WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2026 - 2027 academic year! The purpose of this letter is to introduce you to the Westwood Public Schools Elementary Handbook. Our primary goal is to provide challenging and appropriate learning experiences that will facilitate every child's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Within this handbook you will find helpful district-wide policies and information.

The Westwood Public Schools is committed to making our learning environments safe and nurturing for all. You are our partners in the education and safety of your child. Your positive support for your children enhances their desire to learn and achieve at their highest level. Research demonstrates that when schools and families work together, children experience great educational success; therefore, we value and need your involvement. Together we can create joyful learning for your child and all of the children who attend our schools.

The faculty is happy to speak with you at any time throughout the year. Teachers will let you know the best way to contact them. Whether it is an email or a phone call, every effort will be made to get back to you in a timely fashion. Also, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, we are pleased to welcome you to the school year. As you read the handbook, you may notice some additions and changes that have been made by the District. Please be aware that certain aspects of the school handbook may need to be updated as school committee and/or state requirements are adjusted. All students must comply with school committee policies (linked here) and/or state requirements related to maintaining the health and safety of the Westwood Public School Community.

Sincerely,

Katy Dearborn, Westwood Integrated Preschool Director
Deb Gallagher, Downey School Principal
Reid Jones, Pine Hill Elementary School Principal
Matthew Kuklentz, Martha Jones School Principal
Stacy Mahoney, Sheehan School Principal

Westwood Public Schools

Elementary Handbook
2026 - 2027 School Year



Downey School **250 Downey Street** **781-326-7500 ext 8386**	**Martha Jones School** **80 Martha Jones Road** **781-326-7500 ext 7422**
Pine Hill School **790 Gay Street** **781-326-7500 ext 8404**	**William E Sheehan School** **549 Pond Street** **781-326-7500 ext 7100**

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District Contact Information

Westwood Public Schools Administration
and Telephone Extensions
(781) 326-7500

Timothy Piwowar	*Superintendent*	ext. 1340
Caitlin Ahern	*Assistant Superintendent*	ext. 1348
Lemma Jn-baptiste	*Director of Finance and Operations*	ext. 1344
Lori Cimeno	*Director of Student Services*	ext. 1345
Lateefah Franck	*Director of Equity, Integration & Community Partnerships*	ext. 3368
Tom Carey	*Director of Facilities*	ext. 1304
Steve Ouellette	*Director of Technology*	ext. 3364
Chon'tel Washington	*Director of Human Resources*	ext. 5108
Katy Dearborn	*Preschool Director/Out-of-District Coordinator*	ext. 5113
Debra Gallagher	*Principal, Downey School*	ext. 8386
Matt Kuklentz	*Principal, Martha Jones School*	ext. 7422
Reid Jones	*Principal, Pine Hill School*	ext. 8401
Samantha Bean	*Assistant Principal, Pine Hill School*	ext. 8402
Stacy Mahoney	*Principal, Sheehan School*	ext. 7100
Lindsay Strauss	*Dept. Head/Chair, Student Services K-5*	ext. 8405
Michael Redmon	*Principal, Thurston Middle School*	ext. 2336
John Murray	*Principal, Westwood High School*	ext. 3314

www.westwood.k12.ma.us

Westwood School Committee
JoAnna French, Chair
Anthony Mullin, Vice Chair
Maya Plotkin, Clerk
Nick Vidnovic
Katie Willette

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Westwood School Committee and Westwood Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Westwood Public Schools, subject to school authority.

This policy does not limit any other policies or authority of the Westwood School Committee or the Westwood Public Schools. This includes not limiting the authority of Westwood Public Schools under its Student Handbook or any other authority to discipline or take corrective action for educational and workplace conduct which the Westwood Public Schools deems unacceptable. This policy also does not limit the authority of the Westwood Public Schools to take immediate interim disciplinary action as set forth in any applicable guidance, practice or policy.

Westwood Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of, or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Westwood Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner, consistent with this policy, with respect to all other members of the school community.

As Westwood Public Schools is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, it shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil rights of any member of the school community. Discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, in any form will not be tolerated.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, that relates to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, or any other category protected by state or federal law, and that has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile education or work environment. Westwood Public Schools will take the appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found in violation of this policy.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report

such conduct or file a complaint, or for opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

Any member of the school community who believes s(he) or another school community member has been the victim of any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, should report the conduct or file a complaint. Students may make a report or complaint to any school faculty, staff, or administrator. Reports or complaints by any other member of the school community should be to the designated official specified in the applicable policy or grievance procedure or to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools. Westwood Public Schools will promptly respond to and investigate all reports or complaints, formal or informal, written, oral, or otherwise given notice, of any discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violation of civil rights.

Westwood Public Schools will investigate all reports or complaints promptly and in an impartial and as confidential a manner as possible, to ensure prompt and appropriate action. Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, against another member of the school community will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and corrective action. Additionally, appropriate remedial action will be taken as necessary.

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Westwood Public Schools, and can be reached at:

Caitlin Ahern
Assistant Superintendent of Schools
220 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090
(781) 326-7500
cahern@westwood.k12.ma.us

The Director of Student Services is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Westwood Public Schools. In addition, the Director of Student Services is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

Lori Cimeno
Director of Student Services
220 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090
(781) 326-7500
lcimeno@westwood.k12.ma.us

Inquiries concerning the Westwood Public Schools' policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary or Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109; (617) 289-0111; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov; Website: www.ed.gov/ocr.

Further information about the procedures for response to Harassment or Discrimination can be found in the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (2022).

Important Dates

The school calendar for the 2026-2027 school year is available on the front page of the WPS district website.

Report Cards/Conferences: Communicating Student Progress

Fall	Parent/Teacher Conference (K-5)
Winter	Full Report Card: Status Report and Academic Areas (K-5)
Spring	Parent/Teacher Conference
	No Report Card
Year end	Full Report Card: Status Report and Academic Areas (K-5)

Westwood elementary schools have been using a standards-based report card format since 2005. A standards-based report card differs from a traditional report card because it gives parents information about student progress toward explicit learning standards in the most important skills and knowledge taught in that grade. On a traditional report card, students receive one grade in each subject area for each marking period. On a standards-based report card, each subject is broken down into the most important knowledge and skills that the students in the grade should learn. Students receive one grade for each skill and item of knowledge. The grades students earn on a standards-based report card differ from the grades on a traditional report card. The grades typically used on a traditional report card are A, B, C, D, and F. These grades do not give parents information about student progress toward a specific standard. Thus, standards-based report cards use grades based on student progress.

1. Alignment: The report card line items (the specific skills and knowledge that the students should learn in each grade) are aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

2. Academic Rubric: Students will receive grades of 4, 3, 2, or 1 on each academic line item. A 4 means that the student meets or exceeds the learning standard, 3 means the student is progressing toward the standard, 2 means that the student requires additional time and support to reach the standard, and 1 means that the student is working on concepts and skills below grade level.

3. Academic Grading Timeline: Students will be graded on the June standard in January and June. This means that the typical student may earn primarily 2-3s on the January report card and 3-4s on the June report card.

4. Status Report Rubric: Students will receive one of three grades on the status report: U (Usually), S (Sometimes), or R (Rarely).

5. Comment Section: The comment section allows teachers to provide parents with additional information.

Parents are invited to contact teachers by phone, note or email for a personal conference at any time. Teachers will contact parents or guardians to discuss issues related to a child's cognitive, social, emotional, or physical growth as they arise.

School Cancellations
In the event that school is closed due to inclement weather or other circumstances, TV announcements will be made. Parents will also be notified by School Messenger. Please be sure your contact information is up-to-date in our Aspen portal.

TV: Channels 4, 5, & 7
Internet: District website (www.westwood.k12.ma.us), Twitter and Facebook

Home-School Communication

Home Language
School publications can be translated into other languages for families whose primary language is other than English. Requests for translations should be made to the principal.

Email
To contact a teacher by email, first type in the first initial of the person's first name, then the entire last name (no space) followed by *@westwood.k12.ma.us* (for example: msmith@westwood.k12.ma.us). If a message is time-sensitive, please call the school office instead of using email. Teachers do not routinely check email during the school day.

Web Page
Visit the school's web page on the school department's website. Go to www.westwood.k12.ma.us. Go to the Pre K-5 tab and select your child's school. There you will find important school information and documents, teacher pages, learning links, and more.

Automated Messaging
The district uses a school-to-parent automated telephone communication system that allows school personnel to notify families about important events. In order to be sure that you receive these periodic calls, please be sure that you update your current telephone numbers in Aspen. The system cannot dial extensions, so please be sure that direct telephone lines are included in the information you give the school.

Parent Participation

The School Site Council

Each elementary school has a School Site Council. School site councils were first formed in 1993 in accordance with M.G.L. ch.71 §59C. It is a representative, school-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members.

The law outlines four major areas of responsibility for councils. School councils assist principals in:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards.
2. Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school.
3. Reviewing the annual school building budget.
4. Formulating a school improvement plan.

The PTO/PTA

Through dues and ongoing fundraising, the PTO/PTA serves children by supporting the school. Families and staff members come together to discuss educational issues and allocate funds that provide educational materials and enrichment programs for all of our children.

Room Parents

Each classroom has designated room parents who assist in a variety of ways. Room parents are recruited by teachers and/or the PTO on a volunteer basis at the beginning of the school year. Specific information is available for room parent activities through the principal.

Visitors

Parents and other visitors to the school must enter through the front door, sign in at the office in the Visitors' Log and obtain a visitor badge to wear while in the building. Visitors are required to return to the office to sign out and return the visitor badge upon departure. Please understand that any staff member may ask you to sign in at the office if you are not wearing a visitor badge. They do so for the safety of your child and of all the children in the building.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the school culture. If you have an interest in volunteering, contact your child's teacher or principal. State law requires a Criminal Records Check (CORI) of all school volunteers.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

The SEPAC is a district-wide parent organization supporting parents and guardians of students with disabilities. Visit its website at www.westwoodsepac.org for information, resources, and contact information.

School-Based Supports, Programs, and Expectations

Curriculum

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Westwood Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Support Services

The Child Support Team (C.S.T.)

As a school system, the Westwood Public Schools is committed to meeting the needs of all students. The Child Support Team is a general education initiative and resource designed to help children have a successful school experience. The team consists of several educators, including the school psychologist, classroom teachers and specialists. The team meets regularly to brainstorm with teachers seeking assistance with the academic, social-emotional, and/or behavioral needs of particular students.

Students present with unique learning challenges. They often need materials presented in different manners or modified to meet their learning styles. Collectively, the staff has considerable expertise and experience which they offer through suggestions to the teacher. The suggestions do not compromise the child's instructional program.

At a conference you may hear that your child's teacher is seeking assistance from CST. The process is internal to the school and does not generate reports to parents or notes placed in students' permanent school records. This group is a way of using objective peer advisors to assist our teachers as they support the learning of individual students. If a parent has concerns regarding his/her child's learning, the teacher should be contacted. If concerns persist, the Child Support Team may discuss intervention alternatives. Suggestions and strategies will be shared with the parent(s).

Special Education Services

Special education, under federal and state mandates, provides services to children from the ages of 3 to 22 who have diagnosed disabilities that meet state-mandated eligibility criteria. These services may include, but are not limited to, specialized instruction, classroom support, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. All learners are included in general education classrooms to the fullest extent possible. Many special education services are provided through collaboration between classroom teachers, special education teachers, and in some cases, instructional assistants.

In order to facilitate general education support, parents, teachers, or other concerned parties are encouraged to explore the Child Support Team process prior to initiating a referral for a special education evaluation. Upon a formal referral, a comprehensive evaluation is then conducted to determine if the student meets specific eligibility criteria. The criteria require that the child has a diagnosed disability, that s/he is not making effective progress in the classroom as a result of the disability, and that s/he requires specialized instruction or related services in order to make effective progress or access the general curriculum.

The special education staff works closely with parents to assess, collect, and share information: determine eligibility; plan for services when appropriate; monitor progress; and transition students as needed. Parents and teachers are encouraged to use CST. before considering a referral for an evaluation. If you have questions about your child's needs, please contact your child's teacher or the principal.

Other Support Services

School Psychologists and School Adjustment Counselors
Each elementary school has a school psychologist who works with teachers, parents and students to teach respect, responsibility, and conflict resolution. The psychologist supports the school community by working with small groups of students to facilitate friendships and assist with social and emotional issues.

Literacy Support
Literacy support is provided for students who may need supplemental support in their development of reading and writing skills. Students are identified for support based on assessment data and teacher identification. Support is provided by a member of the literacy staff (literacy specialist or literacy paraprofessional). Students who receive supplemental literacy support commonly receive instruction from a member of the literacy staff several times a week in a small group. Literacy staff also assist teachers in determining students in need of supplementary instruction and work with teachers on in-class support for students.

Math Support
Math specialists provide math services for students and staff. They assist classroom teachers in determining students in need of supplementary instructional services to meet grade-level standards. Specialists work with classroom teachers on in-class support for students, as well as provide direct services to small groups of students identified as needing targeted intervention.

Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Coordinators
Content area coordinators assist teachers and coaches throughout the elementary schools with lesson planning, curriculum development and review, and professional development.

Health Services and Wellness
Each school has an assigned school nurse who promotes health, safety, and wellness so all children can achieve optimal academic success. The school nurse provides advisory and emergency care only. The school nurse does not provide a medical diagnosis, but is available for consultation regarding health related issues. After first aid has been administered, parents/guardians are responsible for contacting their family physician for diagnosis and follow-up care. Injuries or illnesses that occur at home should be assessed by your physician. A record is kept of all visits to the health room and parents/guardians will be notified of any possible health conditions that may be developing.

Medical Conditions
In order to provide each child with appropriate care, parents/guardians should notify the school, in writing, of any medical conditions a student has that may affect his/her well being. This also includes any religious stipulations regarding restrictions in medical care.

Health Records
All children attending school must have a comprehensive health record kept on file with the school nurse. In MA, a physical exam is required for kindergarten entrance, for entry into third grade, and for any child entering school for the first time. Students in these categories who have not submitted a physical by February 1 will be excluded from school.

All students are expected to comply with Westwood School Committee policies which can be found online at this link.

The health report must include a lead screening test as well as immunizations for:

Hepatitis B
DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)
Polio
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
Varicella (Chicken Pox) or evidence of having the disease

Students must be immunized according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines. Students who have not been immunized due to medical or religious reasons must have a written exemption on file in the health office and may be excluded from school during an outbreak.

Emergency Contact Information
Each family will enter contact information in Aspen, a student information system. The contacts must include the parent's or guardian's work phone numbers and the phone numbers of ***local*** family members, neighbors, or friends who may pick up your child if a parent cannot be reached. Please do not list emergency numbers of individuals whose travel time is more than 15 minutes from the school, as a sick child must be sent home as soon as reasonably possible.

Accident, Illness, and Injury
The school nurse or staff addresses minor first aid problems. If a student is injured or becomes ill and needs to go home, a parent/guardian will be called to arrange for the child to be picked up. If a child is seriously injured or seriously ill, an ambulance will be called. The ambulance will transport the child to the nearest hospital. The parent will be notified any time the child receives an injury to the head, regardless of its severity.

Medications
No child is permitted to take prescription or over-the-counter medication without the direct supervision of the school nurse. Medication will be administered after the following procedures are completed:

1. A physician's medication order and parental consent form must be on file in the health office. These forms must be renewed at the beginning of each year.
2. For short-term prescriptions (10 days or fewer), the medication must be contained in a pharmacy-labeled container in lieu of a physician's order. A parental consent form is still required.
3. Over-the-counter medications, such as Tylenol or cough syrup, also require a physician's order and parental consent form.

4. A responsible adult must deliver all medication directly to the school nurse and the medication must be in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container. No medication is provided by the school.

Communicable Diseases and Returning to School

A sick child cannot effectively learn and is unable to participate in class in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child at home helps prevent the spread of illness in the school community and allows the child an opportunity to rest and recover. The recommendations below will help families determine when a sick child should return to school. Please contact the school nurse with any questions.

Chicken Pox/Shingles: Notify the school nurse immediately if your child has been diagnosed of having either of these conditions. There are Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines that govern your child's return to school.

Conjunctivitis: Students may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic medication has been started and as soon as the symptoms of redness and discharge are greatly improved. There are different types of conjunctivitis: viral (no treatment) or bacterial (eye drops). Your child should remain home if they develop a fever or continue to have eye symptoms (drainage, redness, itching).
(American Academy of Ophthalmology, 2023)

Diarrhea: Students should remain home for 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhea. If diarrhea is the result of a specific pathogen (norovirus, salmonella, etc), remain out of school per pathogen protocol or until a medical exam indicates that it is not due to a communicable disease.

Fever: Fever is defined as 100 degrees or higher. Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students may return to school when:

- Their temperature is below 100 degrees AND
- They have not taken medication to reduce the fever for 24 hours.

Fevers that are associated with a virus are the lowest in the morning. If your child has a fever in the evening or during the night, he/she should not attend school the next day.

Fifth Disease: No isolation period. Please notify the school nurse if it is suspected or diagnosed.

Mononucleosis: No isolation period. Please notify the school nurse if it is suspected or diagnosed.

Pediculosis (Head Lice): Students with lice can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after beginning appropriate treatment. Nits may stay in hair after treatment, but successful treatment will kill crawling lice. (CDC lice) (Mass.gov lice)

Strep Throat: Students may return to school 12-24 hours after starting medication, be fever free, and remain free of other symptoms. CDC strep Strep study 2015 Strep study summary

Vomiting: Students must be fever free, symptom free, and able to tolerate two full meals without returning symptoms for at least twelve hours before returning to school.

Screenings

The following screenings will be performed by the school nurse. If there is any reason a student should not be screened, please notify the Nurse in writing.

- Vision – yearly K-5
- Hearing Screening - Grades K-3
- Postural Screening - Grade 5
- BMI Screening - Grade 1, 4

Wellness Policy and Celebrations

Birthdays are a major event in the life of a child. Classrooms recognize each child on his/her special day. The Westwood School Committee has adopted wellness policies that include the following: **"Schools should limit birthday celebrations during the school day and only include nonfood related items."** In the spirit of implementing the policy while recognizing each child on his/her special day, the staff looks for creative and joyful ways to acknowledge birthdays. Please work closely with the building principal when planning celebrations at school.

If your family wants to celebrate a child's birthday at school, please plan the celebration in advance with the teacher. Here is a sampling of ways a student may celebrate his/her birthday at school:

- Families may purchase fabric markers and a white t-shirt that may be signed or decorated by each member of the class. Children may celebrate by donating a "Birthday Book" to the classroom or school library. The library/media specialist has many suggestions for titles.

Invitations for home parties may not be passed out at school. They should be mailed to children's homes directly, even when every classmate is included.

School Attendance

School attendance is required by state law beginning in the Fall of the calendar year in which the student turns age 6. Coming to school every day is one of the most important ways students can build strong learning habits and feel connected to their school community. Students who attend school regularly and arrive on time establish routines and habits that are conducive to learning and success in school. When students are at school regularly, they have more chances to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. In addition, tardiness to class is disruptive to the student, the teacher, and classmates. We expect that students will make every effort to be present and on time to school.

Families are expected to arrange vacations during weeks scheduled on the school calendar, as doing so eliminates disruptions in the learning process. Teachers will not provide work for students to complete during family vacations.

Attendance: Expectations

Students who are absent from school may not attend or participate in any extracurricular functions that occur the same day or evening (such as sports events, dances, concerts, plays) without special permission from the Principal. Students absent from school on Friday may not participate in school events that take place during the weekend without special permission from the Principal.

In special circumstances, student absences may be considered excused from school. Upon administrator review, the following types of student absences may be deemed excused absences for reporting purposes:

- An illness documented by a medical provider
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- Absence due to attendance at a school-sponsored activity
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Suspension from school
- An absence excused by an administrator for other exceptional reasons

Excessive absences–even those that fall under the categories listed above–may be considered truancy and/or require additional documentation and administrator intervention. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), a student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10% or more of the school year — that's 18 days. Chronic absenteeism can have a lasting impact on a student's success in school. The school will notify the parent or guardian of any student who is experiencing frequent absences to develop a plan to support regular school attendance. School officials may work with parents/guardians, local agencies, including the police and juvenile court, to improve student attendance and support students and families as needed.

Absence, Dismissal, and Tardiness: Reporting and Documentation
When a child will be late, absent, or dismissed early, parents should report this via School Dismissal Manager by 8:30 a.m. and leave the student's name, grade, and a reason for the absence/tardiness/dismissal in the message. If there is an attendance or dismissal update that needs to occur after 11:00am, please call the main office.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Sections 1A and 1B, Westwood Public Schools maintains a student absence notification program. In addition to daily absence notifications, the school will notify parents/caregivers when a student has accumulated five (5) absences during the school year. Families will receive additional notification when a student has accumulated ten (10) absences. At these points, the school may request a meeting with the student and parent/caregiver to review the student's attendance, identify barriers to regular attendance, and develop strategies and supports to improve attendance and academic success.

Tardiness
Families are required to input the late arrival into School Dismissal Manager by 9:00 a.m. Upon arrival, tardy students should enter through the front door and immediately check in at the office to receive a pass to class.

Dismissal for Appointments
Families are required to input the dismissal into School Dismissal Manager when the student will be dismissed following school attendance procedures. Please reserve dismissals for important appointments and emergencies. No child will be dismissed to the custody of anyone other than a parent unless prior arrangements have been made and verified. Families should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside of the typical school day where possible.

Transportation
Massachusetts state law requires all students to stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Once the bus stops, students must leave the bus in an orderly fashion, one at a time.

All parents are asked to talk with children about safe and kind behavior at the bus stop and on the bus. Frequent reminders will go a long way in helping us to keep our buses physically and emotionally safe.

Students are advised not to eat on the bus. There are young students with life threatening allergies who may be exposed to allergens on the bus if we allow snacks and food to be consumed.

The school buses are equipped with seatbelts. Since state law does not require seatbelts in school buses, there is no requirement that these be used in Westwood. As such, drivers are not expected to police their use nor are they required to assist students in the use of seatbelts.

Please remember that children may only ride the buses to which they are registered and assigned.

On any day that a child's transportation plans are altered, the parent must provide instruction of change to the principal's office, on School Dismissal Manager by the specified deadline, or by a phone call and conversation with staff. Changes cause great confusion for children, so we ask you to maintain schedules to the greatest degree possible. Buses are held-up until all children are accounted for, so please help us ensure student safety by keeping us fully informed well before dismissal time.

If you have any questions about buses or bus routes, you may contact Bus Coordinator Scherie Ciarrocchi, by leaving a message at (781) 326-7500, ext. 1338. The principal is also a resource for parents and students regarding these issues.

Bus Rules

All of the behavior expectations of school apply on the bus. In addition, the following expectations are important to remember:

1. Stay in your **assigned** seat until the bus stops.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself. No fighting.
3. Tell the bus driver about dangerous and destructive behavior.

4. Keep hands and objects inside the windows.
5. Use an “indoor voice” and kind words.
6. Be kind to everyone; don’t pick on or tease others.
7. Listen to the bus driver. Do what the bus driver says.

M.G.L. c.71 S37H Update

Amended Massachusetts legislation restricts operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling vehicles on school grounds.

Bus Conduct Reports

The primary responsibility of bus drivers is to transport students safely, and students must cooperate by behaving responsibly and courteously. If a student fails to observe the bus rules, his/her actions will be reported to the principal according to the following procedure.

1. The bus driver will file a Bus Conduct Report (see below) with the principal and the bus coordinator.
2. The principal will discuss the incident with the student, other involved parties, parents, and the student’s classroom teacher.
3. The principal will determine the appropriate action to be taken. While the consequence depends on the severity, usually the first report will result in a warning. Subsequent reports will result in the loss of bus privileges from a few days to a week or more, depending on the severity of the infraction. Any student who receives more than 3 reports will be in jeopardy of losing bus privileges for the remainder of the school year. In that case, transportation will become the parents’ responsibility.
4. The principal will send parents a copy of the report.

BUS CONDUCT REPORT

WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT'S NAME		CLASS/GRADE
DATE OF INCIDENT	☐ 1ST NOTICE ☐ 2ND NOTICE ☐ 3RD NOTICE	
BUS NO.	TRIP AM/PM	DRIVER'S NAME

NOTICE TO PARENTS

1. The purpose of this report is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving the student on the school bus.
2. You are urged to both appreciate the action taken by the driver and to cooperate with the corrective action initiated today.

DRIVER'S REPORT:

- ☐ VIOLATION OF SAFETY PROCEDURES
- ☐ DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY
- ☐ FIGHTING-PUSHING-TRIPPING
- ☐ OTHER
- ☐ EATING-DRINKING-LITTERING
- ☐ RUDE-DISCOURTEOUS
- ☐ UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE

PRELIMINARY ACTION (*SCHOOL SECTION*):

- ☐ HELD CONFERENCE WITH STUDENT
- ☐ CONSULTED WITH STAFF
- ☐ TELEPHONED PARENT

OTHER NOTES:

DRIVER'S SIGNATURE *ADMINISTRATOR'S SIGNATURE* *DATE*

PARENTS' COPY - WHITE OFFICE COPY - YELLOW TRANSPORTATION COPY - PINK DRIVER'S COPY - GOLD

Code of Conduct

Academic Integrity

The Westwood Public School community believes in the values of truth, integrity, personal accountability and respect for the rights of others. Our schools will promote an environment which fosters integrity and truthful conduct, and through our curriculum and instruction, students will learn how to appropriately cite sources and demonstrate academic integrity. Students must credit all material copied, generated, or gathered from CD-ROM, Internet, AI tools, or software sources, just as they would cite references from printed materials and books. Examples of academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to the following *(Taken from School Committee Policy IA)*:

- communicating with another student during an examination or quiz;
- copying material during an examination or quiz or copying another person's assignment;
- allowing a student to copy from one's examination, quiz or assignment;
- using unauthorized notes, tools (eg. AI), or devices on quizzes, tests, or assignments;
- submitting a paper or project which is not entirely the student's work (i.e., plagiarism);
- changing answers and seeking credit on an assignment or examination after the work has been graded and returned

Repeated violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in disciplinary action.

Bullying Policy

The Westwood Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be reviewed and updated at least biennially, as mandated by M.G.L. c.71,§.15. See the link below for the Westwood Public Schools Policy on Bullying Prevention and Intervention. The WPS Bullying Prevention Policy and related resources for reporting can be found here.

Complete 2022 Reauthorized Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan linked here.

Student Discipline

Students will be subject to age appropriate discipline. The Principal has the authority to exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for a student who has violated disciplinary rules. Depending on the nature and severity of the offense, the discipline imposed can range from a verbal warning to expulsion, in accordance with applicable policy, procedures and regulatory requirements. The Principal will also consider ways to re-engage the student offender in the learning process.

Mobile Phones, Smart Watches, Electronic Devices (iPad, Laptops, Gaming Devices)

These items are NOT allowed in school as they are a distraction to the learning environment. If a student brings these items into school the classroom teacher will ask them to turn off their device and place it in their backpack. If a parent needs to send a communication to their child during the school day, parents should contact the school's main office and leave a message with the administrative assistant.

Weapons, Toy Weapons, Dangerous Items, & Controlled Substances

With dangerous items and toy weapons, the item will be removed from the child immediately, and parents will be contacted. They will be required to come to school in order to remove the toy weapon or dangerous item from the school and meet with the principal. This type of object may scare children and adults, and it is a

distraction from the learning process. Such items do not belong at school. Possession of weapons and/or controlled substances at school or school-sponsored events can also trigger disciplinary action under the law. Westwood Public Schools are committed to the safety of the students and staff.

Tobacco Use
Pursuant to M.G.L. ch.71 §2A, it is unlawful for any student, enrolled in either primary or secondary public schools in the Commonwealth, to use tobacco products of any type on school grounds during normal school hours. Thus, each school committee shall establish a uniform policy dealing with students who violate this law. This policy may include, but not be limited to, mandatory education classes on the hazards of tobacco use.

Security Cameras
Westwood Public Schools, in accordance with School Committee policy ECAF (see full policy here), maintains security cameras in school district buildings, school transportation vehicles, and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property.

The Superintendent shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system as the situation requires.

Suspension
A suspension is a short term or long term removal from regular classroom activities.

Short term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive days or fewer.

Long term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

A suspended student is restricted from entering the school buildings, or coming onto school grounds; and a suspended student may not participate in any school sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period.

The Principal or his/her designee has sole responsibility for determining who is suspended. The suspended student and parent may be required to attend a re-entry conference to return to school.

In School Suspension
At the discretion of the Principal, in-school suspension may also be imposed for violation of the student code of conduct. In-school suspension means the student is removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than 10 consecutive school days. In-school suspension for fewer than 10

days shall not be considered a short-term suspension. An in-school suspension of more than 10 days shall be deemed a long-term suspension.

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

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

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

Out of School Suspensions and Opportunity for Academic Progress During Suspension/Expulsion
Any student receiving in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension shall have the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days shall have an opportunity to receive educational services that will enable the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school-wide educational services plan.

Student Due Process Rights
In administering discipline, school officials will be careful to observe the right to due process under the law for each student. The nature of the violation determines the due process that school officials follow.

1. <u>DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF A DANGEROUS WEAPON, POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE, ASSAULT ON SCHOOL STAFF AND/OR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF A FELONY (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½)</u>.
   Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the Principal or designee determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.

Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parents/guardians will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, a written decision will be issued. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long term suspension or expulsion from school to the Superintendent. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76, §17, M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½.

2. DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH OTHER VIOLATIONS (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾)

   Notice and principal's meeting:

   For any suspension under this section, the principal or a designee shall provide notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. The student shall receive written notice of the charges and the opportunity to meet with the principal or designee to discuss charges and reasons for the suspension and/or exclusion prior to suspension/exclusion taking effect.

   The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The meeting may take place without the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) so long as the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

   The purpose of the principal's hearing is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

   The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense.

   a. Short-term Suspension

      The principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

b. Long Term Suspension

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall also have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

If present, the Parent shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

If the student is suspended for more than 10 days for a single infraction or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the Superintendent and the process for appealing in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. No student will be suspended for greater than 90 days, beginning on the first day the student is removed from the building.

Appeal Process for Long-Term Suspensions:
The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion to submit a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to 7 additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 3 school days or the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to 7 additional calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Superintendent's hearing may proceed without the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
At the hearing, the superintendent shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 5 calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The Superintendent's decision is the final decision of the district.

Emergency Removal

The principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal.

In the event of an emergency removal, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal. The principal shall provide written notice to the student and parent as provided above, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal as provided above, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

The principal shall render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements as described above.

In the event of an emergency removal from school, the principal will not release the student until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities [Includes students currently on 504 accommodation plans or Individual Educational Programs.]

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.
3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP team or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardians consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order form a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as

appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.

5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

Discipline of Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for special education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred **if the following procedural requirements have been met below.**

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education.

A. If prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
    1. The parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing: or
    2. The parent/guardian had requested an evaluation: or
    3. School district staff had expressed concern that the student had a disability.
B. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures to conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.
C. The school district has developed procedures consistent with the federal requirements to expedite evaluations.

Physical Restraint

WPS complies with 603 CMR 46.00 regarding the prevention of physical restraint. See this link to the Westwood Public Schools Policy for further information.

Student Record and Regulations and Procedures

General Guidelines

Federal and state laws provide parents and eligible students (those who have turned 14 or who are entering ninth grade) with rights of confidentiality, access, and amendment relating to student records. Copies of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations ("Regulations") detailing these rights are available in the school

office and the office of Student Services. The following is a general overview of the provisions in the Regulations, which may be found at 603 CMR §23.00 *et seq*.

Access and Amendment
A parent or eligible student has a right to access student records and to seek their amendment if the parent or eligible student believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. In order to obtain access or to seek amendment to student records, please contact the building principal.

Confidentiality
Release of student records generally requires specific, informed consent of the parent or eligible student; however, the regulations allow for certain exceptions. For example, authorized school personnel shall have access to student records as needed to perform their official duties. The Westwood Public Schools also require that each incoming student provide a complete copy of his/her student records from his/her prior school, in accordance with M.G.L. ch.71 §37L. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incident involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act. Westwood will provide a complete copy of a student's record to any public school into which the student seeks or intends to enroll, upon receiving verification from any source that the student may be transferring out of a Westwood school (603 CMR §23.07(4)(g)). For more information on student records and other circumstances in which student records may be released without the specific, informed consent of a parent or the eligible student, view the Massachusetts Regulations at 603 CMR §23.00 *et seq*.

The Westwood Public Schools has a practice of releasing directory information, consisting of the following; the student's name, address, telephone listing, date, and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of the members of athletic teams, class, participation in recognized activities and sports, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release of any of the above information, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the school principal. Absent receipt of a written objection within two weeks of the date of the notice, the directory information will be released without further notice or consent.

Student Records—Access by non-custodial parents
M.G.L. ch.71 §34H governs the process by which public elementary and secondary schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children. The statute requires non-custodial parents seeking access to submit a written request and other important documentation to the school principal on an annual basis. Non-custodial parents share equal standing with custodial parents to access student record information unless a court order limiting the rights of the non-custodial parent is presented to the school. If such a court order is provided to the school, the school then needs to notify the custodial parent that the non-custodial parent seeks to obtain access to student records.

A twenty-one (21)-day waiting period is then imposed. If no such court order is presented to block the rights of the non-custodial parent, after the twenty-one (21)-day waiting period, student records should be provided to the non-custodial parent; however, the name, address, telephone and email information should be deleted from the records and the records should be stamped to indicate that they cannot be used to enroll the student in another school district. School personnel should also be mindful of the fact that "authorized school personnel" excludes staff that has no contact with the student.

Those persons are considered third parties and can only access the student record information after receiving

informed written consent from the parent or eligible student. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding access to records by non-custodial parents are requested to contact the principal or director of student services for detailed information regarding the standard procedures schools must follow in making student records available to non-custodial parents.

Maintenance and Destruction of School Records

Student transcripts shall be maintained by the school department and may only be destroyed sixty (60) years following a student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system. The student's temporary record shall be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school system. If a parent wishes to collect the temporary record or any part thereof, he/she must do so within this timeframe.

A temporary record is defined as information which is not contained in the transcript and includes such information as standardized test results, class rank, evaluations by teachers, counselors and other school staff, and records pertaining to your child's special education eligibility or program.

Expectations for Technology Use
The Westwood Public Schools provides technology tools to enhance learning. Technology tools are used both independently and collaboratively to research, to practice or reinforce academic skills, for communication and creativity, and to increase productivity during the learning process.

The expectations for student use of technology are articulated to students using the framework BARK (see below).

B.A.R.K. Your Way to Tech Success!



Balanced	Being **balanced** means: Taking frequent breaks from devices Enjoying tech-free activities Speaking to people face to face Having device-free family time
Appropriate	Being **appropriate** means: Using school devices & accounts only for learning Giving credit when using other people's work Asking permission for taking photos, videos, and audio
Responsible	Being **responsible** means: Taking care of equipment Protecting everyone's privacy Thinking about what you share Using strong passwords Informing adults of inappropriate or uncomfortable situations
Kind	Being **kind** means: Cooperating with your tech team Staying respectful and positive online Being a helpful tech buddy