make anonymous reports of bullying. Parent written reports and student anonymous reports will be investigated by the principal or her designee but no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Students who make complaints of bullying may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the staff member who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the principal or her designee shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that

maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and /or possible remedial action.

*Staff Responsibilities & Intervention Strategies:*

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the building principal and/or her designee in writing of the events observed, and shall promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed. Teachers and other school staff who receive student reports of suspected bullying shall promptly notify the building principal and/or her designee of such reports.

All reported acts of bullying will be thoroughly investigated and responded to in accordance with district guidelines. When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. (Sec. 9-200)

The principal or her designee is responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint. Parents/Guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying act and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such alleged act was directed will receive prompt notification that such investigation has begun. The results of the investigation will be provided no later than 48 hours after its completion, verbally and by electronic mail. Parents of students involved in a verified act of bullying will be invited to attend at least one meeting at school. The principal or her designee are required to receive mental health first aid training. The complaint procedure is also posted on the District's website and the school website. At Polk School, forms to report acts of bullying can be found in the main office.

**BUS CONDUCT**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation.

The primary objective of the bus transportation system is to provide safe bus transportation for the students of Watertown Public School System. Once a child boards the bus, he or she becomes the responsibility of the school district. This responsibility will end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. Good bus safety is the business of everyone, not just the driver. Courtesy and good manners are essential in achieving this objective.

To meet this objective, full cooperation in adhering to the following rules and regulations is necessary.

1. The driver of the bus is in full charge of the bus and its passengers until they are discharged.
2. All students are required to sit in their seats and face the front while the bus is in motion.

3. Students should refrain from loud talking or shouting. Reasonable conversation is permissible. Horseplay, profane language, shoving, throwing objects in, at, or about the bus is not permitted.
4. Students should assist in keeping the bus clean and orderly and shall refrain from damaging and/or defacing any equipment on the bus. Should this occur, parents of these students would be held liable for such damage.
5. After leaving the bus, students living on the opposite side of the road or highway will cross to the other side, in front of the bus, ONLY after being signaled to do so by the driver.
6. Any permanent change in a bus assignment requires the completion of the bus transportation form available in the office. The supervisor of the school bus transportation and/or Board's Policy Committee must approve this form before the change becomes effective. Even in these cases, drop off and pick up points other than the child's legal residence may be approved only when the address is within the child's school district or the school the child is attending.
7. Students will be permitted to carry items that can fit into a grocery size bag or backpack and can be placed on the student's lap. The item should not obstruct the view of the driver when scanning the overhead mirror. Musical instruments must be carried in a case or a bag. No electronic entertainment equipment, bats, or skateboards will be allowed on the bus. Balls must be contained in a bag.

Children are assigned to a bus at the beginning of each school year. Children may not ride any bus other than the one assigned to them without prior approval of the school principal.

#### Consequences for Violations of Bus Policy

In the event that a student misbehaves on a bus or endangers the safety of others, the bus driver may provide a logical consequence, such as an assigned seat. The driver may also submit a conduct report to the principal. Consequences will be issued based on offense. Administration reserves the right to take immediate measures necessary to preserve the health and safety of the other students riding the bus. This may include suspension from the bus.

When there is an incident on the bus, students are encouraged to immediately inform the bus driver, so he/she can investigate and handle the situation immediately. The bus driver may issue a consequence and/or write a conduct report that details the situation for the principal. It is often difficult for teachers or the principal to determine the facts of such incident hours or days after their occurrence.

#### **CAFETERIA**

Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or such other disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

The District participates in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the Food Service Director or the District/School website. The district must also provide parents with an application form. An explanation of the required notices and sample forms are available at: [Information/examples of Free/Reduced Lunch Forms](#).

Charging is not encouraged by the District but on those occasions that a student does not have money, they will be offered an alternate meal. Board of Education policy establishes the conditions under which students may charge a meal and the means of repayment.

In conformity with applicable law, necessary accommodations will be provided, where required, for students with food allergies, including emergency procedures to treat allergic reactions which may occur.

The District complies with the professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

It is the intent of the Board of Education that schools take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. Food and beverages offered for sale to students, whether in the cafeteria, school store, or vending machines will meet federal and state standards and guidelines. All sodas and sports drinks will not be available for sale.

## **CALENDAR**

The district calendar shows the beginning and ending dates of school, legal and local holidays, meeting days, number of teaching days, vacation periods and other pertinent dates. The board of education will establish a firm graduation date which is no earlier than the 180th day noted in the school calendar originally adopted by the board for the school year.

The District Calendar for the 2022-2023 School Year may be found here [District Calendar/Special Observances-2022-2023](#).

## **CELL PHONES**

To avoid disruptions to the school day, all cell phones must be turned off and remain in the student's backpack. Cell phones that are found not to be stored in a backpack are subject to confiscation. Parents/guardians may be contacted to pick up their child's cell phone.

## **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

If you should ever have a concern that involves your child, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases, that is the teacher. The proper channel of communication regarding instruction, discipline, or learning materials is:

1. Speak to the teacher or other professional who works with your child first.
2. If not resolved satisfactorily, go to the principal.
3. If not resolved, contact the Superintendent of Schools.
4. If not resolved, contact the Board of Education liaison for your building.

It is doubtful that you will need to proceed through all of these steps, since all members of the school staff are eager to work with you and your child. Please contact your child's teacher whenever you have a concern or question.

## **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM (Academic Dishonesty)**

Students are expected to pursue their school work with integrity and honesty. Cheating and plagiarism demonstrates a lack of integrity and character. That is inconsistent with District goals and values. All forms of cheating and plagiarism, including by electronic means, are not acceptable. The misrepresentation by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidents require disciplinary action. Consequences for cheating will take into account the grade level of the student and the severity of the misrepresentation.

## **CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT**

All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including school counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive training in their use, as required by state law.

Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

The Board of Education will post in each school the telephone number of the Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline, Careline, and the Internet web address that provides information about the Careline in a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

### **CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

The District collaborates with state and local child welfare agencies to ensure school stability for children in foster care. A child in foster care must remain in his/her school of origin if it is determined to be in the child's best interest. Transportation will be arranged as required. The District's Liaison for Homeless Students is the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services and is also the point of contact for the education of children in foster care.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Every effort will be made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Parents will have an opportunity to provide information relative to placement. The final decision for placement rests with the principal or his/her designee.

### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

The District utilizes computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for a computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that e-mail communications, using district computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff. Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property, or at a District sponsored activity unless the posting is approved by a teacher. The District will not be liable for information posted by students on social media websites, such as Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, YouTube, etc., when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment.

The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain

the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such material.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Board of Education is committed to aiding students and staff in creating a 21st Century learning environment. Therefore students (plus staff) will be permitted to access the District's wireless network with their personal devices during the school day. With teacher approval, students may use their own devices to access the Internet and collaborate with other students.

Students and parents/guardians participating in the Bring Your Own Device/Technology program must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all applicable Board policies, particularly the Computer Acceptable Use policy.

## **CONDUCT**

(Adopted from BOE [Policy 5120](#))

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. They must accept responsibility for misbehavior and engage with school staff to identify how a different choice of action could result in a better outcome. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

All students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents and all who enter our school are expected to treat each other with respect.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school related activities include:

- Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
- Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
- Being dressed appropriately.\*
- Showing respect toward others, engaging in civil discourse.
- Behaving in a responsible manner.
- Paying required fees and fines.
- Abiding by the code of conduct.
- Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.

- Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
- Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
2. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property.
3. Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
4. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students or staff.
5. Disobeying directives from school personnel or school policies, rules, and regulations.
6. Being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other school employees.
7. Playing with matches, fire, or committing arson.
8. Committing robbery or theft.
9. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students, or school employees.
10. Disobeying school rules on school buses.
11. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
12. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail; that is, forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
13. Name-calling, making ethnic or racial slurs or derogatory statements that may substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
14. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact disruptive to the school environment or disturbing to other students.
15. Assaulting a teacher, staff member or other individual.
16. Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs such as: marijuana; a controlled substance or drug; or an alcoholic beverage.
17. Possessing a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, martial arts weapon, or weapon facsimile.
18. Possessing prescription drugs which are given to a person other than to whom the drug is prescribed.
19. Smoking or using tobacco products, including electronic nicotine delivery systems (e-cigarettes) and vapor products.
20. Hazing, bullying



21. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.
22. Using electronic devices during the school day in school buildings, without prior approval of the principal.
23. Violating the district's Internet Safety policy and/or Online Social Networking Policy.
24. Cheating, plagiarizing, including by electronic means.
25. Threatening in any manner, including orally, in writing, or via electronic communication, a member of the school including any teacher, a member of the school administration or another employee, or a fellow student.
26. Taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing.
27. Violating any state or federal law which would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school or to school property.
28. Damaging in a willful manner school electronic equipment and/or software.

Students are urged to participate in efforts to build a positive school climate as well as alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as restorative circles or peer monitoring. All school rules are in effect during after school activities.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of publicized Board of Education policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In determining whether conduct is "seriously disruptive of the education process" for purposes of suspension and expulsion, the administration in cases of suspension, and the Board of Education or impartial hearing board, in matters of expulsion may consider, but consideration is not limited to (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school, (2) whether other students were involved, or whether there was gang involvement, (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon and whether any injuries occurred, and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

### Polk School Behavioral Expectations

At Polk School, we believe that clear, positive behavioral expectations are necessary to keep our students and staff members safe and to help our students stay focused on their academics. It is our hope to partner with families to maintain a safe and nurturing environment that enables all students to learn and grow.

At Polk, we strive for students to:

- Be accountable
- See cause/effect relationship with respect to behavioral choices

- Develop a strong “inner voice” that helps them decide what is “right”
- Learn to self-regulate
- Learn appropriate and/or replacement behaviors

### Positive Behavior Intervention and Support

We utilize restorative practices and implement a PBIS model. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) teaches behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject. PBIS consists of rules and routines developed and taught by school staff to prevent occurrences of problem behaviors. PBIS focuses on intervening before problem behavior occurs to minimize escalation. Educators work together to set clear expectations and create an atmosphere that ensures appropriate behavior by all students and staff. Emphasis is placed on Polk Staff to “catch” students exhibiting appropriate behaviors and provide recognition to these students through praise and other incentives.

However, when students do elect to make poor behavioral choices, the Polk staff handles such occurrences respectfully and fairly. Characteristics of our response to problem behaviors are as follows:

Polk staff:

- Is respectful to students and parents
- Provides logical consequences and/or points out the natural consequences directly related to the behavior
- Is restorative – we find the teachable moment
- Focuses on finding and addressing the root cause
- Remains calm and positive, not punishing/punitive

### Polk School Expectations

**P-** Practice mindfulness

**A-** Act respectfully

**W-** Work responsibly

**S-** Safety first

Through the PAWS program, students are taught schoolwide expectations and have opportunities to practice them. Staff members teach expected behaviors across all school settings. Positive student behavior is celebrated and rewarded in a variety of ways including rewards and special privileges.

*Bathroom Expectations*

<b>Practice Mindfulness</b>	<b>Act Respectfully</b>	<b>Work Responsibly</b>	<b>Safety First</b>
Make wise decisions using your Wizard Brain, not your Lizard Brain!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give others privacy</li> <li>• Put trash in the trash can</li> <li>• Keep the bathroom clean</li> <li>• Use your 6-inch voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go</li> <li>• Flush</li> <li>• Wash</li> <li>• Head straight back to class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk to and from the bathroom</li> <li>• Wash hands</li> <li>• Keep water in sink and toilet</li> </ul>

*Bus Expectations*

<b>Practice Mindfulness</b>	<b>Act Respectfully</b>	<b>Work Responsibly</b>	<b>Safety First</b>
Use Mindful Body-seated with your feet flat on floor, straight back, hands on lap, relaxed shoulders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to the bus driver</li> <li>• Use kind words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep track of your belongings</li> <li>• Set a good example</li> <li>• Make good choices</li> <li>• Ignore distractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain seated</li> <li>• Face forward</li> <li>• Keep aisle clear</li> <li>• Hands and feet to yourself</li> <li>• Use appropriate voice levels</li> </ul>

Cafeteria Expectations

<b>Practice Mindfulness</b>	<b>Act Respectfully</b>	<b>Work Responsibly</b>	<b>Safety First</b>
Use active listening strategies and practice them in conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait patiently for your turn in line</li> <li>• Listen to adult directions</li> <li>• Use kind words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave your table/space clean when you are finished</li> <li>• Remain in your seat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk at all times</li> <li>• Only eat the food you have</li> <li>• Use table talk voice at your seat</li> </ul>

Hallway Expectations

<b>Practice Mindfulness</b>	<b>Act Respectfully</b>	<b>Work Responsibly</b>	<b>Safety First</b>
Make wise decisions using your Wizard Brain, not your Lizard Brain!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain quiet</li> <li>• Keep hallways clean</li> <li>• Admire student work without touching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go directly where you need to be</li> <li>• Return to class promptly</li> <li>• Listen to adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk forward</li> <li>• Stay to one side</li> <li>• Stay in line</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Recess Expectations

<b>Practice Mindfulness</b>	<b>Act Respectfully</b>	<b>Work Responsibly</b>	<b>Safety First</b>
Practice perspective taking- understanding something from someone else's point of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include others</li> <li>• Play by the rules</li> <li>• Use kind words</li> <li>• Be a good sport!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put equipment away when you are done</li> <li>• Use playground equipment the correct way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No running on the playscape</li> <li>• Go down the slide</li> <li>• Keep your hands and feet to yourself</li> </ul>

### Consequences for Breaking School Rules

If inappropriate behavior is observed, the classroom teacher may implement logical and appropriate consequences after any infraction which may include a loss of privileges, etc. A behavior plan, parent contact and/or support from other school personnel may be necessary.

At times, students may demonstrate inappropriate behaviors in other settings throughout the building such as in the hallways, cafeteria, bus line, or on the playground. To assist in these settings, a behavior referral form will be completed and submitted to the classroom teacher for action.

However, referral to the principal may be made at any time depending on the seriousness of the offense regardless of setting and number of offenses. The principal reserves the right to take disciplinary action, such as lunch detention, after school detention, loss of privileges or in-school or out of school suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

Students are urged to participate in efforts to build a positive school climate as well as alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as restorative circles or peer monitoring.

All school rules are in effect during after school activities. Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of publicized Board of Education policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In determining whether conduct is "seriously disruptive of the education process" for purposes of suspension and expulsion, the administration in cases of suspension, and the Board of Education or impartial hearing board, in matters of expulsion may consider, but consideration is not limited to (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school, (2) whether other students were involved, or whether there was gang involvement, (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon and whether any injuries occurred, and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

### Dangerous Weapons and Instruments

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons and facsimiles of weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as, appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school-activity will be expelled from school.

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission is at the discretion of the Board of Education (unless the Board has delegated authority for readmission decisions to the

Superintendent.) The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

### Dress Code

(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5125](#))

Student dress may be regulated and students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive to the educational process or contrary to law. Administrators will use reasonableness and discretion when determining the appropriateness of attire. The school staff will enforce the dress code in a consistent manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size. Enforcement of the dress code will be gender neutral.

Any school dress which impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g., uncleanliness, malodorousness, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption of the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or is libelous or inherently contains unreasonable potential to upset and hurt others is prohibited.

### Smoking

Students shall not possess nor smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes or vapor product devices on all school property both inside and outside, or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law. Smoking is prohibited in all school buildings and on all school grounds at all times.

### Substance Abuse

As stated in the conduct section of this handbook, the school prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities. Any student in violation of this will be subject to disciplinary action.

In addition to the prohibition pertaining to alcohol, drugs, tobacco and inhalants, the Board of Education prohibits the use of performance-enhancing drugs, including anabolic steroids and food supplements, including Creatine, by students involved in school-related athletics or any co-curricular or extracurricular school activity or program, other than use for a valid medical purpose as documented by a physician.

Substance abuse or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia including alcohol may indicate serious, underlying problems. Every effort will be made to offer student assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment to private or community agencies and aftercare support.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under federal laws.

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population and community in mind and with due consideration of the rights of students. However, consideration must be given to the fact that substance abuse is illegal and subject to criminal prosecution.

Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale or consumption of dangerous drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Students are encouraged to consult with teachers, administrators and other professional staff on substance abuse problems. A staff member who is contacted by a student regarding a drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person in accordance with state law. However, the student will be encouraged at the earliest appropriate time to seek help from parents or guardians.

In such cases, the decision to involve the parents/guardians will be arrived at jointly by the student and educator unless, in the judgment of the educator, the mental or physical health of the student is immediately and dangerously threatened by drug/alcohol use. If such danger is imminent, the parents/guardians and health officials will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken.

As required by statute, instruction will be provided regarding the "knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand and avoid the effects of alcohol, of nicotine, of tobacco, and of drugs."

### **COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS**

Teachers may be contacted either through voicemail or email. A staff directory is available on each school's website. Please allow teachers 24 hours, during the school week, to respond to your email /voicemail. Please be aware that District policy prevents teachers from discussing confidential information in an email correspondence.

Polk Staff can be reached by phone through the school office (860) 945-4840 or via email.

Staff email addresses are patterned the same way:

- Full Last Name
- First Two Initials of First Name
- @watertownps.org

For example, you would reach Jennifer Galik, Principal of Polk School, through this email address:

[galikje@watertownps.org](mailto:galikje@watertownps.org)

## **CORRIDOR BEHAVIOR**

In order to ensure student safety and that of others, students will keep to the right when passing in the corridors, adhere to the HANDS OFF policy, walk, move at a reasonable pace, not obstruct the passage of others, and use the doors on the right hand side. Students in the hallway during class time require a pass.

## **COVID-19/HEALTH EMERGENCY MEASURES**

In order to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of educational services to students on school property and a safe workplace, protocols adopted by the Board of Education, based on coordination with state and local health officials and the Connecticut State Department of Education will be followed during a declared health emergency.

The protocols include physical distancing, group cohorts, face masks, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, temperature screening, hand hygiene measures, identification of students exhibiting symptoms, and attention to ventilation. Transportation and food services will be modified as necessary.

Alternate means of educating students in the event of prolonged closings and/or extended absences will be implemented as necessary. The traditional class schedule and school calendar may be changed, as required, to include distance learning and a mix of in-person learning with distance learning.

The district/school will communicate with all involved via its website, press releases, written notices/fact sheets and the school notification system.

## **CYBERBULLYING**

The District's computer network and the Internet, and the personal electronic devices of students, whether accessed in or out of school, during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment. All forms of harassment over the Internet, commonly known as cyberbullying, are unacceptable, a violation of District policy and of the District's acceptable computer use policy and procedures. Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, such misuses of technology as harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material may be disguised or logged on as someone else.



Students and community members who believe they have been the victims of such misuses of technology as described, should not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the material should be printed and brought to the attention of the Safe School Climate Specialist, Principal, or Director of Technology. All reports of cyberbullying will be investigated by the Principal or her designee.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer, but brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be severely disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of school. Also, such conduct must be violative of a publicized school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, threats, or making a threat off school grounds, to harm a teacher or student.

Disciplinary action may include loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension or expulsion. A communicated threat or a hate crime will be reported to the police.

Students will be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior.

### **DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AEDS)/SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST**

Each school will have (1) one automatic external defibrillator (AED) and (2) school personnel trained in AED operation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The AED and trained personnel will be available during the school's normal operational hours, at school-sponsored athletic events and practices on school grounds and at school-sponsored events not taking place during normal school operational hours. The school also has an emergency action response plan addressing the use of trained school personnel to respond to individuals experiencing sudden cardiac arrest or similar life threatening emergencies. Coaches, as required by law, review before beginning his/her assignment the State's sudden cardiac awareness education plan. Parents of participating students will be provided with a copy of the State-adopted informed consent form authorizing their child to participate in the intramural or interscholastic athletics.

### **DISCIPLINE**

(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5120](#))

Discipline is teaching students to develop self-control and character. At Polk School, we establish a positive learning environment that promotes a sense of respectful, responsible, and safe behaviors. To support our efforts, we have established expectations and rules that promote a safe learning environment for our Polk School community.

A student who violates the district's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. Watertown Public School's disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as a restorative justice model, detention, removal from class, removal to an alternative education program, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates publicized board of education policy even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. The school district believes that exclusionary discipline practices (suspension, expulsion) limit students' access to classroom instruction and fail to improve student outcomes and school climate. These practices will be used as a last resort.

### Detention

A student may be required to stay outside of school hours on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until the students' parents have been notified of the reason for the detention (and can make arrangements for the student's transportation on the day(s) of the detention).

### Removal from Class

A teacher may remove a student from class when the student deliberately causes a serious disruption to the teaching and learning process within the classroom.

### Suspension

The administration may suspend a student for infraction of school rules. Suspension is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for not more than ten (10) consecutive days, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which suspension was imposed. Serious acts that endanger others or show blatant disregard for school rules will result in a suspension. During an in-school suspension the student will be removed from his classroom for the length of the suspension to a scheduled area. All class work and assignments will be completed by the student. Based on the severity of the violation, a student may be suspended out-of-school from one to ten days with the possibility of a review for expulsion with the Superintendent of Schools.

Students in Preschool through Grade 2, inclusive, may only receive in-school suspensions, unless, after an informal hearing, the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence that the students conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

However, no student shall be suspended without an informal hearing before the building principal or his/her designee at which time the student shall be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action

and given an opportunity to explain the situation, unless circumstances surrounding the incident require immediate removal. In such instances the informal hearing will be held during the suspension.

School administrators will determine, using state guidelines, whether the suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. Suspension from school will result in loss of extracurricular and social privileges during the period of suspension.

For any student suspended for the first time and who has never been expelled, the administration may shorten the length of or waive the suspension period if the student successfully completes an administration-specified program and meets any other administration-required conditions, which shall not incur an expense to the student or his/her parents.

### Expulsion

The principal may consider recommendation of expulsion in a case where he/she has cause to believe the student has engaged in conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity which endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive to the educational process or is in violation of a publicized Board policy, or conduct off school grounds which is seriously disruptive to the educational process and violation of publicized Board policy.

Suspension will be assigned for specific reasons and the principal must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the administration reasonably believes:

1. Was in possession on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity of a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, or firearm as defined in 18 US 921 as amended from time to time;
2. Off school grounds, possessed a firearm as defined in 18 US 921, in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 29-35, or possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 US 921, deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument or a martial arts weapon in commission of a crime; or
3. Was engaged on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution a controlled substance (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 21a-240(9)), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 21a-27 and 21a-778.

Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation. If the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that a student should or must be expelled, he or she shall forward his/her recommendation to the Board of Education so that the Board of Education can consider and act upon the recommendation.

Except in emergency situations, the Board of Education shall, prior to expelling the student, conduct a hearing.

Prior to an expulsion hearing, parents will be given notice of at least five (5) business days before such hearing. It will contain information about the legal rights of the student and parent and information concerning legal services that are provided free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services shall be provided to the student and his/her parent or guardian. An attorney or other advocate may represent any student subject to expulsion proceedings. The parent/guardian of the student has the right to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation, except that if an emergency exists, such hearings shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

The Board of Education may expel a student in grades 3 through 12 inclusive, from school privileges if, after a full hearing, the Board finds that the conduct of the student to be both (1) a violation of a Board policy; and (2) either seriously disrupts the educational process or endangers persons or property. Students who have been expelled for the first time may be eligible for an alternative educational program, as defined in accordance with State Board of Education standards.

Expulsion from school will result in the loss of all extra curricular and social privileges during the period of expulsion.

Students in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive are subject to mandatory expulsion for the possession and/or use of weapons, including martial arts weapons, or other dangerous instruments in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school sponsored activity for a calendar year. A student in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive, who offers illegal drugs for sale or distribution on or off school grounds is also cause for expulsion for a calendar year. The Board may modify the expulsion period on a case-by-case basis.

Whenever a student is expelled, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled will be included on the student's cumulative education record. The record will be expunged if the student graduates from high school and the expulsion was not for weapon possession and/or for the sale or distribution of illegal drugs.

If students expulsion is shortened or the expulsion period waived based upon the fact that the student was expelled for the first time, has never been suspended and successfully completed a Board specified program and/or met other conditions required by the Board, the notice of expulsion will be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school or, if the Board so chooses, at the time the student completes the Board specified program and meets other Board required conditions.

Expelled students, under age 16, will be offered an individualized learning plan as part of an alternative education. Students between ages 16 and 18 who are expelled, even for conduct that endangers others, will be offered an alternative educational opportunity if it is the student's first expulsion (PA 16-147). Once a student is admitted to an alternative educational placement, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed to govern the programming for the student during the period of expulsion.

A district student who has committed an expellable offense who seeks to return to a District school after having been in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for one year or more, in lieu of expulsion from the District, shall be permitted to return to the appropriate school setting within the District. Further, the District will not expel the student from any additional time for the offense(s).

### **DISTANCE LEARNING**

The District may provide distance learning options in the event schools must be closed due to an emergency health situation. Schools may operate remotely while continuing to provide meaningful instruction to students through the use of a variety of instructional resources.

To provide equitable instruction to all students, the District will ensure that all students have access to instructional materials and electronic devices.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communication. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

The principal or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate or position.
4. Does not promote profit making organizations.
5. Does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District has the right to impose neutral time, place and manner restrictions on the

dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not endorsed or sponsored by the District.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor or teacher. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbooks.

### **DISTRICT-PROVIDED PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICES**

All students will be provided with a DISTRICT DEVICE, unless they choose to use their own device. Parents and students must sign and agree to the student device sign-out sheet and guidelines provided by their school. Parents are financially responsible for damages, loss or theft of the device. Students leaving the District must return their devices, with accessories, on the day of departure.

### **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

In pursuit of the District's mission, we believe

- everyone in our school community will be learners
- all learners will be held accountable for their performance
- all learners have individual interests, needs and talents
- all learners will be physically and emotionally safe in the learning environment
- home, school and community will act as partners in the learning process

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES**

(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5150](#))

The school strives to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment while providing students with opportunities for reasonable access to cell phones and other electronic devices. This policy also recognizes the use of electronic devices for educational purposes with administrative permission or with teacher approval within the classroom. The possession and use of electronic devices within Watertown Public Schools is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of privileges.

Students are solely responsible for any electronic devices brought to school. Do not leave them unattended. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

Mobile devices such as cell phones, digital watches, or gaming devices are not allowed in classes, unless their use is part of the teacher's lesson plan. Teachers have discretion concerning how the devices may be used for learning. No recording, video or audio, or photographs may be taken in school unless it is part of a lesson and all appropriate privacy protections, such as contained in FERPA, are honored. The sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, emails or other material of a sexual

nature in electronic or any other form on cellphones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the school setting and will result in a police referral and a report made to the Department of Children and Families.

### **EMERGENCY MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

We try to avoid interrupting classroom learning to deliver messages to students. If there is an emergency where a student must be contacted, please contact the main office.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on local television (WVIT-TV30; WTNH-TV8) and radio stations (WWCO-1240 AM; WTIC-1080 AM; WZBG-97.3 FM).

Emergency closings will also be posted on the District's website: [Watertown Public Schools Website](#).

An automated phone call and email will be sent out to all families through Thrillshare, our District communication method.

The "No School" announcement for Watertown Public Schools will be made prior to 7:00 am. In addition to radio and television postings, the district communication system will be used as necessary to inform parents.

Typically, after-school activities are canceled when early dismissal occurs. In such cases, children will be sent home the way they are typically dismissed, unless the school office is notified via written notification or a phone call. Arrangements should be made between you and your child as to what they are to do, and where they are to go in the event of an early dismissal due to inclement weather.

### **ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ENGLISH LEARNERS)**

The number of students from non-English speaking backgrounds is increasing, including those with limited English proficiency. Such students will be identified, assessed and provided appropriate services.

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students/English Learners participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the English Learners program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

### **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

Students deserve a respectful learning environment in which their cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. The school learning and work environment is enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives, and the very presence of diverse participants.

### **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION**

A student may be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian. In addition, a student may be excused from participating in, or observing, animal dissections as part of classroom instruction upon a written request from the student's parent or guardian. The student must complete an alternate assignment determined by the school.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

#### *Clubs and Performing Groups*

Student clubs, performing groups, athletic teams and other extracurricular activities may establish rules of conduct for participants that may be stricter than those of students in general.

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups may establish standards of behavior, including consequences for misbehavior, that are stricter than those for students in general.

#### *Student Publications*

The official student newspaper provides an instructional device in the teaching of writing and other journalistic skills. It also provides a forum for the opinion of students, school staff and members of the community, as well as to serve the entire school by reporting school activities.

The newspaper advisor shall have the primary responsibility of reviewing each article prior to its publication. The school principal or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor may also review copy prior to its publication. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 72 hours\* after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for reasons listed in board policy.



## **FACILITIES**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place. After dismissal, and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the campus immediately.

## **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided without charge to students. A student is expected, however, to provide his or her own supplies of pencils, erasers, and notebooks. The student may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

1. Club dues.
2. Security deposits.
3. The materials for a class project that the student will keep.
4. Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
5. Voluntary purchases of pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, etc.
6. Student accident insurance.
7. Insurance on school-owned instruments, instrument rental and uniform maintenance.
8. Parking fees and student identification cards.
9. Fees for damaged library books and school-owned equipment.
10. Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra curricular activities.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. When a field trip is planned, children will be sent home with a form describing the trip and its cost. A permission slip will also be included. Please sign and return any necessary information to your child's teacher. Children who do not return the necessary paperwork will not be allowed to participate.

Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal. While on a trip, all students are considered to be "in" school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity. The Board of Education strongly encourages all transportation of students to be on buses or other transportation vehicles which conform to the requirements of law and regulations of the State Department of Education. The Board realizes that, on limited occasions, it may be more cost effective and/or responsive for school employees to transport small numbers of students in private automobiles.

The District does not endorse, sanction, sponsor or approve student travel to foreign countries by teacher-sponsored private trips/tours. Such programs are sponsored by outside agencies, not the Board of Education.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact the Principal to request confidential help.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Board of Education, on a quarterly basis, posts its current and projected expenditures and revenues on the district's website. Such a report is also shared with the town's legislative body or Board of Selectpersons.

### **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill will be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Such crisis response drills will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency. Such crisis response drills will incorporate the basic protocols of lockdown, evacuation, and shelter-in-place responses. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.

When the alarm sounds, students are to proceed along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given. Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials will evaluate and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills.

### **FIREARM SAFETY PROGRAM**

A firearm safety program may be offered to students in grades Kindergarten through Grade 12, utilizing a curriculum guide developed by the State Board of Education and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. Parents/Guardians may exempt their child from the program in its entirety or any portion thereof by written notification to the school.

### **FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS**

Watertown Public Schools recognize that students have a right to bring into our schools, in a judicious manner governed by regulations, items for posting that are not considered obscene, libelous, disruptive, vulgar, and are deemed by the Administration to be consistent with community standards. Further, no expressed idea will be suppressed because it is not shared by the majority. However,

expressions which involve false statements, disruptive or potentially dangerous content, the use of obscenities, and advocacy of violation of law or school regulations are unacceptable.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for students with food allergies and to support parents regarding food allergy management. A plan based upon guidelines promulgated by the State Department of Education will be implemented for each student for the management of students with life-threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease.

Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and an Emergency Care Plan (ECP) shall be developed and implemented for students identified with food allergies. Such students may also be eligible for accommodations and services under Section 504 and special education law.

The District's specific plan for managing students with life-threatening food allergies will be posted on the District website (and/or on the school's website.) A student with glycogen storage disease is permitted to have a parent/guardian or a person they so designate to provide food or dietary supplements on school grounds during the school day. A student with an allergic condition may retain possession of an EpiPen or similar device while receiving school transportation services.

## **FUNDRAISING**

(Adopted from [BOE Policy 5040](#))

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fundraising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the school principal at least two months before the event and approved by the Superintendent or designee.

Any food items sold as part of any fund-raising activity must meet the nutritional standards published by the Connecticut Department of Education. Beverage or foods not allowed for sale during regular school hours may be sold provided (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) the sale is at the location of such event, and (3) the food or beverage are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

All online fundraising activities are subject to administrative approval prior to the posting of any such fundraising solicitation. (Crowdfunding).

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED IDENTIFICATION**

Parents/guardians of identified students will be electronically notified with information pertaining to the identification process, district contact person, State Department of Education resources, and state associations providing support to such students.

## **GPS DEVICES**

Some disabled students may need the use of safety-oriented assistance technology, ("Angel Sense") for reasons of safety. A parent/guardian request for use of such a device will be processed through the IEP/PPT process or Section 504 process. The listening-in capability of the device must be disabled during school hours or at a school-sponsored event.

## **GREEN CLEANING PROGRAMS**

A green cleaning program to clean and maintain the school will be implemented by July 1, 2011. The program provides for the procurement and proper use of environmentally preferable cleaning products in the school. The cleaning products used meet standards approved by the Department of Administrative Services and minimize potential harmful effects on human health and the environment. Parents/Guardians may request a written copy of the District's policy pertaining to the green cleaning program and a written statement which includes the names and types of environmentally preferable cleaning products used in the school and where in the building they are applied; the schedule for applying the products; and the names of the school administrator or designee whom the parent/guardian or student may contact for more information.

*\*No parent, guardian, teacher, or staff member may bring into the school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect.*

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

The school's counseling department is committed to a program of comprehensive developmental services structured to anticipate and nurture the personal, social, career, and educational growth of all students as they pass through specific developmental stages. This complete program incorporates a school counseling curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and program management. Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. At Polk, we have one social worker and one school psychologist. The responsibilities of the social worker and school psychologist include helping students function more successfully within the school environment.

Our counseling staff will use a variety of methods to assist students in overcoming barriers to learning, to make strong connections with the educational opportunities in the school and to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy and supportive setting. Counseling is an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, educational or vocational. Counselors will listen and be open and honest with students. If

deemed necessary, minor students may be seen by school health professionals without parent notice or consent to ensure that the student is safe or is not a danger to others.

Referral for psychological and/or psychiatric assistance by other social services agencies within or outside the school may also be recommended.

Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parents/guardian's written consent.

### **HANDS-OFF POLICY**

Students must refrain from all physical contact that is potentially unsafe or distracting to the educational process. Unacceptable behavior includes "horsing around", just fooling around, poking, pushing, tripping, and/or jostling one another. The policy is HANDS-OFF. Students must also refrain from overt acts of affection. Violence will result in teacher/team and/or administrative consequences.

### **HARASSMENT STATEMENT**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any disability they may have. The District prohibits harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

A student who believes he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident to the school administration. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

### **HATE CRIMES**

The District is implementing a comprehensive hate prevention program based on the premise that prejudice and hate-motivated behavior are not acceptable in our schools. This program strives to promote a school climate in which racial, religious, ethnic, gender and other differences, as well as freedom of thought and expression are respected and appreciated.

## **HATE SPEECH**

The District denounces the use of words or images to harass individuals or groups based on gender, gender expression, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of identity. Hate speech is not tolerated in District schools and such speech, threat speech and harassment is prohibited. All speech that denigrates, disrespects, or misrepresents "types of people" must be challenged.

## **HAZING ACTIVITIES**

Students are prohibited from participating in any hazing activities. Hazing is any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student organization. Hazing, bullying, or abuse of students or staff will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in an act that injures, degrades, or disgraces another student or staff member, disrupts the educational process, or interferes with a student's opportunity to obtain an education shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school health office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information. Vision and hearing tests are administered to students in grades K, 1, 3, 4 and 5. Postural screening will be done in grades 5 and 7 for female students and grade 8 or 9 for male students. The results are provided to the parents. An annual written notification of when these screenings, at no cost to parents, will be provided. Parents wishing to have these screenings conducted by their private physician are required to report the screening results to the school nurse.

Parents are encouraged to have oral health assessments for their child(ren) prior to school enrollment, in grade 6 or 7, and in grade 9 or 10. Such assessment may be conducted by a dentist, dental hygienist, physician, physician assistant (PA) or an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) trained in conducting such assessments. The results are to be provided to the school district's designated representative (school nurse). (Note: The school district has the option to provide for such oral assessment, with parental consent, at no cost to parents/guardians.)

Parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. It is likewise important that parents notify the school nurse in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician. The school nurse is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

### Administration of Medication

Parents of students requiring medication during school should contact the school nurse. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the school nurse. All medication must be in the original container with proper labels.

In cases in which a student is able to self-administer medication, the parents or guardians must submit a signed statement that the medication must be taken during the school day and the student is capable of administering the medication. The statement must be accompanied by a physician's, dentist's or advanced practice registered nurse's statement indicating the necessity and naming the medication, the strength, and the prescribed dosage. It must specify the schedule on which it is to be taken and the details of administration. Such statements must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

A student with asthma or an allergic condition may carry an inhaler or an EpiPen or similar device in school at all times if he/she is under the care of a physician, physician assistant or advanced practical nurse and such practitioner certifies in writing that the child needs to keep an asthmatic inhaler or EpiPen at all times to ensure prompt treatment of the child's asthma or allergic condition and to protect the child against serious harm or death. A written authorization of the parent/guardian is required.

Any COVID-19 specific procedures for bringing and picking up student medication will be outlined in school communications directly from the school nurse.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified school employee," may administer epinephrine in a cartridge injector for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions but were not previously known to have serious allergies and therefore do not have prior written authorization of a parent/guardian or qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. Parents/guardians may submit in writing to the school nurse and school medical advisor that epinephrine shall not be administered to his/her child.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified/school employee," may administer anti-epileptic medication to a specific student with a medically diagnosed epileptic condition that requires prompt treatment in accordance with the student's individual seizure action plan. Written parental permission and written order from a physician is required.

A student with diabetes may test his/her own blood glucose levels if the student has written permission from his/her parents/guardian and a written order from a Connecticut licensed physician. The time or place of such testing shall not be restricted.

A school nurse or the principal will select a qualified school employee to, under certain conditions, give a glucagon injection to a student with diabetes who may require prompt treatment to protect him/her from serious harm or death. Written parental permission and written order from a physician are required.

School bus drivers are trained to administer epinephrine in a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction to a student who is in need of emergency care due to a medically diagnosed allergic reaction.

The District does not allow the ingestion of marijuana for palliative (medical) use in any school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, on or off school grounds.

### Allergies

It is important to notify the school nurse and staff if your child has an allergy to things such as bee stings, insect bites, foods, medication, or environmental substances. If emergency medication (ordered by a physician) is necessary, the nurse will store it.

We ask that all parents be sensitive to common childhood allergies. Although we are not a nut free school, some classrooms may be designated "nut free zones." If your child's classroom is nut free, you will be notified. It is imperative that all students in any of these classrooms not bring products with nuts into school for classroom snack.

Be advised that under no circumstances is a student allowed to eat on a school bus unless a medical condition substantiated with a physician's order warrants such activity.

**Note:** Due to latex allergies in school buildings, latex balloons, gloves, and other products are prohibited.

### Communicable/Infectious Diseases

Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such a condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.



### Disabilities

School districts will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

### Emergency Medical Treatment

Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency.

### Health Records

School nurses maintain health records using the Connecticut "Health Assessment and Record Form." These records are accessible to certified staff working with the child and to school health aides if permission is granted by the nurse or building administrator. Parents may request to inspect the health records of their child. Copies may be provided if requested. Original copies of the record are sent when a student transfers to another school in the state. If moving out-of-state, a copy will be forwarded. Health records are maintained for at least six years after the student graduates. The District will comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of protected health information.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education.

### Homebound

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of two weeks or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist or the Planning and Placement Team. Home instruction may also be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

### Homeless Students

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is the Director of Student Services. The District has reviewed its existing policies and regulations to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth. Homeless children and youths are defined as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence". Homeless children have the right to attend the school of origin "to the extent feasible," unless doing so is contrary to the request of such student's parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.

Any homeless child or youth denied school accommodations shall continue in attendance or will be immediately enrolled in the school selected by the child in the school district. A written explanation of the reasons for denial of school accommodations in a manner understandable to such homeless children or youth, or parent/guardian, will be provided. Information will also be provided regarding the right to appeal the decision of the denial of accommodations. The homeless child or youth is entitled to continue in attendance during all available appeals.

A homeless student who is not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian, shall have full access to his/her educational and medical records in the Board's possession.

### Illness/Accidents

If there is any question of your child not feeling well in the morning, please keep him/her at home. *If a child has an elevated temperature (100 degrees or greater), he or she should remain home until the temperature has returned to normal and is maintained at normal for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers such as Advil, Tylenol, or Ibuprofen. Children who are sent home by the nurse for illness and/or elevated temperature should remain at home an additional 24 hours to complete their recovery.*

All significant events such as orthopedic injuries, concussions, and surgery should be reported to the school nurse. A child will be able to resume physical education classes ONLY after a WRITTEN RELEASE from his/her doctor has been received by the school.

Any child with an ace bandage, immobilizer, sling, splint, brace, cast, crutches or wheelchairs should have a physician's written authorization due to safety concerns for school, field trips, bus, recess and gym. Parents requesting an indoor recess or any excuse from P.E. classes for their child must have a physician's note.

A parent's note is acceptable for one P.E. class/physical activity exemption due to a medical reason. A physician's note is required for missing any subsequent physical activity. A doctor's note is required for their return. If the doctor's written excuse states "until further notice," a second written note is required to return to Physical Education. All doctor's notes should state the nature and duration of restriction.

The school nurse will administer first aid if a child becomes ill or injured. No medications will be given without a physician's order. The parent will be contacted by the school nurse or office when necessary. If your child tells you that he or she received an injury at school and that it was not reported to the nurse, please inform the nurse as soon as possible.

Student medical appointments should be made outside of school hours, whenever possible, so as to avoid taking a child out of school.

### Immunizations

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Meningococcal, Pneumococcal, Rubella, Influenza and Haemophilus, Influenza Type B. Parents or guardians of any children unable to have the mandated immunizations prior to initial school entry and the boosters as required in the later grades may have the immunizations, on the recommendation of the Board of Education, be paid by the town.

In addition to the required immunizations for initial entry into school for kindergarten, regular and special education preschool programs, additional immunizations are required for entry into seventh grade and for entry into eighth grade and ninth or tenth grade. The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records. For further information regarding immunizations contact the nurse's office.

### Insurance

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangement is contractual between the parent and insurance carriers and Watertown Public Schools assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

HUSKY Health Insurance Policy – The State of Connecticut sponsors a health insurance program for children that covers basic health and welfare needs. The cost of this program is determined on a sliding scale tied to income guidelines. If your child is not covered by any type of health insurance coverage, you might be interested in looking into the details of the HUSKY Program. Please see the school nurse for further information or call 1-800 CT Husky.

### Physical Examinations

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a) Health assessment shall also be required in grade 6 (or 7) and in grade 9 (or 10). All students in grades K and grades 1, 3, 4, 5 will undergo vision screening by the school nurse or school health aide. Hearing screening will be conducted for all students in grades K, 1, 3, 4, and 5. Postural screening will be conducted for all female students in grades 5 and 7 and for male students in grade

8 or 9. If a homeless student, as defined by federal statute, lacks immunization/medical records, the school will enroll the child and refer the parent/guardian to the district's homeless liaison.

Physical forms are available on *Forms and Publications* on the Connecticut State Department of Education website : <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE>

**Quarantine Periods (Minimum Control)**

Chicken Pox	When the rash has completely crusted over. Reminder to parents to avoid ASA products. Notify parents who are immuno-suppressed of an exposure so that appropriate action may be taken.
Conjunctivitis	Can remain in school once any indicated therapy has been implemented. <i>No swimming.</i>
Covid 19	Based on health department guidance at time of diagnosis-most current guidance is 5 days
Coxsackie	All suspected cases to M.D. for diagnosis.
Diarrhea	Twenty-four hours after symptoms are resolved.
Fever	Twenty-four hours after return to normal temperature without the use of fever reducing medications.
Hepatitis	With written permission of M.D.
Impetigo	Twenty-four hours of treatment before returning to school. May be left uncovered. <i>No swimming.</i>
Measles	Four days after the appearance of rash.
Mumps	May return to school forty-eight hours after swelling of glands has subsided or nine days after symptoms began - whichever comes first.
Pediculosis Capitis (Lice)	Pediculicide per recommendation of the school medical advisor. Twenty-four hours at home to remove lice. Parents/guardians must accompany the child to school with treatment documentation and remain while the child is examined by the school nurse.
Pertussis	With written permission of a M.D. and no less than five days after the start of antibiotics.
Pinworms	Home until treated.
Ringworm	May return twenty-four hours after treatment began. May remain uncovered if under treatment.
Rubella	One week after the rash appears.
Scabies	Must contact M.D. for treatment and remain home twenty-four hours under RX.

Scarlet Fever	May return to school twenty-four after antibiotics started.
Shingles	No quarantine if the affected area is covered by clothing. If unable to cover (face, neck, possibly arms/legs), the person is excluded until lesions crusted over. Immunocompromised persons should also be excluded (regardless of site) until lesions have crusted over).
Strep Throat	May return to school twenty-four hours after starting antibiotics.
Tuberculosis	May return with note from M.D.
Vomiting	Twenty-four hours since the child last vomited.

Screenings

The school nurse conducts screenings of vision, hearing, and posture according to the following schedule. Referral letters will be sent to parents/guardians of students who fail the screening according to state guidelines.

1. Annual Vision screenings: all grades K-6 and 9
2. Audiometric screenings: all grades K-3, 5, and 8
3. Postural screenings: all grades 5-9
4. Color Vision screenings: Grade K and if not done previously upon entering Watertown Schools

**HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

The Holocaust and Genocide Education and Awareness are required subjects taught in the District's social studies curriculum (beginning in the 2018-2019 school year).

**HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals. Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student's work in school.

In order for homework to be an effective support for learning, the homework policy requires a partnership among the school system represented by the teacher, the student and their parents. Without this partnership in support of learning, students will not achieve their full potential.

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## **INTER-DISTRICT COLLABORATIVES**

Watertown Public Schools has established collaborations with other school districts in order to offer a wider variety of learning environments and specialized curriculum in response to the interests and needs of its students.

## **ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL**

In order to ensure student safety and the protection of personal property, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor closely those items that are brought or worn to school by students. The following items are specifically prohibited on school grounds: weapons, including martial arts (real or fake), knives, razor blades, sharp items, skate boards, roller skates, roller blades, sneakers with wheels, baseball bats, lacrosse sticks, matches, caps, fireworks, laser pointers and portable game systems.

## **LASER POINTERS**

Students are not permitted to possess or use laser pointers while on school property, while using District transportation, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property unless under a staff member's supervision and in the contest of instruction. Laser pointers will be confiscated and students will be disciplined.

## **LEGAL CUSTODY**

When a student's parents are separated or divorced, the issue of custody often becomes a matter of concern for the school. In order to protect the student's and the parent's rights, it is important that the school be given a photocopy of the custodial agreement. With this document in our files, we can follow the custodial agreement in releasing the student to their parents. In addition, school records will be released to either parent without this document.

## **LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE**

In the event of a critical emergency, all school personnel, including students, will follow the "Lock Down Procedures". Students will be informed of specific actions they should take when a Lock Down Procedure is put into effect. Lock down drills, like fire drills, will occur periodically during the school year.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Each year numerous articles of clothing are left at school. Many children cannot identify what they have lost. It is imperative that all clothing, including backpacks and lunch boxes, be labeled with a child's full name and grade. If items are lost, they will be placed in the lost and found box located in the cafeteria. Students should check frequently for missing items. Periodically, if articles are not claimed, they are donated to charity.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

Students are invited to use the books, magazines, newspapers, videos, and other materials, including computers, located in the library.. Students are responsible for any material they sign out. Materials must be returned to the librarian at the circulation desk. Students must pay for any materials they lose or damage. A student's grades, transcript or report card may be withheld until a student's obligation is met.

Guidelines have been established for the use of the Internet. Student violations of the guidelines can result in the termination of access privileges and in disciplinary actions. It is the policy of the Board of Education that all students must sign an acceptable use policy which indicates that a student agrees to use the Internet exclusively for educational purposes. Each contract must also include a signature from the student's parent/guardian. For more information see: [BOE Policy 5140](#))

## **LUNCH CHARGING**

Charging is not encouraged by the District, however, the District is committed to ensuring no student shall be deprived of a meal.

## **MAGNET SCHOOLS**

It is recognized that some students may benefit from attendance at a magnet school not limited by school district boundaries. District students may enroll directly into a magnet school, with which the District does not have a participation agreement, on a space available basis. The District will be responsible for any tuition for such enrollment, but not for transportation, unless the magnet school is within the boundaries of the school district. Tuition will not be paid by the district for students placed by their parents/guardians in a pre-school (PK) magnet program. Parents/Guardians are required, not later than two weeks following an enrollment lottery for an interdistrict magnet school, to notify the district of their child's enrollment or placement on a waiting list for enrollment in the coming school year.

## **MASCOTS/LOGOS**

The school district believes mascots/logos should reflect positive images embracing history, community spirit, and traditions. The selection of a mascot, team names, school colors, as well as other school identifiers must and will be respectful of diverse cultural values and reflect a positive school culture. All mascots, nicknames and descriptors, including symbols, banners, flags, pennants, mascots or other identifiers used by school's sports teams, extracurricular clubs, curricular clubs or organizations shall respect cultural differences and values. The use of any race or ethnic group as a mascot or nickname is prohibited.

### **MEDICAID BILLING FOR HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows certain health-related services provided under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to be covered by Medicaid. Such services could include audiologist services, evaluation and testing, nursing services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, psychological services and/or social work services. Recent Connecticut legislation requires the Board of Education to determine a child's Medicaid Services. The District is required to provide all IEP services, at no cost to parents, even if parent/guardians deny permission to bill Medicare.

### **MEDICAL (PALLIATIVE) USE OF MARIJUANA**

Connecticut law authorizes, under specific conditions and for identified illnesses, the medical use of marijuana for both adults and minors. However, such use is not permitted on the school campus or school buses.

### **MIGRANT STUDENTS**

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

### **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

Federal legislation requires schools selected to participate in this national testing program to notify parents of children who will be taking the test of their right to exclude their child. Parents also have the right to inspect all NAEP data, questions and assessment instruments.

### **OPEN HOUSE**

Open House is scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2022. More information will be sent home closer to the date.

### **OPIOID USE AND RELATED DISORDERS**

The District, as required, will provide instruction on opioid use and related disorders, as part of its program of instruction.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT**

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized board policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.



Examples of off-school conduct that may result in such discipline include but are not limited to:

1. Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including martial arts weapons;
2. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs;
3. Violent conduct;
4. Making of a bomb threat;
5. Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

### **PANDEMIC/EPIDEMIC EMERGENCIES**

A pandemic/epidemic outbreak is a serious threat that affects students, staff and the entire community. At all times, the health, safety and welfare of students will be of primary concern.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Connecticut Department of Public Health, and State Department of Education guidelines will be followed during an epidemic/pandemic. Such guidelines, followed by the District, will address potential school closures, quarantine, infection control, use of PPEs, social distancing, cleaning and disinfection of school facilities and the manner in which instruction will be provided.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference.

A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Conferences are held during school hours but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

Fall parent conferences will be held on November 8, 2022 from 8:00 am-12 pm, and 1:00pm-3:00pm and November 10, 2022 from 5:00pm -7:00pm. Spring conferences will take place on March 8, 2023 from 8:00am-12:00pm and 5:00pm-7:00pm and March 9, 2023 from 1:35 pm -3:35pm.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS**

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications, interactions and engagement. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the District's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher

conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at board of education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged.

### **PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**

The Board of Education has enhanced its student information system to include a parent portal via PowerSchool. The parent portal will allow a parent/guardian of students in grades Kindergarten to Grade 12 to access student records via a secure website. A parent/guardian will be able to view attendance, homework assignments, and grades.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Polk School has a very active and enthusiastic PTO. Our PTO provides parents and teachers an opportunity to work together to provide our children with programs and activities during the year to enhance their education. Every family is encouraged to join. Your involvement will not only benefit your child, but our entire school community.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm in the Polk School Library. Notices of meetings will be sent in advance.

Polk School PTO Officers:

President	Jen Grabel	<a href="mailto:Jgrabel11@yahoo.com">Jgrabel11@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Lauren Kellnhauser	<a href="mailto:Lakellnhauser@gmail.com">Lakellnhauser@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Matt Grabel	<a href="mailto:Mattgrabel@gmail.com">Mattgrabel@gmail.com</a>

The PTO can be contacted via email at [polkpto435@gmail.com](mailto:polkpto435@gmail.com)

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law (Schools without an integrated pest -management plan must send prior notice by mail.) . Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact Luigi Velardi, Director of Facilities.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

From time-to-time during the school year, school personnel and/or the media take photographs. If a parent/guardian does not want their child to be photographed for school use, school website use or for media purposes, the school office must be alerted in writing.

Each year, students are photographed for identification purposes and families are given the opportunity to purchase photographs. School pictures will be held in early September and make-ups will be offered. Notices will be sent out early in the fall with specific dates and further details of this event.

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

All students enrolled in elementary school shall have included in the regular school day, time devoted to physical exercise, of not less than 20 minutes in total. This requirement may be altered by a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) for a child requiring special education and related services or if the board of education permits an additional amount of time.

This daily period of physical activity for elementary school students can be a combination of planned physical education classes, recess, and/or teacher-directed classroom activities.

Students may not be required by school employees to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline during the school day. This restriction does not apply to brief periods of respite/time-outs, referrals to a building administrator, or for safety reasons. Students in elementary school may not be denied participating in recess or in other sustained opportunities for physical activity during classroom learning as a form of discipline. Loss of recess or other physically active learning opportunities may be permitted on an administratively approved case-by-case basis.

## **POSTERS**

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by the building principal. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed. Any student who posts such material without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## **PROMOTION, RETENTION AND PLACEMENT**

A student shall be promoted from one grade to the next on the basis of academic performance.

Student promotion is dependent on each student's mastery and acquisition of basic learning objectives. Normally, students will progress annually from grade to grade. Students who master objectives at an exceptional rate may be considered for acceleration to another grade or class.

Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate will be considered for retention. Retention and acceleration decisions are the responsibility of the teaching staff and principal, after prior notification and discussion with parents. The final decision rests with the school principal.

### **PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline up to and including arrest or civil prosecution as deemed appropriate.

In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Each student is assigned a (desk), (hall locker) and/or other equipment. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, and should be kept in good order and not abused.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the (main office) immediately if it isn't functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students (may/may not) bring in locks from home and attach to assigned lockers. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

### **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisors, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

## **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

The right of community members to register individual or group concerns about district instruction, programs, materials, operations and/or staff members is recognized. Complaints and grievances will be handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible. Complaints will be referred back through the proper administrative channels before investigation or action by the Board unless the complaint concerns Board actions or operations only. A procedure also exists for the placing and response to criticism or approval of instructional materials.

Specialized complaint procedures exist regarding identification, evaluation or educational placement of a student with a disability; loss of credit due to absences; discrimination on the basis of sex; harassment; sexual abuse or harassment; and instructional materials.

## **READING (REMEDIAL)**

The school will, in grades kindergarten through grade three, utilize State Department of Education developed or approved reading assessments to identify students reading below proficiency and to assist with the identification of students at risk for dyslexia.

## **RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

The District prohibits the covert recording of classroom activities. The recording of teachers or students in class is inherently disruptive to the educational process. Students violating this rule will be subject to discipline and confiscation of the electronic device.

## **RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS**

The school district acknowledges each individual's rights to follow or not to follow religious beliefs and practices, free from discriminatory or harassing behavior. The District strives to provide religious accommodations to students in an equitable and appropriate way in accordance with District policies and corresponding guidelines.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be shared electronically three times per year. Parents may view report cards via the Parent Portal on PowerSchool. Non-custodial parents/guardians who would like a copy of the report card should make a request to the main office and ensure the correct address is on file.

Grades given to students are determined by the teacher of the course, and the determination of the student's grade by the teacher, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistakes, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency, shall be final. Grades arrived at by a teacher will be considered final and will be changed only (1) by the teacher, with the consent of the principal after a re-evaluation of the student's work or (2) by an appeal made to the school principal and then to the superintendent or designee.

## **RIDESHARING SERVICES**

The Board of Education does not condone students leaving the school campus in third party ride sharing vehicles (e.g. Uber, Lyft) and will prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult.

## **SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

Information regarding drug and alcohol information and policy and regulations are available in the school office and on the district website.

## **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS**

Students should start early to establish records worthy of scholarship consideration. In general requirements for scholarship consideration are some combination of the following: serious attention to studies, good character, financial need and involvement in the activities of the school. Many scholarships and awards are available to qualified students.

## **SCHOOL ALTERNATIVES**

Connecticut schools offer a range of educational programs to meet the diverse needs and career aspirations of its students in a variety of settings, including comprehensive local schools, regional vocational-technical schools, vocational agriculture centers, charter schools and magnet schools. These programs serve to prepare students for college, the workplace, and active citizenship.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS**

Students will attend the school designated within the school boundary in which the student resides, except that in the best interests of the child the Superintendent, within his/her sole discretion, may approve a student's attending a school in another school attendance area.

## **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

Watertown Public Schools recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating

national holidays such as, but not limited to, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Presidents Day are encouraged. WPS reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others. See complete list of Special Observances acknowledgement by the District at [District Calendar/Special Observances \(pg.2\)](#).

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Nonparticipants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

### **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

School climate means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students' parents' and guardians' and school employees' experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

In order for teaching and learning to occur there must be a positive climate in which students are appreciative and accepting of individual differences and behave responsibly toward others. Students are encouraged to report bullying, discrimination or harassment to any faculty member or administrator and may request anonymity.

### **SCHOOL CLOSURE OR CANCELLATION OF CLASSES IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION**

In the event of the need to close schools and cancel classes for an extended period of time, as a result of a directive from the Governor's office and/or the federal government, the District will implement a program of instruction using computers and distance learning. Transportation to schools and school after-school activities will not be available. In addition, students receiving free breakfast

and/or lunch programs will continue to receive them. Pickup points or a means of delivery will be announced via the district's emergency notification system and through information posted on district and school websites.

In an extended period of school closure and cancellation of classes, many other items of importance will be brought to the attention of students and parents electronically and mainly through links provided on district and school websites.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS**

Interested persons may inspect "public district records" which are maintained at the office of the Superintendent of Schools, during normal hours of business. Copies of records, permitted by law to be disclosed, may also be attained.

**SCHOOL HOURS**

<b>School Day: 8:50am-3:15pm</b>	<b>Early Dismissal: 8:50 am-1:15pm</b>	<b>2 Hour Delay: 10:50 am- 3:15pm</b>	<b>3 Hour Delay: 11:50 am- 3:15pm</b>
<i>Parent Drop Off:</i> 8:35am - 8:50am  <i>Bus Drop Off:</i> 8:35 am - 8:45 am	<i>Parent Drop Off:</i> 8:35am - 8:50am  <i>Bus Drop Off:</i> 8:35 am - 8:45 am	<i>Parent Drop Off:</i> 10:35 am-10:50 am  <i>Bus Drop off:</i> 10:35 am-10:45 am	<i>Parent Drop Off:</i> 11:35 am-11:50 am  <i>Bus Drop off:</i> 11:35 am-11:45 am
<i>Homeroom:</i> 8:50am	<i>Homeroom:</i> 8:50am	<i>Homeroom:</i> 10:50am	<i>Homeroom:</i> 11:50am
<i>Dismissal Parent Pick Up &amp; Walkers:</i> 3:15pm  <i>Bus Pick Up:</i> 3:20pm	<i>Parent Pick Up &amp; Walkers:</i> 1:15pm  <i>Bus Pick Up:</i> 1:20pm	<i>Parent Pick Up &amp; Walkers:</i> 3:15pm  <i>Bus Pick Up:</i> 3:20pm	<i>Parent Pick Up &amp; Walkers:</i> 3:15pm  <i>Bus Pick Up:</i> 3:20pm

**Please Note:** Students may not come to school earlier than noted, as adult supervision does not begin until the student arrival times listed above.

**SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY**

Each school in the District will develop and implement a school security and safety plan based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Each school, as required by law, shall establish a school security and safety committee which will assist in the development and administration of the school's security and safety plan. Each district school will conduct a security and vulnerability assessment every two years and develop a school security and safety plan based upon the standards developed by DESPP.



The District has developed, and maintains, an emergency disaster preparedness and response plan for implementation as needed ("School Security and Safety Plan"). The plan is based upon the standards promulgated by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Development and implementation of the plan includes collaboration with local and state emergency responders, (law enforcement, fire department, emergency rescue squads and local public health administrators). The plan, representing an all hazards approach, utilizes the four recognized phases of crisis management: (1) mitigation/prevention, (2) preparedness, (3) response, (4) recovery.

Polk School is locked at all times and has an armed security guard on site. An intercom system with a buzzer is used to request entry into the building. The staff at Polk School believes that the safety of our environment is a primary responsibility of our school community.

### Emergency Contact Information

Emergency contact information must remain accurate and up-to-date. It is important for parents to contact the office immediately if there is a change in address, telephone number (home or work), childcare provider, or person to contact in case of emergency. Parents can either send changes to the school in writing or make changes through the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Accurate information is essential to ensure individual safety and to facilitate home/school communication. The information provided should contain the names of all people we may call in the event we cannot contact you in an emergency.

CHILDREN WILL BE RELEASED ONLY TO THOSE PERSONS LISTED AS EMERGENCY CONTACTS.

### **Emergency Drills**

Polk's All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan dictates several distinct responses to crisis situations, which are practiced at various points during the school year. They are as follows:

- Evacuation Procedures- used in situations that require immediate egress, such as a fire.
- Lock Out- used when there is a low risk situation happening within or outside of the building. The building will remain locked and students stay in classrooms, but continue to work as usual. Hallway movement is discouraged, but will be allowed on a case by case basis.
- Lockdown- used in situations where danger is clear and eminent inside and/or outside the school. All doors are locked and students gather away from exits and windows.

### **Reunification Procedures**

The information below details how students will be reunited with their families or guardians in the event of an evacuation from school.

Evacuation may need to occur in several ways:

- Evacuation to predetermined on-campus locations
- Evacuation to predetermined primary off-site location via walking
- Evacuation to predetermined primary off-site location via bus

In each of these situations, an initial, pre-recorded message will be sent to all Judson families. Within an hour, a second incident message will be sent containing more specific details should the situation warrant further procedures.

Teachers will be responsible for their own classes. Key persons, such as the principal and/or main office secretaries, will greet parents with class lists in hand to direct parents to the specific sign-out location for their child. Teachers will have sign-out sheets and student information sheets. They will dismiss students to parent pre-approved adults, as indicated on the students' information page.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities.

The District may use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used on lockers and vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. Drug-sniffing dogs will not be used to sniff

students. A locker, a vehicle, or an item in the classroom to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

### **SECLUSION/RESTRAINT/EXCLUSIONARY TIME OUT**

The use of restraint or seclusion will be used only by trained school staff as an emergency intervention only to prevent immediate or imminent injury to a student or others. Restraint or seclusion will not be used to discipline a student or because it is convenient or instead of a less restrictive alternative. Such use will also be constantly monitored by a school employee. When used, parents will be notified within 24 hours, but a reasonable attempt will be made to notify parents/guardians immediately after restraint or seclusion is initiated. Seclusion will not be used as a planned intervention in a student's behavioral intervention plan, IEP or 504 plan. Seclusion involves the involuntary confinement of a student in a room from which he/she is physically prevented from leaving. Physical restraint includes, among other things, carrying or forcibly moving a person from one location to another. Exclusionary time out is a temporary, continuously monitored separation of a student from an ongoing activity in a non-locked setting, for the purpose of calming such student or de-escalating such student's behavior. It may be used as a planned intervention. However, exclusionary time out may not be used as a form of discipline. For district policy on Seclusion, Restraint, and Exclusionary Time-Out, please click [here](#).

### **SERVICE ANIMALS**

The Board of Education, in compliance with state and federal laws, allows service animals to accompany persons with disabilities on the District campus. A service animal is usually a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. This does not include animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Students in grades K-12 may be involved in a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program which teaches students age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and how to report it. Parents/guardians may permit their child to opt out of the awareness program or any part of it by notifying the school in writing of such a request.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, includes, but is not limited to the following: (Give examples which are age appropriate.) Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, his/her

teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse, or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint. The administration will take action to investigate the allegations.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX Coordinator (the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services).

### **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

Watertown Public Schools believes children's social and emotional development are essential underpinnings/foundations to school readiness and academic success. Therefore, the District's educational program has included social and emotional learning and development to support the learning of skills needed to prepare students for careers, college and life. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. The key characteristics of the SEL program include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

The schools utilize resources and draw on the RULER approach to (1) increase the emotional intelligence of students, faculty and the community, and, (2) apply Positive Behavior Interventions and supports. RULER stands for the five skills of emotional intelligence: recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing and regulating emotion. RULER is an evidence-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools, developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

### **SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property or at District-sponsored activities unless the posting is approved by a District representative/teacher/staff member. Social media websites are websites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr and Twitter.

The District will not be liable for information/comments posted by students on social media websites when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment. For safety purposes, the District employs both Internet filters and firewalls.

The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be

and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The District provides special programs such as but not limited to bilingual, learning disabilities and for those with other disabilities which affect a student's success at school. A student or parent with questions about these programs should begin by contacting the building principal. The coordinator of each program is available to answer questions about eligibility requirements, programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. The District identifies students as talented and gifted.

The District utilizes the Response to Intervention (RTI) process which combines systematic assessment, decision-making and a multi-tiered delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students. Academic and behavioral support and targeted interventions will be provided for students who are not making academic progress at expected levels in the general curriculum. When students are experiencing difficulty with academics or behavior, every effort is made to provide support to help the child succeed within the regular classroom setting through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.

### *Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI)*

Despite high quality instruction, there are students who still require more adult assistance to learn, and SRBI (Scientific Research Based Interventions) is a way to provide support and more individualized instruction to children who may need it. We are fortunate to have tutors at Polk and a team of exceptional teachers, so we pool our resources to create what we call "WIN Time" (What I Need). This is a 30-minute block per day per grade level where some students are pulled together based on needs. Students may be working with a classroom teacher, reading intervention teacher, tutor, or partner during this time. The intent is focused intervention or assistance for those who need it, in addition to regular classroom instruction. The purpose of this time is not enrichment, however, as this occurs throughout the entire day. As such, some students may be continuing to work on assignments or reviewing skills from regular classroom instruction; new material is not presented at this time.

SRBI is not a pre-referral process to special education. It is a regular education initiative designed to meet the diverse needs of students in order to meet grade level expectations. It is important to note, however, that a student generally cannot qualify for special education without documentation of two or more rounds of SRBI with corresponding progress monitoring.

### Watertown's Early Intervention Team (EIT)

Each Watertown Public School has a team of school personnel who meet on a regular basis to discuss, review, and develop action plans for students with demonstrated needs. The team is composed of the building administrator, the nurse, a regular and special education teacher, the school's psychologist or social worker and other trained personnel. The goal of the EIT process is to promote early identification, assistance and alternatives to students whose problems are interfering with school performance.

### Special Education(referral, identification and placement)

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs.

Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The State Department of Education Guidelines for Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities mandates the use of SRBI for all students who are suspected of having a learning disability. Before being found eligible for special education and related services, these students must be provided with effective instruction and have their progress monitored carefully to determine whether their educational needs can be met in general education. Information obtained about a student's progress during tiered instruction can be very helpful in determining whether the student has a learning disability and whether the student would be better served with special education services. It is important to note that SRBI does not replace the special education process. If, at any time, parents/guardians believe their child has a disability that is affecting his or her learning, the parents/guardians have a right to request an evaluation for special education.

The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan, based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions. Parents have the right to have the school paraprofessional assigned to their child, if any, attend and participate in PPT meetings. Parents, as required by law, will be provided information at PPT meetings about their right to have advisors and paraprofessionals attend PPT meetings. A school must offer an IEP that is "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make appropriate progress in light of the child's circumstances." Every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.

## Support Staff

Polk School offers a continuum of services to students in need of academic, behavioral or emotional support. Staff in such roles are as follows :

- Classroom Paraprofessionals
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Reading Intervention Teacher
- School Nurse
- School Social Worker
- School Psychologist
- Special Education Teachers
- Title I Tutors

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES: DUE PROCESS**

A student or parent who has a complaint should first bring the matter to the appropriate teacher. If the outcome is not satisfactory, communication with the principal should be requested within 5 calendar days of the event or events causing the complaint. If the outcome of the communication with the principal is not satisfactory, a conference with the Superintendent or designee can be requested within 5 calendar days following the conference with the principal.

A student and/or parent with a complaint regarding possible discrimination on the basis of gender should contact the Director of Student Services. A complaint or concern regarding the placement of a student with disabilities concerning special education or programs and services should be discussed with the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services.

## **STUDENT DATA PRIVACY**

Connecticut legislation, PA 16-189, (C.G.S. 10-234bb (a)) An Act Concerning Student Data Privacy, as amended by PA 17-200 and PA 18-125, restricts how student information may be used by (1) entities that contract to provide educational software and electronic storage of student records ("contractors") and (2) operators of websites, online services or mobile applications (i.e., apps). Not later than five (5) business days after executing a contract with such contractors, the contract will be posted on the District's website. The notice will include a brief description of the content and the purpose of the contract and will state what student information, student records or student-generated content may be collected as a result of the contract. Student information will be deleted by operators of websites, online services, or mobile apps upon student, parent, guardian or board of education request. Such operators may not create student profiles for use in targeted advertising and for purposes unrelated to school. Parents and students will be notified of data

breaches. Students and parents/guardians will be notified not later than two business days upon notice of a breach of security by a contractor to the Board of Education.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee such as an administrator, teacher, support staff, Board of Education member, attorney, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on



a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requester has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requester has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office. One copy of student records are available at no cost. A fee no greater than \$0.50 per page, payable in advance, may be charged for additional copies. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge. (See policy 5025).

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

The District will release to the Parent Teacher Organization the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTO for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the

move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 5400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

The district's HIPAA Privacy Officer is the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services.

### **STUDENT SUNSCREEN USE**

[BOE Policy 5034/5034R](#) states The Watertown Board of Education (the "Board") permits the application of sunscreen by students within the Watertown Public Schools, in accordance with State law. Specifically, notwithstanding the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes § 10-212a and the Board's policy and/or administrative regulations concerning the administration of medication in school, any student who is six (6) years of age or older may possess and self-apply an over-the-counter sunscreen product while in school prior to engaging in any outdoor activity.

For a student to apply sunscreen prior to engaging in any outdoor activity, the following elements must be met:

1. The student's parent or guardian must sign the Board's written authorization and submit the authorization to the school nurse; and
2. The student and the student's parent or guardian, where applicable, must comply with any individual school procedures concerning the possession and self application of sunscreen in school. The Board authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee to develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Students are required to maintain high standards of behavior when being taught by a substitute teacher. Substitute teachers must be given the cooperation, courtesy and respect of all students. Misbehavior for a substitute teacher will result in teacher and office disciplinary action.

### **TARDY PROCEDURE**

If a student arrives after the start of the official starting time, he/she is to report directly to the office for check-in. All tardy arrivals will be considered unexcused unless accompanied by a doctor's note for illness and be signed by a parent.

## **TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Students shall not use electronic telecommunications devices, such as but not limited to, a remotely activated paging device, cellular telephone and related devices while on school property, on school transportation or while attending a school sponsored activity on or off school property. Items of this nature may be confiscated. Camera cellphones are not permitted to be used during the school day and in areas where there is an expectation of privacy.

## **TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested, as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications. To request this information, please contact the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

## **TESTING**

All students in grades 3 through 8 inclusive and grade 11 shall annually take a statewide mastery examination in reading, language arts and mathematics. Students in grades 5, 8 and 11 shall annually take a statewide mastery examination in science. Special education students participate in mastery testing programs except in the rare case when participation in an alternate assessment is detrimental to the student's IEP. All English learners are required to participate in all content areas of the state summative assessment.

## **TEXTBOOK CARE AND OBLIGATIONS**

Students are responsible for the care of books and supplies entrusted to their use. They will assess damage to textbooks, equipment or materials. In accordance with state law, the school reserves the right to withhold grades, transcripts, or report cards until the student pays for or returns the textbooks, library book or other educational materials.

## **TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES**

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

## **TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Parents/guardians of students withdrawing from school must notify the office at least one week in advance of the student's last day. At that time, they will be given forms to complete. Included will be a release of records form.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Notes must be sent in for all changes in transportation (i.e. staying for student council meetings, homework club, student pick up vs. riding bus, etc.). We cannot dismiss those students eligible to take the bus as pick up without written verification. Only in emergency situations should a parent call within the same school day to change the means of transportation.

### **Bus Routes**

Bus service is provided for all students who meet the guidelines for distance from school. The Watertown Board of Education contracts bus service through: First Student Bus Company-Michelle Pennella-(860) 274-5212. Children may not ride any bus other than the one assigned to them without prior approval of the building principal and bus company.

Students will be notified of their bus stop and times for pick-up and drop-off via the Parent Portal of PowerSchool prior to the start of school. Bus routes are printed in the Republican American and Town Times sometime in August. However, once they are available from the bus company, they can also be found on the district's website: [District Website-Transportation](#). Students and parents are asked to wait safely at their bus stop and abide by all protocols.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

A detailed description of arrival and dismissal procedures follows and a diagram can be found on page 86.

All students fall under one of the following categories for arrival and/or dismissal.

1. Bus Rider – students who meet the guidelines for distance from school and therefore qualify for district provided transportation. (Back Loop /Library or 4th/5th grade hall entrance – Buses enter and exit on Buckingham.) On Diagram #1 & #2
2. Walkers – students who do not meet the guidelines for distance from school and therefore do not qualify for district provided transportation. These students physically walk from home to school. Where students enter/exit the building depends on the main road they take to get to and from school - French Street Entrance or Front Entrance on Buckingham. Only those children designated as walkers by district zoning will be allowed to enter and exit from these areas. On Diagram #3 and #4 respectively
3. Pick Up/Drop Offs – students who get a ride to school, because the family opts to do so. These students may technically be Bus Riders or Walkers. (Front Entrance - cars enter from French Street and exit to Buckingham). Drivers must make a right turn only into the parking lot and a right turn only to exit Buckingham. #3 On Diagram

Please determine which category your child falls under and see the corresponding procedures below.

### Bus Riders

The Buckingham Street loop on the side of the building is closed to general traffic during student arrival (8:35-8:50) and student dismissal (3:15-3:30). Cars are prohibited from entering the loop (#1 and #2 on diagram) during these times.

Buses will be unloaded and loaded two at a time. Students will enter and exit through separate entry doors to reduce congestion in the hallways. All students will go directly to their classrooms upon arrival and will wait in their classrooms until their bus is called.

### Student Drop Off

For AM drop off, please enter the front loop via French Street. We ask that you make a right turn only into the loop to avoid crossing traffic. This intersection gets very busy and easily backed up and we hope this will alleviate that issue. Families may not park and walk their students in at arrival or park to pick their children up at dismissal. The loop must be used.

Pull as far forward as possible (to the end of the yellow fire lane marking) towards the staff member on duty.

Students should unload on the passenger side of the car closest to the school. Adults should not exit the car. Please say your goodbyes prior to pulling into the loop and ensure your child has everything ready to exit.

Once your child has exited the car, follow the cars in front of you to the stop sign. We also ask that cars make a right hand turn only out of the parking lot onto Buckingham Street to help with the flow of traffic.

All students will go directly to their classrooms upon arrival.

### Student Pick Up

For PM pick up, please enter the front loop via French Street. We ask that you make a right turn only into the loop to avoid crossing traffic. Families may not park and walk their students in at arrival or park to pick their children up at dismissal. The loop must be used.

Pull as far forward as possible (to the end of the yellow fire lane marking) and remain in your car. Please display the card with your child's name (once distributed) to assist the staff members on duty in identifying which student you are picking up. Please be prepared to show a photo ID. Your child will be brought out to your car.

### Walkers

If your child will be walking to/from school, see the attached diagram for entrance/exit doors. Please send a note to the office if your child has permission to walk home each day.

### Change in Normal Transportation

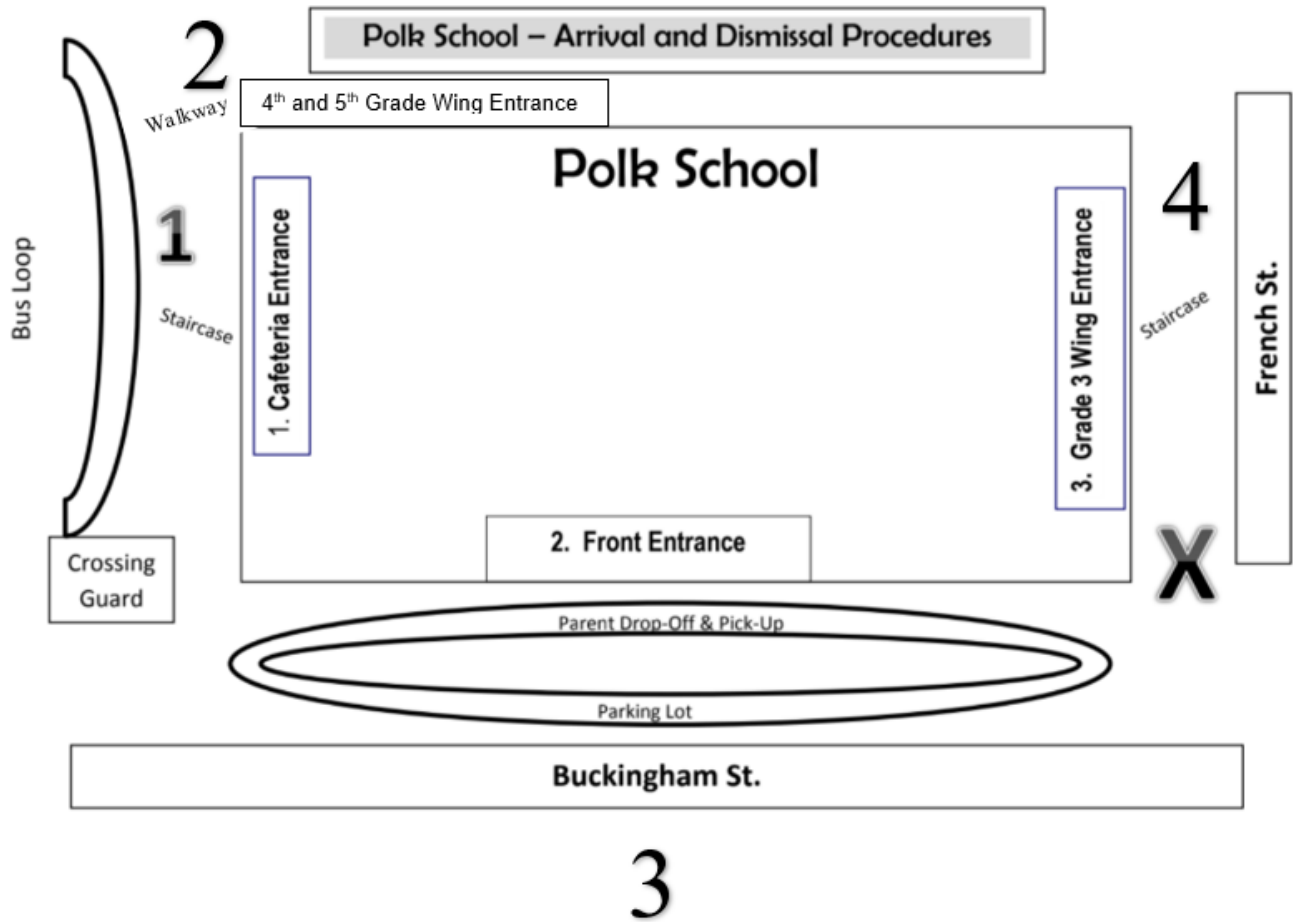
#### *Long-Term*

If your child is going to daycare or taking a bus to another destination other than home (or bus stop) he/she is assigned, a "Change in Normal Bus Transportation Form" must be completed and the change approved by the Board of Education in advance. A complete copy of the Transportation Guidelines can be obtained in the school office. All permission notes for children attending recreation programs should be on file in the school office at the beginning of the year. If an activity is to continue throughout the school year, one note on file is sufficient.

#### *Occasional*

When students need to change their normal means of transportation for a day or a few consecutive days, a parent must inform the school in writing. Only in emergency situations should a parent call within the same school day to change the means of transportation. Please notify the office of any changes. In the absence of a note, children will be dismissed from school in their usual manner at dismissal time.

Please write a note if you need to take your child out of school early. The office will notify the teacher and call for your child when you arrive at the school. Please be prepared to show identification at time of pickup. Arrangements for appointments should be taken care of in writing at least one day in advance. Please avoid early dismissals by making doctor and other appointments after school hours. This will allow your child to attend a full academic day.



1. LIBRARY ENTRANCE - This entrance/exit is for grade 3 bus riders only. Walkers (including Buckingham St. walkers) may not use this entrance during arrival and dismissal. Walkers that use Buckingham St. to travel to school should remain on the sidewalk, cross by the two crossing guards and enter through the front doors of the school.
2. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> GRADE WING ENTRANCE- This entrance/exit is for grade 4 and 5 bus riders only. A separate entrance will be used this year to minimize congestion in our hallways.
3. FRONT ENTRANCE - This entrance/exit is for student drop-off/pick up and for Buckingham St. walkers. Drivers should make a right into the parking lot from French St. and a right turn when exiting onto Buckingham St. to avoid congestion.
4. FRENCH ST/GRADE 3 WING ENTRANCE - This entrance/exit is for French St. walkers only. These are the students who travel to Polk using French St. Parents MUST NOT drop off from a vehicle on French Street. Students driven by parents MUST get into the loop in the front of the school (#2 on Diagram.)
- X. FRENCH ST - No drop-offs here please. Right turn only into parking lot.

### Traffic Pattern

For safety reasons, there is a one-way traffic flow into the student pickup/drop off area. Please observe the entrance and exit signs. Cars should make a right turn only into and out of the Polk drop off loop during arrival and dismissal times. These are in effect to prevent accidents and to keep traffic flowing smoothly. Please observe the drop-off point when driving your child to school. PLEASE DO NOT PARK AT THE CURB OR IN THE FIRE LANE IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL.

Parents should park in the designated area at each school. Cars should not be parked in undesignated areas which include on the grass, in fire lanes, on the curb, etc. at any time.

Parents who choose to drive their children to school and drop them off should drive into the designated drop off area with their vehicles, remain in the vehicle, and drop off their child. All vehicles coming into or leaving the school grounds are subject to the regulations of the school.

There is a crossing guard on duty to assist students on both French Street and Buckingham Street from 8:15-9:00 AM and 3:00-3:45 PM.

### **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the Transportation Coordinator-District Business Manager. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

### **TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS**

The District believes when students are healthy, safe, supported, engaged and challenged, they are then able to learn to the best of their ability. Schools are trauma-sensitive in the implementation of policies to help children feel safe in order for them to learn. Policies, practices and the school culture will be sensitive to the needs of traumatized individuals. A flexible framework provides universal supports, is sensitive to students' unique needs. Emphasis will be placed on building supporting relationships.

### **TUTORING**

Teachers may not teach privately (tutor) students of the school in which he/she teaches. This does not apply to teachers of homebound children employed by the Board of Education.

### **VACATIONS**

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation or trip that takes place when school is in session may be considered "unexcused absences," in light of State Department of Education guidelines.



## **VANDALISM**

Vandalism, which is the willful and/or wanton destruction of public or private property, and an anti-social act, cannot be tolerated in our schools.

Vandalism includes the damaging or destruction of:

- School buildings
- School grounds
- School busses
- School equipment and supplies including, but not limited to books, AV equipment, athletic equipment and school furnishings
- Any personal or public property
- Any sites of school sponsored activities

As stated in the Connecticut General Statutes 52-572, "the parent or legal guardian of any minor/emancipated child who willfully cuts, defaces, or otherwise injures in any way real or personal property belonging to the school district shall be held liable for all such damages up to the maximum allowed under state law."

Liability provided under CGS 52-572 does not relieve the minor child of any personal liability for damage or injury. This liability is in addition to any other liability, which exists under the law.

The parent or guardian of a minor child is also liable for all property belonging to the school system lent to the child and not returned upon demand/returned damaged or defaced. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action.

## **VIDEO RECORDERS ON SCHOOL BUSES/SCHOOL CAMPUS**

(For School Security Purposes)

The district has installed video recording equipment on school buses to monitor school transportation and discipline. Videotaping will be done randomly during the school year, students will not be notified when a recording device has been installed and in use on their bus. Tapes will be viewed by the administration. Students violating bus conduct rules will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken. Videotapes shall be treated as protected student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Video equipment is used to enhance the safety and security of all individuals. It is also used to monitor student behavior in common areas or campus. Video surveillance cameras are used in public areas and school buses for security and to assist in maintaining student safety. The principal or his/her designee will review the tapes routinely and document students' misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the District's discipline policy. Any student, staff member, or visitor to the school is prohibited from tampering with or damaging the school's video surveillance equipment.

## **VISITORS**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit schools. All visitors must first report to

the main office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

All doors that open to the outside of any school must remain locked in order to preserve the safety and security of students and staff. Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school. Visitors may not be allowed into school buildings during the COVID-19 health emergency or any such similar emergency.

Visitors will be required to show photo identification and sign in to obtain a visitor's pass if entering the building. Any student being dismissed will be called to the office (the visitor will wait in the lobby or Main Office but does not enter the school building). If it is deemed necessary to enter the building, a visitor pass will be given and the destination will be notified.

No visitors shall enter the building during arrival or dismissal. If you will be picking your child up early, you must notify the office in writing prior to dismissal. If it is not an emergency, call the office to provide notification. If a parent would like to observe in their child's classroom, they must call 24 hours in advance to set up a time which is mutually convenient for the parent, teacher, and the building principal.

Main Office secretaries will be required to call 911 and notify the building principal should a visitor become uncooperative, not adhere to the procedures, or become threatening.

### **VOICE ASSISTANT DEVICES IN CLASSROOMS**

The District reserves the right to determine whether such devices may be used in classrooms. Necessary measures will be taken to properly regulate and control such use. It must be stressed that information and communications sent utilizing such voice-activated devices may not be secure.

### **WEBSITES**

School web pages must contain material that reflects on educational purposes. School web pages are not to be used for personal, commercial or political purposes; and are considered a publication of the Board of Education. The Principal or his/her designee will approve all material posted on the school's web page. Student maintained personal web pages may be subject to disciplinary action for the content of such sites under certain conditions. The District/School is committed to ensuring accessibility of its website(s) for parents, students and members of the community with disabilities. Please visit our website at <https://www.watertownps.org/o/polk-elementary-school>

## **WELLNESS**

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided, in addition to time in the elementary school day for supervised recess.

The Watertown School District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. This policy was developed to support these goals and help provide support for staff and students. The Watertown School District's wellness policy supports: Nutrition Education and promotion; physical activity and physical education; nutrition standards for school foods and beverages (school meals and other foods and beverages); other school-based activities to promote student wellness; communication and promotion; and measurement and evaluation. (Sec. 4-100).

### **Lunch Program**

A hot lunch program is offered at Polk School. Students may buy hot lunch or bring their own. Monthly lunch menus will be sent home in advance and are posted in classrooms and in the office. You may also access the menu on our district website.

If you wish to make an online payment for your child's lunch account, please go to [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com) and register for a free account. You may also send in checks made payable to the Watertown Student Lunch Program.

Students who bring in their own lunch may receive milk for free under the current program (and a fruit and vegetable as well!). Ice cream and snacks are sold daily and the cost varies. **Students are not allowed to bring drinks in glass bottles.**

In the event that a student forgets or loses lunch money, he/she may charge up to three hot lunches. After the third charge they will be allowed to have a cheese sandwich until the account is paid in full. We ask that this charge be paid within two weeks. Students may not buy snack while money is still owed. Efforts will be made to collect the outstanding balance on the student's account. In the event reimbursement is not received from a parent or guardian, a cheese sandwich and milk will continue to be provided until the outstanding balance is paid in full.

Forms for the Federal Lunch Program are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year and upon enrollment. They are also available at any time during the school year in the main office. The forms are reviewed and those eligible for free or reduced lunch are notified in writing. We also have a breakfast program in place for any students who wish to purchase breakfast before school starts.

### Snacks/Food in School

All classroom teachers schedule a snack time during the day. This snack provides sustained energy supporting focus and attention to learning tasks. Healthy snacking is promoted in the classrooms. Please assist your child in packing a healthy snack. Please be aware that due to food allergies, some classrooms may have a restriction on snacks containing nut products.

### Celebrations

Due to the numerous children with serious allergies the district has adopted a district wellness policy. Pencils, stickers or other items are suggested in lieu of food. Should you wish to have food, please see the Polk School website for the order form provided by the Watertown Food Service department. The items listed have been approved for school celebrations. Please be advised that a minimum of a week's notice is requested. **All food items must be purchased through the Watertown Food Service Department in consultation with the classroom teacher and nurse.**

If your child is going to bring invitations to school for a party at home, make sure that either all girls, all boys, or all children in the class are invited. If not, please make other arrangements to distribute invitations.

Please do not have any gifts, flowers or balloons delivered to school. We will not be responsible for delivering these items to students.

### WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

If a student needs to withdraw from school during the school year, the student's parent/guardian must complete a withdrawal form, obtain all necessary signatures and submit all forms to the main office. All books, materials, athletic equipment and other equipment loaned by the school must be returned or paid for by the student or his/her parents/guardians.

### YEARBOOKS

Children will have the opportunity to purchase a yearbook close to the end of the school year. Details will be announced prior to that time and notices will be sent home.

## **POLK SCHOOL STAFF LIST 2023-2024**

**General Phone #:(860) 945-4840**

**Website: <https://www.watertownps.org/o/polk-elementary-school>**

<p><b>Administration</b> Jennifer L. Galik, Principal- ext 4840 <a href="mailto:galikje@watertownps.org">galikje@watertownps.org</a></p> <p>Kimberly Keil, Dean/Social Worker- ext 5169 <a href="mailto:keilki@watertownps.org">keilki@watertownps.org</a></p>	<p><b>Secretaries</b> Lori Lampron, Head Secretary- ext. 5126 <a href="mailto:lampronlo@watertownps.org">lampronlo@watertownps.org</a> Kaitlin Izzi, Special Education Secretary - ext. 5127 <a href="mailto:izzika@watertownps.org">izzika@watertownps.org</a></p> <p><b>School Security Officer</b> Thomas Gorman- ext 4840</p>														
<p><b>Nurse</b> Georgianna Karlak - ext. 5128 <a href="mailto:karlakge@watertownps.org">karlakge@watertownps.org</a></p>	<p><b>Cafeteria</b> Shirley Barkauskas – ext. 5129 <a href="mailto:barkauskash@watertownps.org">barkauskash@watertownps.org</a></p>														
<p><b>Custodial Staff</b> Steve St. Mary, Head Custodian- ext. 5161 Roman Nalysnyk Salvatore Rinaldi</p>	<p><b>Special Education Teachers</b> Jodie Angiolini Kristin Canfield Kirstin Geer Kelsey Geraci Ann-Katherine Hartzog Samantha McQueenie</p>														
<p><b>Grade 3 Teachers</b> Laura Bell Laura Grzewinski Jennifer O'Donnell Abby Quish Erica Wilson</p>	<p><b>Grade 4 Teachers</b> Jessica D'Addona Leisha Eckerlin Valerie Tasker Emily Thomas Tara Schulte</p>														
<p><b>Grade 5 Teachers</b> Katherine Ahlgren Anna-Lisa Barlow Stephanie Milo Gary Pflomm Jessica Sarandrea</p>	<p><b>Special Area Teachers</b> Rebecca Borbas, Band Kathleen Cummings, General Music Jody Field, Art Amy Gauthier, Library Media Specialist John Loyer, Physical Education Dorothy Rinaldi, Computer Education</p>														
<p><b>Support Staff:</b> Amy Blais, Physical Therapist Ashley Coon, Literacy Interventionist Susan Danaher, Speech &amp; Language Pathologist Elena DeAngelis, Occupational Therapist Alyssa DeAngelo, School Psychologist Lisa LaPlante, SRBI Coordinator Elayna Stein, Social Worker</p>	<p><b>Paraeducators:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Amy Cronk</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Dan Rivera</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lauren Desrochers</td> <td>Ashley Rivera</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cathy Keenan</td> <td>Camille Santopietro</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jen Mancini</td> <td>Olga Spring</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Viola Mustafi</td> <td>NancyLynne Velezis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cary Pavelo</td> <td>Lisa Warner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paulina Pietrorazio</td> <td>TBD</td> </tr> </table>	Amy Cronk	Dan Rivera	Lauren Desrochers	Ashley Rivera	Cathy Keenan	Camille Santopietro	Jen Mancini	Olga Spring	Viola Mustafi	NancyLynne Velezis	Cary Pavelo	Lisa Warner	Paulina Pietrorazio	TBD
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<p><b>Building Substitutes</b> Tina Hill Ashley Picard</p> <p><b>Interns</b> Kayleigh O'Donnell, Teacher Intern Bridget Fehon, Social Work Intern</p>	<p><b>Tutors</b> Maxine Martello Kayleigh Paliulis Tristan Wert Amy Slattery, MLL</p>														