Albanian Arabic Bulgarian Chinese Espanol Greek Korean Portuguese Russian

# Westwood High School Student Handbook

## 2026-2027

**Westwood High School**
200 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090
(781) 326-7500

# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future*

## WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

JOHN MURRAY
*Principal*

AISHLEEN MARCUS
*Assistant Principal*

KATHERINE CLIFFORD
*Dean of Students*

Dear Students,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at Westwood High School! I am excited to welcome both new and returning students to our school community. A new school year brings new opportunities to learn, grow, build relationships, and make a positive impact on those around you. I look forward to seeing the leadership, creativity, and energy each of you brings to Westwood High School.

Each new beginning offers an opportunity to reflect on your personal goals and to make choices that strengthen our school community. Westwood High School has a long-standing commitment to excellence. Our faculty and staff provide a wide range of opportunities for students to explore their interests, discover their talents, and achieve success. Together, we encourage one another to challenge ourselves, work hard, and embrace new experiences. As we begin this school year together, we will continue to build on Westwood High School's tradition of excellence while fostering a culture where every student feels challenged, supported, and connected. I look forward to seeing how each of you contributes to the academic, co-curricular, civic, and social life of our school.

While we each pursue our own goals, we also share a responsibility to create a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment for everyone. Every member of our community brings unique experiences, perspectives, and strengths. By treating one another with kindness, respect, and integrity, we create a school where everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

This handbook is an important resource as you navigate your years at Westwood High School. It outlines our core values, expectations, policies, and procedures. I encourage you and your families to review the handbook together and refer to it throughout the school year whenever questions arise.

Our faculty, staff, and administrators are committed to supporting you throughout the year. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or need assistance. We look forward to partnering with you to make the 2026–2027 school year a successful, rewarding, and memorable one.

Best wishes for a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,

John J. Murray, Ed.D.
Principal
Westwood High School

Table of Contents


I. WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL OVERVIEW
- Westwood High School Mission Statement
- Statement of Expectations
- Portrait of a Graduate
- 2026-2027 Bell Schedule
- Reports to Families
- High School Personnel

II. GOVERNANCE
- Elections and Qualifications for Office
- Judicial Council and Appeals Process
- Legislative Council Representation
- Site Council

III. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
- Announcements
- Communication with Families
- Cancellations/Delayed Opening of School
- Emergency Responses
- Lost Items
- Field Trips
- New Student Orientation
- METCO Program
- School Counseling Services
- English Language Learners (ELL)
- Health Services
- Resource Areas

IV. ACADEMICS
- Academic Reports
- Awarding of Credit
- Course Credit
- Audit Option
- Curriculum
- Examination Policy
- Grades
- Grade Scale
- Grade Point Average
- Graduation Requirements
- Honors
- Independent/Work Study
- Incomplete Work
- Make-Up Policy
- Outside Course Work

Schedule Changes
Textbooks

V. CODE OF CONDUCT
Attendance Policy
Conduct Guidelines
Search Policy

VI. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Rules and Regulations
Athletics

VII. SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICIES
Academic Integrity
Discipline Policy
Inhalant Abuse
Drug and Alcohol Policy
Non-Discrimination Policy Include Harassment and Retaliation
Bullying Policy
Hazing
Physical Restraint
Security Cameras

VIII. RELEASE OF INFORMATION
Student Records
Transcript and Temporary Records
Access
Amendment
Transfer Students
Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents
Release of Student Information
Right to Request That Student Information Be Withheld From Armed Forces Recruiters
Complaints

IX. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY
Acceptable Use of Technology Overview
Westwood Public Schools District Acceptable Use Policy
Westwood Public Schools Grades 6 - 12 Responsible Use Guidelines
Acceptable Use Policy Violations

X. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

****The policies and procedures contained in this Handbook are in effect for 2026-2027 and take the place of previous editions of the WHS Handbook.****

## I. WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL OVERVIEW

**High School Mission Statement**

Members of the Westwood High School community will strive for excellence in academic endeavors. We recognize that fostering a climate that promotes intellectual, social and emotional growth is the shared responsibility of students, faculty, administrators, support staff, parents, and the community-at-large. We challenge all members of our school community to practice self-discipline, exhibit respectful behavior, celebrate others' achievements and demonstrate a commitment to learning as a lifelong process.

**School-Wide Academic Expectations**

1. Read effectively
2. Communicate effectively
3. Define, analyze, and solve problems
4. Access and interpret information from a variety of sources

**School-Wide Social and Civic Expectations**

1. Practice kind, respectful, and appropriate behavior
2. Assume responsibility for one's own behavior
3. Contribute to the well-being and welfare of others
4. Participate in the school's democratic process

## Portrait of a Graduate
***A Vision for WPS Students, PK-22***

## Graduates of the Westwood Public Schools will:

**Think Critically and Creatively**
Critical and innovative thinkers possess the skills, knowledge, and strategies to be curious, continuous learners. They understand information, develop content mastery, solve problems, adapt to novel situations, and design their own paths.

**Communicate and Collaborate**
Collaborative communicators connect effectively across identities, cultures, and generations. They leverage their skills and voices to be productive speakers, listeners, writers, creators, and contributors.

**Act with Integrity**
Individuals with integrity are guided by a deep sense of self and compassion for others. They demonstrate authenticity, responsibility, and empathy in their decision-making and actions.

**Engage Locally and Globally**
Engaged learners connect with local, national, and global communities to be a force for positive change. They find purpose and joy in service to one another and our world, and in improving conditions for all.

## Indicators:

**Think Critically and Creatively:** *Students can...*
- Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize multiple perspectives and viewpoints
- Reflect, ask questions, and use reasoning and evidence to problem-solve
- Seek knowledge and apply understanding to adapt to novel situations

**Communicate and Collaborate:** *Students can...*
- Listen actively with purpose of understanding before making decisions
- Navigate interactions to work effectively with a variety of individuals and audiences
- Communicate and contribute respectfully through various modalities and platforms

**Act with Integrity:** *Students can...*
- Demonstrate courage to make positive choices even in difficult situations
- Model integrity and honesty in their words, actions, and work
- Adapt to and employ technology ethically and responsibly

**Engage Locally and Globally:** *Students can...*
- Engage in service to others and contribute actively to make change in their community
- Explore different communities and perspectives
- Persevere in the face of challenges to be a force for positive change

*Westwood Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.*

***2026-2027 Bell Schedule***

| Traditional | Early Release | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:15 - 9:20 | 8:15 - 9:05 | A | F | D | B | G | E | C |
| 9:25 - 10:25 | 9:10 - 9:55 | B | G | E | C | A | F | D |
| 10:30 - 11:10 | 10:00 - 10:35 | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |
| 11:15 - 12:15 | 10:40 - 11:25 | C | A | F | D | B | G | E |
| LUNCH 12:20 - 1:50 | 11:30 - 12:15 | D | B | G | E | C | A | F |
| 1:55 - 2:55 | LUNCH 12:20 - 1:40 | E | C | A | F | D | B | G |
| Drop Block 1 | | **F** | **D** | **B** | **G** | **E** | **C** | **A** |
| Drop Block 2 | | **G** | **E** | **C** | **A** | **F** | **D** | **B** |

BREAKFAST SCHEDULE

8:00 AM - 8:25 AM
9:00 AM - 9:25 AM

REGULAR LUNCH SCHEDULE

| 1st Lunch | 2nd Lunch (split class) | 3rd Lunch |
|---|---|---|
| Lunch: 12:20-12:50 | Class: 12:20-12:50 | Class: 12:20-1:20 |
| Class: 12:50-1:50 | Lunch: 12:50-1:20 | Lunch: 1:20-1:50 |
| | Class: 1:20-1:50 | |

EARLY RELEASE LUNCH

| 1st Lunch | 2nd Lunch (split class) | 3rd Lunch |
|---|---|---|
| Lunch: 12:20-12:50 | Class: 12:20-12:45 | Class: 12:20-1:10 |
| Class: 12:50-1:40 | Lunch: 12:45-1:15 | Lunch: 1:10-1:40 |
| | Class: 1:15-1:40 | |

**2026-2027 REPORTS TO FAMILIES**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TERM 1** (44 days) | **Last day of term: November 6th** | |
| Progress Reports | Grades due: | Friday, October 2nd at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, October 2nd at 3:30 PM |
| Report Cards | Grades due: | Friday, November 13th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, November 13th at 3:30 PM |
| SPED Progress Reports Due: | | Friday, November 20th |
| **TERM 2** (43 days) | **Last day of term: January 22nd** | |
| Progress Reports: | Grades due: | Friday, December 11th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, December 11th at 3:30 PM |
| Report Cards: | Grades due: | Friday, January 29th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, January 29th at 3:30 PM |
| SPED Progress Reports Due: | | Friday, February 5th |
| **TERM 3** (44 days) | **Last day of term: April 2nd** | |
| Progress Reports: | Grades due: | Friday, February 26th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, February 26th at 3:30 PM |
| Report Cards: | Grades due: | Friday, April 9th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday April 9th at 3:30 PM |
| SPED Progress Reports Due: | | Friday, April 16th |
| **TERM 4** (44 days) | **Last day of term: June 11th** | |
| Progress Reports: | Grades due: | Friday, May 7th at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Friday, May 7th at 3:30 PM |
| Report Cards | Grades due: | Monday, June 21st at 12:00 PM |
| | Available to students: | Monday, June 21st at 3:30 PM |
| Senior Summaries and Progress Reports Due: | | Wednesday, June 2nd |
| SPED Progress Reports Due: | | Monday, June 21st |

**J-TERM (5 days): June 14 - 18th**

**Important Dates for Seniors**

| | |
|---|---|
| Last day of senior classes: | May 28th |
| Senior Grades due: | Wednesday, June 2nd at 12:00 PM |
| Available to students: | Wednesday, June 2nd at 3:30 PM |
| Class Day: | June 4th |
| Graduation: | Tentative June 6th, at 10:00 AM |

## *High School Personnel*

*Updated: 7/20/26*

**Administration**

| | |
|---|---|
| Murray, John | *Principal* |
| Marcus, Aishleen | *Assistant Principal* |
| Clifford, Katherine | *Dean of Students* |
| Bergiel, Lauren | *Student Services Department Chair* |

**Administrative Staff**

| | |
|---|---|
| Curtis, Sue | *Admin. Asst. for Guidance* |
| LeGuyader, Alexa | *Admin. Asst. for Student Services* |
| Kinsman, Jacqueline | *Admin. Asst. to Principal* |
| Montgomery, Maura | *Admin. Asst. to Assistant Principal & Dean* |
| Tryder, Mara | *Admin. Asst. for Guidance* |

**Building Support Staff**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sorrell, Dan | *Associate Dean* |
| Brooker, Lisa | *Building Substitute* |
| Hughes, Ernest | *METCO Secondary Schools Coordinator* |
| McGillvray, John | *Building Substitute* |
| Medalie, Ryan | *Building Substitute* |

**Library/Technology**

| | |
|---|---|
| Fisher, Theresa | *Librarian* |
| Morrier, Lori | *Librarian Assistant* |
| Hebb, Andrew | *Technology* |
| Perez, Nelson | *Technology* |
| Schwanbeck, Gregory | *Instructional Technology Coach* |

**Health Office**

| | |
|---|---|
| Petrous, Laura | *Nurse* |
| Shu, Dawnmarie | *Nurse* |

**Athletics**

| | |
|---|---|
| Verrier, Richkaard | *Athletics Director* |
| Gillis, Shannon | *Assistant Athletic Director* |
| Lilla, Paul | *Athletic Trainer* |

**Facilities**

| | |
|---|---|
| Smith, Ron | *Assistant Facilities Director* |
| Bradshaw, Eric | *Head Custodian* |

**English**

Holmes, Kate, *Chair*
Bresnick, Helena
Briggs, Leslie
McCarney, Kaitlyn
McGee, Jamie
Moriarty, Kieran
Moses, Mike
O'Brien, Katrina
Sweeney, Jessica
Vanderwerf, Cameron
Whelan, Caitlin
Wilson, Angela
Wright, Fritha

**Mathematics**

Ferguson, Tanya, *Chair*
Amarillis, Anissa
Cerce, Leah
Glynn, William
Griffin, Katherine
Keene, Nathan
Kinugawa, Miki
Mao, Michael
McGrath, Ashley
Mehigan, Brianne
Monahan, Eavan

**Wellness**

Tornatore, Ariana, *Director*
Costello, Nathan
Duarte, Sarah
McCord, Michelle

**Science**

Miller, Andrew, *Chair*
Looney, Jim
Merrick, Jaclyn
Mullins, Shawn
Parrish, Mark
Rycroft, Nate
Sargent, Jared
Schwanbeck, Gregory
Stief, Scott
Taylor, Chris
Warner, Erin
Wheeler, Erin
Zubarev, Yana

**Social Studies**

Hilton, Chris, *Chair*
Chu, Christine
Donahue, Alison
Johnson, Travis
LaVigne, Martin
McEachern, Brian
Noble, Sally
Rocha, Corey
Sherr, Jonas
Shuman, Brian
Steltzer, Emily

**Performing Arts**

Cote, Heather, *Director*
Goldman, Robert
Howard, Jim

**School Counselors**

Higgins, Caroline, *Director*
Blais, Mallory
Haskins, Caryn
LaRochelle, Brian
Erilus, Max
Peterson, Deb
Shields, Julia

**Student Services**

Bengel, Joanna, *Social Worker*
Bergiel, Lauren, *Liaison*
Booth, Virginia, *Liaison*
Burns, Ashley, *SLP*
DiBasie, Kayla, *Psychologist*
Durant, Christina, *ELL*
Goldstein, Cheri, *Liaison*
Harris, Samantha, *Liaison*
Houston, Paul, *Liaison*
Kimbar, Whitney, *Psychologist*
Lobsitz, Jessica, *Psychologist*
Mehigan, Seamus, *Liaison*
Mitchell, Josh, *Liaison*
Montello, Anna, *ABA Tutor*
Munoz, Heidi, *Psychologist*
Muse, Stephanie, *BCBA*
Peck, Emma, *Liaison*
Peters, Elizabeth, *Liaison*
Rau, Evan, *Liaison*
Scully, Matthew, *Liaison*
Strachan, Allison, *Liaison*
Sundaram, Shalini, *ABA Tutor*
Tannenbaum, Lisa, *Lit Specialist*
Tucceri, Sharyn, *SLP*
Zhai, Yue, *ABA Tutor*

**Instructional Assistants**

Brennan, Robert
Capone, Wilson
Giordano, Matthew
Hwang, Jacqueline
McCullough, Justin
Perry, James
Shaunessey, Brendan
Thornton, Pamela
Thorp, Catherine
Touma, Doris
Ward, Beth

**Visual Arts**

Johnson, Zoe, *Interim Director*
Celantano, Kelli
Houston, Liza
Penney, Logan
Tracey, Brian

**World Languages**

Carpinella, Hillary, *Chair*
Altenbach, Julia
Balivet, Aaron
DeLeon, Andrea
Flanagan, Eileen
Lee, Kathy
Urizzi, Emma
Weydt, Rebecca
Zarrow, Edward

## II. GOVERNANCE

Westwood High School (WHS) is governed under the provisions of the WHS Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The Constitution establishes three branches of government. The Bill of Rights establishes the rights and responsibilities of each member of the school community.

Copies of the WHS Constitution can be found in the Main Office. Changes in school policy affected by any of the three branches of government (due to legislation, executive decision, or judicial precedent) shall be considered amendments to the rules and regulations found in this handbook.

### *Elections and Qualifications for Office*

Elections shall be held for positions on the following bodies and offices: Legislative Council (Student Advisory Board and Faculty Senate), Judicial Council, Student Council, Site Council, and Class Officers.

### Procedure

In addition to those rules found in the Constitution, the following rules shall prevail regarding elections to WHS bodies and other offices:

1. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be empowered to conduct and oversee any election which shall take place under the Constitution. Furthermore, it shall be authorized to create rules and regulations governing elections, provided nothing conflicts with the principles embodied in the Constitution.
2. Regular elections shall be held annually in April. Elections of 9th grade class officers and any other positions pertaining to the incoming 9th grade called for under the provisions of the Constitution shall take place before September 30th of the new school year. Additionally, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall hold special elections whenever a vacancy occurs and shall see that the position is filled promptly according to Constitutional procedures.
3. Elections shall be conducted virtually during school hours and accessible to all members of the High School Community.
4. Candidates or their authorized representatives may be present virtually for the tabulation of the votes. All ballots shall be counted by members of the Nominations and Elections Committee.
5. Results of elections shall be announced on the next school day following the vote and results shall be posted.
6. Offices in extracurricular organizations will be achieved by such fair and equitable methods as the organization shall decide.

### Qualifications for Student Office

1. All students who are passing with at least 25 credits and in satisfactory disciplinary standing may hold office in student government, class or other organizations. Please note: credits for students enrolled in Learning Center part-time are prorated; the prorated number of credits they are passing will be used to determine whether they qualify for student office.
2. Students who have been suspended during the current school year are ineligible to hold office during that school year. If a student is suspended while holding office, they must resign and a new election must be held to fill the position.

### *Judicial Council and Appeals Process*

At the discretion of the Principal, students may appeal disciplinary decisions (such as detention, Saturday School, and loss of privileges; excluding any decisions related to M.G.L. c. 71, s. 37H, 37H½, or 37H¾) if they feel their school constitutional rights have been violated.

The Judicial Process is described in Article V of the WHS constitution. A two-thirds majority of the council is needed to overturn or alter an administrative decision. Students, faculty members and administrators are encouraged to have an advocate who is familiar with the judicial process and can help the student present their case.

In the case of an appeal, a punishment given by the administration will be postponed pending the hearing, except in cases when the administration deems there is a danger to community members or the school or in cases where the law allows the school to continue the student's punishment during an appeal. Any person appealing a decision or going before the Judicial Council will not be harassed or treated with disrespect.

### *Legislative Council Representation*

Legislative Council members shall serve as the representatives for the members of their class. Suggestions from students regarding legislative action are solicited through activities such as homeroom visits or the electronic suggestion box at legislativec@westwood.k12.ma.us.

Legislative Council meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. All are welcome to attend. Any member of the WHS community may submit legislation for consideration directly to the council or via a legislator.

In addition, during the first week of each month each liaison shall present a concise, structured, and focused overview of governance happenings. The liaison shall also be prepared to field questions and take suggestions from students.

### *Site Council*

Every public school in Massachusetts is required to have a school council. The Council consists of the principal, parents/caregivers, teachers, students and community representatives. Elections are held in October under the direction of the Principal and the Parent-Teacher Organization.

The Council meets monthly to discuss educational needs and formulate a school improvement plan. Interested parties are encouraged to participate and seek elected positions.

## III. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

### *Announcements*

Announcements will be presented daily at the beginning of the first block, and time-sensitive information will be emailed to all members of the WHS community. A student may submit an announcement to the main office.

### *Communication with Families*

The link to the WHS web site from the Westwood Public Schools home page (www.westwood.k12.ma.us) provides a variety of information from the daily bulletin to upcoming events, athletic schedules, and important announcements. A database of family email addresses (listserv) may be used for communications such as the Principal's Monthly Newsletter and other timely information.

**Phone:** An automated phone system (Thrillshare) allows WHS to communicate with families simultaneously to provide important information ranging from cancellations to emergencies.

**Aspen Portal:** Report cards are available for students and families to view through Aspen at the end of each term.

### *Cancellations/Delayed Opening of School*

Announcements canceling or delaying school will be made over the Thrillshare phone system, as well as radio and television stations and social media. Please do not call the police or fire departments.

In the event that inclement weather results in a delayed school opening, Westwood High School modifies the schedule by *eliminating S-block that day* and *shortening the other five blocks* [A-G, depending on the rotational day]. Each block is typically shortened by 10-15 minutes, depending on the length of the delay.

When school is canceled, the rotating day calendar is not changed. For example, if school is cancelled on Day 1, students return to school on the following day for Day 2.

### *Emergency Responses*

**Hold**
Hold is used when students and faculty are expected to stay in their assigned room or area and keep hallways clear, often for a medical emergency. The goal is to limit movement within the building, with classroom doors closed, but classroom lights stay on, and teaching and learning continues. Even if the bell rings, individuals are expected to remain in their hold location until they are told otherwise.

**Secure**
Secure is used when there is an external threat to the school. Exterior doors are locked, and no one is permitted into or out of the building. Similar to a hold, classroom doors are closed, classroom lights stay on, and teaching and learning continues. Even if the bell rings, individuals are expected to remain in their secure location until they are told otherwise.

**Lockdown**
Emergency lockdowns are an elevated response and implemented when students and/or staff are facing an internal threat inside of the building. At the direction of the Incident Management Team (IMT), students and staff may be directed to follow lockdown protocols in which all persons remain in secured areas until

given further instruction. External doors are locked immediately, classroom doors are locked immediately, lights and light sources are turned off, and individuals are to stay out of sight and silent. Individuals are expected to remain in their lockdown location until they are told otherwise by a first responder. An emergency lockdown will be practiced at least once per year.

**Evacuation**
Evacuations are prompted by the sounding of the fire alarm. All people in the building will leave immediately in accordance with directions posted in each classroom and report to their designated area for attendance. Students are expected to cooperate fully and follow the directions of any adult during building evacuation. Silence is required. Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by a faculty member, even if the alarm stops. Evacuations will be practiced at least three times per year.

***Lost Items***

Any student who fails to return district-provided materials (i.e. chromebooks, books, uniforms) will not be able to participate in grade level activities, including Graduation, until the item is returned, the district has been reimbursed for lost items, or alternative arrangements have been made. Any fee or charge owed to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District.

***Field Trips***

Completed permission slips signed by a parent or caregiver must be received by the school at least one week in advance of a field trip. Students are responsible for notifying their teachers at least two days in advance of the trip and for making up all work missed due to the field trip immediately. Students on field trips are governed by all school policies. High school administration has discretion to deem a student ineligible to participate in any school sponsored field trip.

***New Student Orientation***

Students new to Westwood High School (new in 9th grade or matriculating to any grade) are invited to attend New Student Orientation, held the week before school begins. The goal of New Student Orientation is to create space for relationship building among new students and their peers, as well as with students from other grades levels as the orientation itself is planned and facilitated by current WHS students. All school rules apply during Orientation.

***METCO Program***

METCO (The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity) provides students with a strong academic foundation rich in cultural, educational, ethnic, socioeconomic, and racial diversity while creating opportunities for Boston and suburban children to develop a deeper understanding of each other in an integrated public school setting. METCO strives to be a leader in voluntary school integration within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and across the nation to promote school diversity, close the achievement gap, and overcome racial barriers. Westwood has been a member of the METCO program for over fifty years.

***School Counseling Services***

The School Counseling Department is dedicated to supporting each student's academic, social, emotional, and postsecondary growth and development. We strive to empower students to achieve success as learners, build confidence, develop effective problem solving skills, strengthen emotional awareness and resilience, foster healthy

interpersonal relationships, and explore educational, career, and personal opportunities that prepare them for success beyond high school.

### *Counseling*

Counseling is at the heart of the School Counseling Program. School counselors provide a safe, supportive environment where students can discuss academic, personal, social, and college or career concerns. When additional support is needed, counselors work with families to connect students with appropriate outside resources. Students are encouraged to build a relationship with their school counselor early in the school year. A strong partnership between student and counselor can play an important role in a positive and successful high school experience.

**Assignment of Counselors**

All high school students are assigned to a counselor. A change in counselor assignment will not be made without good cause. Such requests must be in written form and addressed to the Guidance Department Head and the Principal.

**College Admissions Representatives**

The guidance office will make sure to communicate to seniors the dates and times that specific schools will be holding in-person and virtual visits. The majority of college admissions representative visits will be scheduled during S-block or after school. To attend a meeting during S-block, register for the meeting via your MyFlexLearning account. To attend a meeting with a college admissions representative during the regular school day outside of S-block, a senior student must secure a "Request to Attend College Admissions Presentation" form from the Guidance Office and obtain the signatures of the student's Guidance Counselor and classroom instructor (indicating permission to be absent from class at the specified time and date). The completed form must be turned in to the Guidance Secretary. A pass to attend the presentation will then be issued.

**School Counseling Appointments**

Students who wish to see their counselor in person should email their counselor. The counselor will then send an email confirmation of this appointment. Appointments should be made during the student's study, S-block, free block, or lunch block, and should not infringe upon class time.

Parents or caregivers who wish to make a personal appointment with their child's counselor are requested to contact the Guidance Office:

- Caroline Higgins, *Chair* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3134)
- Mallory McKearin, *Counselor* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3399)
- Max Erilus, *Counselor* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3135)
- Meredith Gaynor *Counselor* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3120)
- Caryn Haskins, *Counselor* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3138)
- Brian LaRochelle, *Counselor* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3312)
- Sue Curtis, *Admin. Asst.* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3126)
- Mara Tryder, *Admin. Asst.* (781) 326-7500 (ext. 3319)

### *English Language Learners (ELL)*

Students whose primary language is other than English may receive ELE support from an ELD Teacher if they meet eligibility criteria.

ELE= English Language Education
ELL= English Language Learners (refers to students)
ELD= English Language Development (refers to teacher)

***Health Services***

The school health office provides advisory and emergency care only and is not a diagnostic clinic. After first aid has been administered, parents/caregivers are responsible for contacting their health care provider for diagnosis and to carry out any after-care.

The health office keeps a record of all visits. Parents/caregivers will be notified of any possible health condition that may be developing.

Emergency information should be entered into the Aspen portal by a parent/caregiver at the beginning of the school year and should be updated during the school year if any information changes.

If a student becomes ill and needs to go home, parents/caregivers will be notified. Parents/caregivers are responsible for arranging transportation. If a student must be transported by ambulance to the emergency department, the ambulance is required to go to the nearest hospital, which is Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital Needham. In an extreme emergency, if it is impossible to reach either parent/caregiver, the principal has the authority to decide what steps are necessary.

Parents/caregivers should notify the school, in writing, of any medical conditions the student may have that may affect their well-being, including any religious stipulations regarding restrictions in medical care.

**Contagious Diseases and Returning to School**

A sick student 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 high school health office with any questions.

> ***Chicken Pox/Shingles*:** Notify the school nurse immediately if your child has been diagnosed with having either of these conditions. There are Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines that must govern your child's return to school.
>
> ***Conjunctivitis*:** Student may return to school 12 hours after starting antibiotic medication, *and* as soon as the symptoms of redness and discharge are greatly improved. There are different types of conjunctivitis: viral (no treatment) or bacterial (antibiotic eye medication). Your child should remain home if they develop a fever or continue to have eye symptoms (drainage, redness, itching).
>
> ***Fever*:** Fever is defined as 100 degrees or higher. 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, they should not attend school the next day. Student should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Student may return to school when:
>
> - Their temperature is below 100 degrees AND
> - They have not taken medication to reduce the fever for 24 hours.
>
> ***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 should 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. Discuss with the school nurse treatment for lice and nits.

***Strep Throat*:** Student may return to school 12-24 hours after starting antibiotic medication, provided they are fever-free, and remain free of other symptoms.

***Vomiting*:** Student 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.

***Diarrhea***: Student 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.

**Illness, Injuries or Accidents Occurring in School**

Students should report to the health office if an illness, injury, or accident occurs in school. If a student needs to go home, the nurse will make arrangements with the parent/caregiver. If the health office is closed for any reason, the student should report to the main office and a nurse will be contacted.

**Immunizations**

All immunizations must be up to date according to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Parents/caregivers will be notified if a student is in need of an immunization. The parent/caregiver must then provide written documentation when it has been administered.

**Insurance**

It is mandatory in Massachusetts to have health insurance. The Health Connector is an independent state agency that helps you find the right health insurance plan. The website is www.mahealthconnector.org. For information about MassHealth call 1-800-841-2900.

**Medications**

All medications that a student must take during the school day must be administered by the school nurse according to the following procedures:

1. A medication authorization form must be on file in the health office. These forms must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. A small photo of the student is strongly recommended for identification.
2. For short-term prescriptions (10 days or less), the medication may be contained in a pharmacy labeled container in lieu of a medication authorization form. A parental consent form is still required.
3. Over the counter medications, such as Tylenol, also require that the medication authorization form be on file in the health office.
4. Inhalers may be carried by the student if a physician's medication authorization form is on file in the health office. It is helpful to leave an extra inhaler in the health office, in case of an emergency.
5. Any student requiring an EpiPen or Benadryl for a severe allergic reaction is required to provide the medications and the medication authorization form by the first day of school.

**New Student Admissions**

New admissions to the district in all grades, including all visiting and exchange students, must provide an up to date immunization record in writing ***before entry to school.*** They must also provide documentation of a valid physical exam within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry, or they will not be allowed to attend school until this documentation is provided to the school nurse. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

**Physical Education and Athletic Excuses**

All physical education and athletic excuse notes should be presented to and filed by the nurse in the health office prior to the class or activity. The nurse will then give the student a note to present to the teacher or coach.

**Physical Examinations**

All grade 9 students are required to provide written documentation of a physical exam done by their health care provider. If this information is not provided by February 1, 2027, the student will not be allowed to attend school until written confirmation of a health care provider's physical is presented. Parents/caregivers must also fill out the Westwood Public Schools health information sheet and send a copy of it with the physical exam to the school nurse.

Written documentation of a current physical exam is required for participation in interscholastic sports. A physical exam is considered current for thirteen months from the date it is done. All other registration forms for athletics are done online. Students may not participate in a sport until the current physical is turned in and they have registered for athletics online.

**Screenings**

The following screenings will be performed by the Health Office and Student Services department. If there is any reason a student should not be screened, please notify the health office in writing.

Scoliosis screening - Grade 9 (required by law)
Signs of Suicide - Grade 9, Grade 12
Hearing and vision screening - Grade 10 (required by law)
Height, weight, BMI - Grade 10 (required by law)
SBIRT - Grade 10 (required by law)

***Resource Areas***

**Library/Media Center (LMC)**

**Mission**

The mission of the library program at Westwood High School is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. To meet this goal, the library strives to be a place where students and staff can create, collaborate, communicate, and think critically about a wide range of subjects and areas of interest.

**Expectation**s

The library is an academic space and students are encouraged to take advantage of its resources for their academic needs. Sometimes, we have more students than work tables, so we give priority to students who need to use our space for school work. While the cafeteria is available for groups wishing to socialize, the library is intended for students who need an academic space to pursue their studies.

The following guidelines are in place to help make the library a welcoming and productive place for all:

- Space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Students are required to sign in at the start of the block and stay in the library for the entire period.
- Be productive and come prepared with work to complete -- homework, research, quiet study, reading, project work, brain break activities.
- Respect the needs of others and keep your voice quiet.
- Do not pull chairs over to add seating to a table - this helps to keep noise at an acceptable level.
- Texting and other silent use of electronic devices are permitted in the library. Students must use headphones when listening to audio.

The Library staff is happy to be of service to any student who needs assistance in using library resources. We are also happy to reserve tables and rooms for staff and student use.

**Math Lab and Writing Lab**

The Math Lab and the Writing Lab are available during S Block for students seeking extra help in math and writing.

**Support Block**

Support Block ["S-block"] provides all WHS students with time within the school schedule to work on academic and/or social-emotional growth. S-block does not completely eliminate the need for before, during, or after school independent work and/or help with a teacher.

S-block meets daily for 35-40 minutes. Students grades 9-11 are assigned an S-block Anchor classroom to report to directly at the start of S-block. Students may remain in the Anchor to complete independent work, *or* students may select a different S-block offering for the entirety of that block. Students in grade 12 with privileges may access these privileges during S-block, or may select an S-block offering for the entirety of the block. S-block offerings may include teacher or departmental extra help, collaborative workspace, departmental enrichment, science labs, school counseling seminars, college representative visits, social-emotional support, skill-based seminars, and silent study.

Students engagement during S-block includes:

- Clarifying assignments given by a teacher
- Reviewing concepts that have been presented in class
- Discussing and reviewing assigned reading material.
- Practicing fundamental academic and social-emotional skills
- Working individually on major projects or class assignments
- Collaborating with classmates on group or whole-class projects
- Receiving assistance with incomplete class assignments
- Completing tests, quizzes or other assessments
- Conferring with a teacher/counselor to advance studies
- Extended studio work in the visual arts
- Extended lab work in the computer sciences
- Musical practice or rehearsal
- Meeting with a counselor or school social worker

All school rules apply during S-block, including CLEAR technology guidelines, and attendance and discipline policies. Students will come prepared to S-block by bringing all the materials needed for support such as:

- Something to write with
- The materials for the course in which help is needed
- Class notes
- Calculator
- Chromebook or BYOD device
- Snack (optional)

## IV. ACADEMICS

### *Academic Reports*

Academic reports are prepared periodically to convey information of achievement. Interim reports like Progress Reports, indicating progress to-date, are issued approximately half-way into each term. Report cards, indicating term and/or final grades, are issued approximately one week after the close of the term. Academic reports are issued directly to the student.

Progress Reports and Report Cards are issued via the Aspen Portal. Students and families will be alerted by email when report cards and progress reports are available for viewing. The dates when report cards and progress reports are issued are listed at the front of this document and on the school website. Please contact your student's school counselor if you cannot access an academic report.

### *Awarding of Credit*

At Westwood High School all courses are assigned credit values based on the number of class meetings per cycle, whether the course meets for one semester or the full year, and the amount of preparation required to meet acceptable standards of performance. A full-year course meeting 5 days of the 7-day cycle typically receives 5.00 credits toward graduation. Please refer to the Program of Studies for more detailed information about courses and course credit values.

### *Course Credit*

Unless otherwise approved by an administrator, all students are required to take no less and no more than six (6) major courses every year. A major course is one that offers five (5) or, in the case of lab courses, six (6) credits. In addition to these six major courses, minor courses offering 2.50 credits or 1.25 are required; these include Wellness, Financial Literacy, and Civic Action. Students seeking to take seven (7) courses must obtain permission from their school counselor, and will only be allowed to do so if space permits.

*Credits are awarded based on the following criteria:*

1. Students passing a course with a final grade of **A, B, C, D**, **or P** will receive full credit for the course.

2. A grade of **F** denotes failure and awards no credit. In order to make up the unearned credits a student may:

    A. Retake the course in summer school at an accredited summer school program, provided the course is pre-approved by the WHS Principal and relevant department head. A passing grade must be earned in summer school to receive full credit for the course.

**OR**

B. Repeat the course during the regular school year. The student must receive a D or higher in the same course to receive full credit for the course.

.

3. A student may earn a maximum of 5 credits for a 5 credit course, 6 credits for a 6 credit course, 2.5 credits for a 2.5 credit course, and 1.25 credits for a 1.25 credit course. Note: Students who have not earned sufficient credit for standing may not be advanced to the next grade.

*Certain departments may require that students attending summer school or receiving summer tutoring take an exam upon completion of summer work before allowing the student to enroll in the next course in the subject area sequence.*

**Audit Option:**

As an enrichment option, students have the opportunity to audit courses. Students are required to attend audit courses at the same rate as other students in the class, but are not required to complete coursework or take tests. Students will not be given a grade, but the course will be recorded as an audit in an addendum to their transcript. Students may apply to audit a course on a semester-to-semester basis. To take a class through the audit option, students are required to fill out a drop form in guidance, indicating that the course will be added as an audit. Forms must be submitted to guidance before the start of the semester the student is to enter the course. Students may drop audit classes during the first two weeks of the course, but are otherwise expected to attend regularly. Students who do not attend their audited classes will be subject to the same consequences as for classes taken for credit. No credit will be awarded to classes taken through the audit option.

***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.

***Examination Policy***

Many courses at WHS will administer summative assessments at the end of each quarter and/or semester. Term, midyear, and final assessments may be given in all courses, but there is no formal midyear or final exams period. Exams are prepared by members of each department and administered during the regular academic calendar. Students should make every effort to be present at an exam. *Knowing that extenuating circumstances can develop for students and families, the following protocol will be observed:*

1. Major assessments missed because of family emergencies verified by a parent/caregiver, or because of an illness verified by a doctor can be made up by individual arrangements with the teacher and the department chair.
2. Commitments to school-endorsed programs will be honored. Individual arrangements to make-up the assessment will be made with the student's teacher(s).
3. Make-up assessments will be scheduled at the convenience of the teacher. The grading of the exams and the necessary adjustments in records will be done as soon as mutually agreeable with faculty members but no later than the second full week of school in September.

If a student has been assigned three or more major assessments in one day, that student may self-advocate and make a plan with their teachers **to reschedule the most recently announced assessment**. A major assessment is one that takes 50 minutes or more to complete.

Students in this position should:

1. Identify the assessment that needs to be rescheduled.
2. Communicate in person with the classroom teacher about rescheduling the assessment at least 24 hours in advance.
3. Determine a rescheduled time as soon as possible after the original date of the exam.

***Grades***

Determining accurate, fair and appropriate grades is an important responsibility of each teacher at Westwood High School. At the beginning of each course, teachers must explain their grading policy to students. Students are welcome to ask their teachers about any grades they have received. Department heads, administrators, counselors, and parents/caregivers may make similar inquiries about grades. However, no grade shall be changed without just cause.

***Grade Scale***

Mathematical grades are converted to letter-based grades according to the chart below.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 93-100 | C | 73-76 |
| A- | 90-92 | C- | 70-72 |
| B+ | 87-89 | D+ | 67-69 |
| B | 83-86 | D | 63-66 |
| B- | 80-82 | D- | 60-62 |
| C+ | 77-79 | F | 0-59 |

***Grade Point Average***

The Guidance Department computes weighted and unweighted grade point averages (GPA) for every student in order to provide GPA information to colleges. In addition, the School Counseling Department will send to colleges a bar graph of GPA distributions in the senior class with each student's transcript and the school profile. The GPA is based on the final grade received in the student's six major courses completed annually. Grades of pass and fail shall accumulate no weight. Independent study courses and virtual high school courses do not count for the GPA.

The weighted GPA is based on a 4.0 scale, with a maximum possible GPA of 4.5, as illustrated by the matrix below. The un-weighted GPA will be computed on a 4.0 scale, with no distinction between levels. ***Please note that GPA is calculated according to a 4.0 scale.***

| | **COURSE LEVELS** | |
|---|---|---|
| **FINAL GRADE** | **H/AP** | **ACP/CP** |
| A | 4.50 | 4.00 |
| A- | 4.17 | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.83 | 3.33 |
| B | 3.50 | 3.00 |
| B- | 3.17 | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.83 | 2.33 |
| C | 2.50 | 2.00 |
| C- | 2.17 | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.83 | 1.33 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| D | 1.50 | 1.00 |
| D- | 1.17 | 0.67 |
| F | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| P | 0.00 | 0.00 |

The guidance office will prepare and publish an annual profile of graduated students, colleges applied to and accepted at and the representative GPA's. Parents and/or students may access this information on Naviance.

Term grades for Terms 1, 2, 3, and 4 each comprise 25% of the student's final grade respectively; end-of-term, end-of-semester, and end-of-year assessments are factored into term grades.

***Graduation Requirements***

The College Preparatory Program of Studies is a pattern of courses designed to prepare students for admission to a four-year college or university. Almost all students spend four years completing this program. A student following this program may opt for more difficult classes in their areas of strength. Please see the Program of Studies Booklet for specific course suggestions.

To graduate from Westwood High School, a student must earn a minimum of 115 credits (meeting minimum credit requirements in subject areas listed below).

**Required Credits for Advancement**

To advance to the 11th grade: 52.5 credits
To advance to the 12th grade: 85 credits
Graduation Requirement 115*
(Credits may be earned at College Preparatory, Advanced CP, Honors, and/or AP credit)

**20.00** Credits of English
**1.25** Credits of Civic Action
**1.25** Credits of Financial Literacy
**15.00** Credits of Mathematics
**17.00** Credits of Science (including 6.0 Credits of Biology or Physics)
**10.00** Credits of Social Studies (including 5.0 Credits of United States History)
**7.5** Credits of Wellness
**5.00** Credits of Art (Visual or Performing Arts courses)
**10.0** Credits of World Language (must complete a 2-year sequence in one language)

* *Please note that the 115 credit requirement is not simply a total. Students must meet subject area credit requirements listed above in order to graduate from Westwood High School.*

**Competency Determination**

One of the requirements for graduation in Massachusetts is a determination of competency in subjects previously covered by the MCAS. In addition to other requirements for graduation, students must have been determined by the district to have achieved mastery of the common core of skills, competency, and knowledge in said areas, and satisfactorily completed coursework that has been certified by the student's district as showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge contained in the state academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

Competency Determination Requirements
A determination of competency shall include:

- Demonstrating a mastery of skills in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science; and the satisfactory completion of relevant coursework aligned to the standards measured by the high school English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science MCAS assessments administered in 2023.

- An additional requirement for mastery in US History will apply to the graduating Class of 2027, and beyond.

To show mastery, a student must successfully complete, in accordance with the district's grading policy or by any other appropriate methodology as may be determined by the School Committee:

1. The final assessment for a course; or
2. A capstone or portfolio project; or
3. An equivalent measure identified in the district's CD policy.

Please click here to review the full Competency Determination policy.

**Graduation Participation Requirements**

In order to participate in Westwood High School's graduation ceremony, a student must have completed the following:

1. Met all necessary obligations by 3:00 PM on ***Thursday*** prior to the commencement date
2. Attained at least **110** credits
3. Completed all the above subject area requirements, or be able to complete the requirements with a single approved summer school course

When all academic and other obligations are met, the student may receive a Westwood High School diploma.

**Requests for Course Credit for Online Courses through Outside Providers**

Approvals for online coursework will be made on a case-by-case basis by guidance in conjunction with school administration. While Westwood High School is supportive of online learning opportunities, it is important to note that students are not able to take a course online that is already offered at WHS unless the course does not fit into the student's schedule.

**Grading and Credit Approval**

All online coursework taken for credit from a provider other than WHS must be approved in advance of the course start date. Students are able to take a limited number of online courses to count toward graduation requirements. If a student chooses to take an online course for credit, Westwood High School reserves the right to review coursework, curriculum, and instructional practices of all online courses to determine appropriateness and fit within the scope of Westwood High School's program of studies and graduation requirements to make determinations regarding awarding of credit for online coursework. Courses that are approved for individual credit to students will be awarded credits and a grade following successful completion of the course and awarding of grades by the online content provider.

**Outside Coursework Deadlines**

Westwood High School cooperates with several online providers to make online learning opportunities outside of WHS available to students. Because online coursework is developed, managed, and assessed by independent providers, the deadlines and grading practices of the providers are firm and non-negotiable. As a result, extensions, Incompletes, and other adjustments to the online learning curriculum, calendar, or coursework are not available.

**Early Graduation**

Students may request approval from the high school principal to graduate early. Requests for approval for early graduation must be made at least two semesters prior to the desired date of graduation. Interested students and their families should research options for alternative credit well in advance and should seek the input of their counselor in developing their plan to complete all graduation requirements.

A review committee composed of the Principal, designee, Guidance Director, and Special Education Department Chair (if applicable) will review early graduation requests. If the committee approves the request, the student and their parent/caregiver will sign a contract that outlines the student's plan for completing graduation requirements, which acknowledges that failure to fulfill the terms of the contract may jeopardize the student's early graduation status. Students who are approved for early graduation must fulfill their graduation requirements by taking required courses during grades 9-11, or in the summers between those years if necessary (please note: a maximum of 5.0 credits will be allowed each summer for summer courses).

If the committee denies the request for early graduation, the student and their parent/caregiver may appeal the decision to the Superintendent.

Further eligibility requirements after the granting of Early Graduation status:

1. Student eligibility to participate in Senior Week activities will be determined by the review committee.
2. The student may apply for all scholarships for which the graduating class has the opportunity and for which the student is eligible.
3. The student will not be eligible for designation as Valedictorian of the graduating class.

For more information about early graduation, students and families should consult their guidance counselor.

***Honors***

**Class Valedictorian**

The student(s) in the graduating class with the highest cumulative weighted GPA (based on coursework completed at WHS) will be selected as valedictorian. Computation of the GPA will take place at the end of the 4th term of the senior year.

**Graduation Honor Address**

The Honor Address at Westwood High School's Graduation ceremony is an opportunity for a student from the graduating class to share a message with other attendees of the ceremony. The Honor Address will be chosen by a committee of WHS staff and community members. Any graduating student may submit a speech for consideration by the committee.

**National Honor Society**

National Honor Society: Membership in the National Honor Society is open only to those juniors and seniors who are elected by the five-member faculty council on the basis of four criteria: scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

To fulfill the scholarship requirements, students must have attained a requisite weighted cumulative grade point average of 3.7 or higher. The School Counseling Department Head will identify those students who have achieved the GPA required for NHS eligibility and notify the Advisor of the National Honor Society at the beginning of the second semester of junior year and the first semester of senior year.

In order that the faculty council may judge leadership, service, and character, students who qualify scholastically are asked to submit documentation of these characteristics, including a resume, an essay response and references. Conduct reports and compliance with attendance policies will also be reviewed as part of the evaluation of leadership and character. As part of this criteria, candidates (and members) must adhere to the school's academic integrity policy. Such violations may result in non-selection following the review of a candidate's qualifications and a majority vote of the faculty council. Students seeking membership will have also demonstrated service by participating in at least ten hours of community service prior to applying for NHS Membership, since the start of 9th grade.

Membership is an honor bestowed upon a select group of students by the NHS Board on behalf of the school faculty. Students who are not selected do not have a legal right to a hearing, although they and their parents/caregivers will be given an opportunity to present their complaints to the Principal or chapter advisor. Should current members fail to maintain their academic eligibility or should they violate school standards with respect to academic integrity and discipline, probation or dismissal from the society may result. Further information is noted in the NHS charter.

***Independent/Work Study***

The purpose of Independent/Work Study is to allow a student to earn academic credit for learning projects and/or experiences that are not represented in the traditional curriculum. Independent Study for credit must be carried out under the supervision of the Independent/Work Study Coordinator and a classroom teacher. Independent/ Work Study is also considered as supplemental to the regular program of studies, and it is not to be considered as a part of the six major subject requirements.

While Independent Study provides students access to courses uniquely unavailable to them in the program of studies, Work Study provides the opportunity for senior students to engage in real world, hands-on learning outside of the typical Westwood High School setting. Work Study students apply their learning in a setting that is meaningful to them and their future, obtain skills that will equip them to pursue career interests, and receive feedback from experts in specific fields in order to gain.

**Work Study Requirements:**

- Students must be in good standing for graduation and have earned a minimum of 90 credits by August 1st preceding their senior year.
- Students may earn a minimum of 5 and no more than 10 Works Study course credits. Credits are earned in the following manner:
    - 100 hours worked and completion of all below deliverables earns 5 credits.
    - 200 hours worked and completion of all below deliverables earns 10 credits.
- A student may be enrolled in one Work Study course per semester (ex: may not earn 10 credits in a single semester).

A student initiates an Independent/Work Study Project by working with their school counselor and the coordinator to find a teacher or outside professional who will sponsor and supervise the project. Work Study proposals must be submitted by July 15th, and outside supervisors/jobs must be secured by the Principal by August 1st.

The coordinator, supervisor, and student will complete a formal contract for approval by the department chair and the principal. The contract will specify the goals of the study, the means of evaluation, the frequency and time of meetings, the number of credits to be earned, and the level on which those credits will be graded. The contract will also specify what the student will do to carry out the project.

The work is to be graded each marking period and may be a Pass or Fail. A student may earn no more than 5 credits per semester, and no more than 10 course credits total through Independent/Work Study.

Please note that Independent/Work Study is not a "right" of each student, but rather a privilege. The amount of time available to a teacher or outside professional for supervising Independent Study is limited; most student/teacher conferences will have to be scheduled during S-blocks, and before or after school. A teacher may not supervise more than two Independent Study students at one time. Furthermore, each department may establish special qualifications for Independent Study candidates.

***Incomplete Work***

Due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness), a student may be unable to complete assignments or exams prior to the close of a marking period. In these cases, a student shall receive an "I" in place of a grade and will be expected to complete all makeup work according to the WHS Make-up Policy or other arrangements coordinated by administration***.*** Failure to do so may result in a grade based on work received. For the fourth term incomplete grades, students must make prior arrangements with their school counselor and teachers to complete necessary work during the summer so that a grade may be entered in a timely manner.

***Outside Course Work***

Courses taken by WHS students outside of the WHS Program of Studies will not be included as part of the student's high school transcript or be computed in the student's GPA. Such coursework may be identified as an addendum to the high school transcript.

At the discretion of the high school Principal, exceptions to this policy may be made in the following instances:

1. A student has exhausted all WHS curricular offerings in a given academic area.
2. The Student Services Referral Team through an evaluation process has recommended an academic program not available at WHS.
3. A student chooses to participate in an academic program made available through a consortium of which WHS is a member.
4. Wellness courses taken outside of WHS.

***Schedule Changes***

The master schedule of courses in the high school is determined by students' course requests each spring. The teaching staff is then assigned based upon these course requests. Therefore, once the student has made their initial course selections, they should not consider requesting changes unless absolutely necessary. All course offerings are subject to change, availability, and staffing. Minimum enrollment requirements must be met for all sections.

Student-initiated requests to change course or level selections prior to the start of the school year will be considered only when the request for change in course selection is made **prior to the override deadline (April 17th)**. Override requests are processed by academic department chairs at the high school. All requests after April

17th will be placed on the Override Waitlist and processed after July 15th based on class size and availability. This process ensures adequate staffing for course sections and provides students sufficient time to complete summer work, if applicable. No requests after July 15th will be processed until the school year is underway. This process ensures adequate staffing for course sections and provides students sufficient time to complete summer work, if applicable.

**Student- and parent/caregiver-initiated requests for a schedule change during the school year will be considered only under the following conditions:**

- The request for change is made during the Add/Drop period during the first two weeks of the school year. (Semester 2 courses are subject to a second Add/Drop period during the first two weeks of the second semester).
- The request for change in course selection is approved by the student's parents/caregivers.
- Approval of the course change request in course selection is possible within the confines of the established master schedule of courses and teacher assignments. In some rare instances, a course change request is not possible within these confines.
- Approval of the request for course change does not result in the student enrolling in fewer than six major courses or its equivalent.
- Transfer of grade: Students must meet with the new teacher and/or department chair to determine required work to be made up in the new course.

**Student- and parent/caregiver-initiated requests to change course levels during the school year will be considered only under the following conditions:**

- Level change requests may only be submitted after the conclusion of the Add/Drop period.
- The level change request is initiated no later than October 9th (the Friday preceding Indigenous People's/Columbus Day) for Semester 1 courses or no later than March 5th for Semester 2 courses.
- The request for change in course level is approved by the instructor(s) involved, department chairpersons involved, and the student's parents/caregivers.
- Approval of the change in course level is possible within the confines of the established master schedule of courses and teacher assignments and does not result in the student enrolling in fewer than six major courses or its equivalent. In some rare instances, a level change request is not possible within these confines, and the student's support team will need to develop alternative plans for the student in this position.
- Transfer of grade: Course level changes may result in grade adjustments. In these cases, the teachers of the old and new course levels will consult with each other, in conjunction with the department chair(s)/directors, regarding the student's grade. This process typically results in a grade that reflects both the proportional time the student spent in each course, and the requirements, expectations, and learning objectives of the new course.
- There are some instances where a level change necessitates a course change. This typically occurs when courses are not offered at all levels.

Finally, please note that a department chair, director, or administrator may require a change in levels after the semester deadlines based on extenuating circumstances.

In some rare instances, we may not be able to grant schedule change requests, and will need to develop alternative plans to support students in this position. We are confident we will be able to support students' varied interests and needs, and create and maintain schedules that both challenge and support our students.

***Textbooks***

Textbooks and other instructional materials issued for student use will be numbered and signed for by the student. Lost or damaged textbooks or materials will be paid for by the student to whom they were issued. All textbooks must be returned in good condition.

## V. CODE OF CONDUCT

### *Attendance Policy*

**Philosophy and Legal Foundation**

Regular school attendance is required by Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 76, §1) and is foundational to student success. This policy is adopted in accordance with Westwood School Committee Policy File JH – Student Absences and Excuses. Coming to school every day, and arriving on time, is one of the most important ways students build strong learning habits, establish routines conducive to success, and feel connected to their school community — academically, socially, and emotionally. Absence and tardiness are also disruptive: to the student who misses instruction, to their classmates, and to their teacher. At WHS, we are committed to working as partners with families to instill in students the responsible habits that will support their success in high school, in college, and in the work world. We expect that students will make every effort to be present and on time to school and to class. For this reason, we have an attendance policy, as follows:

**Types of Absences**

Excused Absences: Daily and class absences are able to be excused for the following reasons:

- An illness or medical appointment 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
- A pre-approved college visit with required electronic paperwork

Unexcused Absence: All other absences from a class — including missing more than 15 minutes of a class period — are considered UNEXCUSED.

Note: Although the school makes attendance reports available on Aspen and via report cards, it is the primary responsibility of the student to monitor their attendance.

**Family Vacations**

Family vacations are not EXCUSED ABSENCES. 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.

**Notifying the School of Absences**

If a student is going to be absent for the entire day, a parent/caregiver should call the attendance line at (781) 326-7500 x1512 or submit the student's absence electronically to hsattendance@westwood.k12.ma.us by 9:30 AM.

**Attendance Records and Reports to Families**

Official school attendance records are maintained by the Main Office. Daily attendance is recorded at 8:20 a.m., or at the start of a student's first scheduled class each day. Classroom attendance records are maintained by each teacher.

Parents/caregivers will receive an electronic notification whenever their student is reported absent from school. Quarterly report cards will indicate the number of school absences, class absences, tardies to school, and tardies to individual classes.

Faculty and administrators will work with students and families to address attendance concerns through communication, counseling, conferences, academic support, and other interventions as appropriate. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to contact the school whenever they have questions or concerns regarding their child's attendance.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Sections 1A and 1B, Westwood High School maintains a student absence notification program. This program counts all absences, excused or unexcused, consistent with state law. 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.

**Chronic Absenteeism and Support**

Consistent with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidelines, a student who misses 10% or more of the school year or 18 school days, regardless of reason (excused or unexcused) is considered chronically absent.

When a student is identified as chronically absent, the school will notify the parent or guardian and work with the student and family to identify barriers to regular attendance, connect them with appropriate resources, and develop a plan to support improved attendance. Where absences are not properly documented, or where a pattern suggests truancy, school officials may also work with local agencies, including the police and juvenile court, to support the student and family.

**Tardiness to School**

Students are recorded as tardy if they fail to arrive by the 8:20 AM commencement of the first block. Any student arriving after this time must check in at the Main Office. Families are expected to report all tardies to the school. Additionally, students who have already entered the building but are not present in their first block at the start of instruction will be marked tardy.

Tardies may only be authorized by administration as "excused" for the same reasons defined in the excused absence policy:

- A documented medical appointment or illness verified by a provider
- Serious illness in the family or bereavement
- Attendance at an activity sponsored by the school
- Observation of a recognized religious holiday
- Exceptional circumstances approved by a school administrator

To excuse a tardy, documentation must be submitted either before or at the time of the student's arrival. Aspen serves as the official record for all daily tardies. Written notification will be sent to students and families upon the accumulation of three (3) unexcused daily tardies per term; every subsequent tardy will result in an office detention. Should a student exceed eight (8) unexcused tardies in a term, privileges will be suspended for a period of nine weeks. In such instances, a collaborative team conference may be convened with the family to resolve the matter.

For continued eligibility in practices, games, or extracurricular clubs that day, tardy students must report to school no later than 11:30 AM.

If significant extenuating circumstances prevent a student from arriving by 8:20 AM, parents or caregivers are urged to contact the Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, or Associate Dean to discuss the situation.

**Tardiness to Class**

Individual classroom policies govern how teachers manage class tardiness. Potential outcomes may include a disciplinary referral to the office or a requirement to remain after school for extra help. Please note that an unexcused tardy to class exceeding 15 minutes is recorded as a class absence.

**Dismissals**

Students are expected to attend school for the entire school day. Dismissals, therefore, should be infrequent and for a significant purpose. Please reserve dismissals for important appointments and emergencies. Families should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside of the typical school day where possible. No student will be dismissed to the custody of anyone other than a parent/caregiver unless prior arrangements have been made and verified.

The only "excused" dismissal is one that has been authorized by the administration for one of the same reasons that qualify as an excused absence above:

- An illness or medical appointment 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
- An absence excused by an administrator for other exceptional reasons

Documentation for excused dismissals must be submitted to the Main Office the next school day. Late paperwork will not be accepted.

To be dismissed, a parent/caregiver must submit a written or electronic dismissal request to the Main Office via hsattendance@westwood.k12.ma.us prior to 9:30 a.m. For the safety and security of our students, dismissal requests must be received directly from a parent/caregiver by the school. Students may not initiate a dismissal request by calling a parent/caregiver from the Main Office or by asking school personnel to speak with a parent/caregiver on the student's personal phone. Students must sign out in the Main Office prior to exiting the building. Failure to follow the dismissal protocol or misuse of the dismissal system may result in disciplinary action.

Students must report to the office upon re-entering the building after an appointment. Students are responsible for making up all missed work.

A student who has an unexcused dismissal after 11:30 a.m. may not return after the school day to participate in or attend athletics or extracurricular activities that day.

**Class Cuts**

Students are expected to attend all classes during the school day. Every instance of cutting class — defined as an unexcused absence from a class period lasting 15 minutes or longer — adds to a student's cumulative total of unexcused absences and carries a penalty of 2 detentions per class cut. In addition, students who cut class will not receive credit or make-up privileges for the class period.

**Teacher Absences**

When a classroom teacher is absent from school, students are notified by the main office the morning of the teacher's absence. Oftentimes, coverage is provided for absent teachers, and students are therefore expected to attend class despite their teacher's absence. In other circumstances, students will be required to report to the Cafeteria, Little Theatre, and/or Auditorium and be supervised for the duration of the block by a building-based substitute teacher. Specific grade-level attendance requirements when classroom teachers are absent are outlined in the Privileges section below. Failure to report either to the regularly scheduled classroom or the building-based substitute will contribute to unexcused absence totals and be processed as a class cut.

**Truancy**

A student who is absent from school for the day or for part of the day without parent/caregiver permission will be considered truant. Students who are truant will be assigned class cuts for every class that is missed and is subject to disciplinary action.

**Privileges**

Privileges for eligible students in grades 10-12 include the ability to arrive late and/or leave campus during specific unscheduled blocks.

The administration shall designate those students who qualify for privileges at the beginning of each quarter. There are several ways a student can become ineligible for privileges during the school year, including:

1. Earning a term grade of “F” in one or more classes
2. Exceeding the term tardiness limit
3. Exceeding the unexcused semester absence limits
    a. *For classes meeting 5 times in the 7-day cycle (e.g. most classes, including R&Rs), students will have no more than 8 unexcused absences total/semester*
    b. *For classes meeting 6-7 times in the 7-day cycle (e.g. many science classes, S-block), students will have no more than 10 unexcused absences total/semester*
    c. *For classes meeting 3-4 times in the 7-day cycle (e.g. part-time Learning Center): students will have no more than 5 unexcused absences total/semester*
4. Leaving school without permission/checking out
5. Arriving to school without checking in
6. 10 or more unserved detentions during a term
7. Any unserved detentions at the end of a term
8. Suspension served in the previous ten weeks
9. Demonstrating consistent disruptive behavior

All other students in grades 10-12 are eligible for tiered privileges during unscheduled blocks as follows:

| 10th Grade | 11th Grade | 12th Grade |
|---|---|---|
| ● Arrive late to school following a first-block free | ● Arrive late to school following a first-block free | ● Arrive late to school following a first-block free |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Arrive late to school following a first-block teacher absence<br>• Leave school early preceding a last-block free<br>• Leave school early preceding a last-block teacher absence<br>• *Please note, sophomores may not access privileges when their teacher(s) is absent outside of the first/last blocks* | • Leave school early preceding a last-block free<br>• Leave school and return during the lunch block<br>• Arrive late to school, leave school early, or leave school and return during the lunch block due to a teacher absence (*juniors may not access privileges when their teacher(s) is absent outside of the first, last, and lunch blocks).*<br>• Juniors do not have S-block privileges | • Leave school early preceding a last-block free<br>• Leave and return during all other free blocks during the school day including lunch block, including unassigned S-blocks<br>• Arrive late to school, leave school early, or leave school and return during the school day due to a teacher absence |

In order to invoke these privileges, students must:

1. At the beginning of the school year, parents/caregivers must opt their student into privileges, indicating that, when the student has an unassigned block, they have permission to access grade-level privileges.
2. Students are not required to sign in or out of the main office when accessing privileges.
3. Students leaving during the school day are expected to arrive back to school with ample time to check in and report to their next scheduled class. Students who are eligible to arrive late to school but are tardy for their class, for whatever reason, will be recorded as tardy in that class.
4. Once a student arrives on campus, they are required to report immediately to their next scheduled class and remain on school grounds unless otherwise excused from school.
5. Students are accountable for any announcements, emails, letters or general business that they may miss while utilizing this privilege.
6. If a parent/caregiver declines privileges for their student, the student will be assigned to an assigned seat in a supervised R&R block.
7. Failure to follow these procedures may result in revocation of privileges and assignment to an R&R.

Students with privileges are not required to report to a supervised R&R. During unscheduled second and third blocks, students in grades 10-11 have access to indoor or outdoor common areas, such as the courtyards, Library, Cafeteria, Writing Lab, Math Lab, or Guidance Office.

**Make-Up Work Policy**

Students must speak with the teacher within two (2) days of return from an absence to arrange to make up missed work. The student will be allowed two (2) days of make-up time for each day of absence, unless special arrangements are made with individual teachers. If a student is absent the day that a test or project is due, it is expected that the test and/or project will be taken or handed in the day the student reports back to school.

If a student is present in school for any part of the day (i.e. arrives tardy, is dismissed early), the absence policy does not apply, and students must turn in projects or take tests missed or turn in work on that day or at the teacher's discretion.

No credit will be given for work missed due to a class cut. Please refer to the section titled "Field Trips" regarding missed work due to school-sponsored trips.

***Conduct Guidelines***

The Westwood High School community strives to foster an atmosphere in which all people are treated with respect. Respectful, caring, responsible, and kind behavior is essential for maintaining an environment that encourages learning and promotes a positive climate. Students are, therefore, expected to act responsibly, differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate behavior whether in or out of the classroom, and respect the rights of others in the community.

Students will be held accountable for inappropriate behavior. All students should familiarize themselves with school rules and regulations, which are in effect during the school day, in-person and virtually, and at all extracurricular and school-sponsored activities. Students violating these policies will be subject to disciplinary consequences and loss of privileges.

**Athletic Events**

1. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden at all times.
2. Opponents are to be treated with respect.
3. School personnel, coaches from both schools, and officials are to be respected and obeyed at all times by WHS students. In particular, name-calling and other remarks addressed to specific individuals are causes for immediate disciplinary action (see section 5).
4. Booing, taunting, the use of offensive chants, or “cheers” are forbidden.
5. Any student creating a dangerous situation, either as an individual or as part of a group, will be removed from the event and may be subject to progressive discipline. Attending athletic events is a privilege not a right.

**Bus Transportation**

Students using bus transportation must follow all school rules and regulations, including remaining in their assigned seat when applicable, and obey the instructions of the bus driver. Violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action, which may include exclusion from the bus. Parents/caregivers will be notified of bus-related offenses.

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

**Consumption of Food and Beverages**

1. Food may be consumed in the cafeteria or in outdoor/courtyard spaces, or in anchor rooms during S-Block **only**. Only in special cases and/or for educational purposes may food be consumed outside the designated areas, which is at the discretion of the supervising faculty member.
2. Beverages may be consumed in the cafeteria, outdoor/courtyard spaces, and in hallways. Beverages may be consumed in classrooms with the permission and at the discretion of a supervising faculty member.
3. **Food and/or beverages may not be delivered to the school by an outside party (UberEats, DoorDash, GrubHub, etc) during the school day. Food delivered to the school will be confiscated.**
4. Beverages may not be consumed near electronic equipment, during science labs, and media labs. In the library, students are allowed to consume water only.
5. All beverages must be capped with a secure lid or top. WHS encourages the use of non-disposable travel containers. Liquids must be kept in the appropriate container. Water is always permitted throughout the school building.
6. Alcohol, THC/CBD, and other illegal beverages are strictly forbidden.

7. Inappropriate consumption of food or beverages may result in confiscation by any faculty member. Subsequent offenses may result in further disciplinary action.

**Corridor Usage**

From 8:15 AM to 2:55 PM, all academic corridors (i.e. Math wing, Social Studies wing, Science wing, English wing, and World Languages wing) must be kept clear and quiet so as not to disturb classes. Students may not loiter, sit, congregate, socialize or in any way disturb classes. In all corridors in the building, academic or otherwise, students must promptly follow the directions of any faculty or staff member at any time.

*The auditorium and athletic wing, including the weight room, locker rooms, and gymnasium, is restricted during school hours. Students with free blocks and R&R may not be in the athletic wing. Any misconduct with regard to a student's behavior in the athletic wing when that student has a free block may result in loss of privileges or disciplinary action. The pool and preschool areas are off limits to high school students at all times. The only exception is classes and/or teams under staff supervision.*

**Dances**

1. Dances are open to all Westwood High School students.
2. Students may not have any outstanding obligations (such as unserved discipline) to attend school dances.
3. All school rules and policies are in effect at dances.
4. Non-WHS students are only eligible to attend some dances, and must be accompanied by a host WHS student.
5. Guests must be registered in the main office via approved guest forms the day prior to the event.
6. Guests are subject to all WHS rules and are the responsibility of the host WHS student.
7. Any non-WHS student may be excluded from dances and/or events.
8. If a non-WHS student is removed from an event, the host WHS student shall also be removed.
9. Any student seeking entry to a dance may be required to take a breathalyzer or participate in a sobriety test upon entry. All violations shall be treated in accordance with the WHS drug/alcohol policy.
10. Student sponsors of dances must secure a minimum of five chaperones (male and female) plus an administrator or designee.
11. A police detail must be present.
12. Once a student leaves a dance, they may not be readmitted.
13. Bags, backpacks, or outside beverages are not permitted.

**Dress**

The responsibility for student dress rests with individual students and their parents/caregivers. They have the right to determine how the student will dress, providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not interfere with any individual's right to learn in a harassment-free environment.

In accordance with Massachusetts State Law, students have the right to freedom of expression, provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. Clothing that creates a risk of disruption and/or disorder may include:

- Articles of clothing with wording or visual representation that relates to or infers alcohol, drugs, or tobacco, or displays lewd, vulgar, indecent, or "plainly offensive" language
- Articles of clothing that defame, demean, and/or promote violence and/or aggression against any individual or group

The administration maintains discretion and is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

Students will not be prevented from attending school or school functions, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress meets the requirements set forth above.

**Driving, Parking, and Idling**

Parking on school grounds is a privilege and is subject to school control. Student parking is strictly limited to the student parking area and the overflow lot, which is the area adjacent to the baseball fields and tennis courts.

All state laws (including junior operator license restrictions regarding passengers) must be followed. Any form of reckless driving or violation of school rules may result in suspension or revocation of the student's school driving privileges. The school is not responsible for the automobile or its contents. Loitering in the parking lot or visiting a vehicle without permission is prohibited.

The number of parking spaces at WHS is limited, with fewer spots available for students than there are student-drivers seeking to park at school. As such, the following parking restrictions will govern students' use of the student and overflow parking lots during school hours and are in effect from the first day of school until the day after graduation.

Only juniors and seniors with privileges may park in the student and overflow lots. Sophomores may park on the street, if they so choose. After seniors' last day of classes, restrictions to student parking are lifted.

To the best of its ability, WHS will ensure that seniors will be provided a specific parking space, while juniors will enter a lottery to receive a parking space. Seniors will be assigned spots in the student lot, while juniors will have access via lottery to the remaining spaces in the student and overflow lots.

District policy prohibits the operators of school and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling their vehicles on school grounds (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H).

**Drug Free Zone**

By Massachusetts law, the area within one thousand yards of the school is a drug free zone by agreement between the Westwood Police Department and the School Committee. Any drug offenses in this area carry special and severe penalties including suspension and being reported to the police.

*Please refer to the Memorandum of Understanding in the Policy section of this Handbook for more information.*

Though possessing or being under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol on school grounds or at school-sponsored events is forbidden, no student who voluntarily seeks aid or assistance in dealing with a substance abuse problem from any school staff member shall be subject to suspension or other disciplinary action on that account, provided that the student immediately avails themself of the appropriate aid and assistance.

**Fundraising**

Occasionally, student groups wish to fundraise for a charity or cause that is external to the Westwood Schools, or to purchase items that cannot be supported by the school budget. <u>All fundraising by students for the school, or for any school organization, must be approved in advance by the Principal or designee</u>.

Students are encouraged to focus on fundraising activities that promote team-building and community.

Door-to-door solicitation, fundraising quotas, online donation pages such as GoFundMe, donations via individual cash apps such as Venmo, and plans involving substantial profit for a third party are not permitted. Fundraisers must also be for a specific purpose. When communicating with the public about a fundraiser, students must be specific and transparent about the purpose of the fundraiser. Staff and students must carefully vet the security and fee structures of any fundraising websites or partner organizations, and evaluate the ethical implications of the fundraiser, in order to avoid pressuring individuals to participate in or support the fundraiser.

All funds raised ***by students and for students*** must be deposited into a High School Student Activity Account. No funds that are raised by students or staff associated with athletic teams or school clubs should be deposited in external bank accounts except with approval of the Business Office.

**Gambling**

Card playing and other games of chance are not permitted at WHS or at any WHS sponsored event. Similarly, any game or activity that involves gambling or the exchange of money or other items of value is also prohibited.

**Harassment**

It is the policy of the Westwood School Committee to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to harass another. See complete policy in the Policy section of this Handbook.

**Hats**

By act of the Legislative Council, permission to wear hats in the classroom is at the discretion of the teacher. A notice will be posted in every classroom informing students of the rule in that room. Teachers using more than one classroom will announce to students whether or not hats may be worn during their classes.

**Hazing**

Hazing is prohibited by Massachusetts state law and is forbidden at Westwood High School. The law defines hazing as “any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization... which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.” Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor or beverage, drug or other substances or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which physically endangers someone or subjects them to extreme mental stress. Incidents of hazing must be reported to an administrator as soon as is practicable.

Please refer to the entire law, “An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing,” which is found in the Harassment and Discrimination Policies section of this Handbook.

**Inhalant Abuse**

Any persons using or selling inhalants are subject to suspension and other penalties outlined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 270, Sections 18 and 19.

**Personal Electronic Devices (Cell Phone Policy)**

Personal electronic devices, including cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, and headphones, are the responsibility of the student owner. Westwood High School is committed to creating classrooms where students

are fully engaged in learning and interacting with one another. To support this expectation, personal electronic devices must be stored during instructional time unless their use has been specifically authorized by the classroom teacher for an educational purpose.

Students may use personal electronic devices in designated areas. All forms of electronic use, including texting, gaming, social media, and listening to music, are permitted only in the:

a. Cafeteria
b. Lobby areas (e.g., outside the Main Office, Theater, Gymnasium, and School Counseling Office)
c. Courtyards and outdoor spaces
d. Hallways during passing time only

Phones, smart watches, earbuds, and other personal electronic devices for non-instructional purposes are prohibited in designated Study Zones, including classrooms, Anchor rooms, the Writing Lab, the Math Lab, and any other area being used for instructional purposes.

**Expectations in Study Zones**

- Upon entering each academic classroom, students are expected to silence their personal electronic devices, remove earbuds/headphones, and place all personal electronic devices in the classroom phone holder before instruction begins. In classrooms where a phone holder is not available, the classroom teacher will identify an alternate designated storage location.
- Personal electronic devices must remain in the designated storage location for the duration of the class period, including when students temporarily leave the classroom (e.g., restroom, nurse, movement break, etc.), unless the classroom teacher authorizes their use for an instructional purpose.
- Classroom teachers may authorize the use of personal electronic devices when they support instruction. Examples include accessing curricular resources, photographing student work, using the stopwatch feature during a science lab, or other teacher-directed educational activities.
- Students who are authorized to use personal electronic devices for instructional purposes must do so responsibly and without disrupting teaching or learning. If a student misuses a device during an authorized activity, the student will immediately return the device to the designated storage location and may lose the privilege of using the device for the remainder of the class period.
- The camera, video, and audio recording features of personal electronic devices may only be used for educational purposes with the permission of a faculty member. Unauthorized recording or posting of students, staff, or visitors may result in disciplinary action and, when applicable, legal consequences.
- Exceptions to this policy may be approved by the administration. Examples of exceptions include when a device is used to manage a student's health care, when a device is used for educational purposes explicitly outlined in an IEP or Section 504 Plan, or under other special circumstances approved by the administration.

**Failure to Comply with the Personal Electronic Device Policy**

Any student found in violation of these expectations will progress through the following tiered interventions:

- **Initial Non-Compliance:** If a student has not placed their personal electronic device in the designated classroom phone holder or storage location at the start of class, the classroom teacher will provide one reminder.
- **Refusal to Comply:** A student who refuses to place a personal electronic device in the designated classroom phone holder or storage location after one teacher reminder will be referred to the Main Office. Upon arrival, the student will place the device in the care of the Main Office for the remainder of the school day. Refusal to comply with a teacher's directive may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

- **Repeated Violations:** Repeated failure to follow this expectation may result in administrative interventions, including detention, a structured phone plan, Highly Structured Day, loss of privileges, a parent/caregiver conference, or other disciplinary consequences as determined by the administration.

Teachers will not engage in prolonged discussions or repeated requests regarding compliance with this expectation. After one reminder, continued refusal to comply will result in an office referral.

Westwood High School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property, including personal electronic devices brought to school or placed in the custody of the Main Office as part of the implementation of this policy. Students assume responsibility for securing their own devices. Lost, stolen, or damaged items may be reported to the Westwood Police Department.

Members of the Westwood High School community must also adhere to the Westwood Public Schools Technology Agreement for Students and Families.

**Lockers**

Students will be assigned lockers upon request. Students must use their assigned lockers when applicable and are responsible for their condition. Students should keep lockers locked. Lockers are school property, and as such, should not be decorated or written on. If a student damages the finish of a locker, they will be held responsible for restitution. Problems with lockers or requests for repairs should be reported immediately to the Assistant Principal's Administrative Assistant. Tampering with the locker mechanism to keep the door from locking may cause damage to the door and result in loss of locker privileges.

**Passes**

When class is in session, students need a pass signed by a staff member in order to move to another building location. Loitering is never permitted.

**Pool/Preschool Areas**

The pool, recreation, and preschool areas are off limits to high school students at all times. The only exception is students, classes, and/or teams under staff supervision.

**Pranks**

The school administration is bound by the School Committee directive to prosecute any student apprehended in the process of any prank that results in the destruction or vandalism of school property or harm to another person.

**Reading and Research Blocks (R&Rs)**

All ninth-grade students shall be assigned to supervised R&R blocks in the Cafeteria/Auditorium/Little Theatre and must present a signed pass from a subject area teacher or counselor to be allowed to move elsewhere in the building. Upperclass students may also be assigned to R&R blocks based on criteria outlined below.

Students from R&R blocks may not leave their assigned R&R block to enter the library, guidance, or other parts of the building without prior written consent from a subject area teacher for a specific purpose. Misuse of this privilege may result in the loss of permission to leave R&R block under any circumstance. R&R teachers do not write passes to the library.

If a pass is presented to leave R&R, the student should return to the R&R block in the last five minutes with the pass signed by the teacher he or she went to see. If the destination is the library, the librarian must sign the student out in the last five minutes and the student should report back to the R&R for the last five minutes of the period.

Not attending R&R is considered a cut and is subject to discipline. Leaving R&R without a proper pass or not returning to R&R at the end of the period may result in the loss of privilege to leave R&R for a determined length of time.

**Sexual Harassment**

See "Harassment" above and **complete policy in the Policies section of the Handbook.**

**Social Media**

All Westwood High School clubs, teams, and organizations affiliated with the school are permitted to use responsibly social media platforms (i.e. *Instagram, X*) to publicly promote and inform others about their respective organizations. However, student leaders should not exclusively use social media to communicate messages to current and prospective members to ensure equitable access to club, team, or organizational information.

Accounts that publicly identify themselves as the "official page" of any Westwood High School-sanctioned club, team or organization must be monitored by the respective advisor or coach. Student leaders, such as captains, presidents, and E-board members, must seek advisor or coach approval for all posted content, and must ensure social media passwords are accessible to the advisor or coach, and kept private to protect each account and its material.

Posted content shall follow all school policies as set forth in the student handbook. Specifically, the handbook prohibits "Conduct or language which is obscene, abusive, threatening, offensive, disrespectful, or harassing." Any student who fails to abide by these rules will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of school administration.

**Taunting**

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators that are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike offense that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest, and may result in an MIAA suspension or dismissal from the team.

At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Therefore, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators should be ejected. The complete policy can be found at http://www.miaa.net.

**Technology Use**

Access to computers and other technology is limited to educational purposes (i.e. class-related activities, career development and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature). See the complete policy in the "School Policies" section of the Handbook.

**Tobacco and Nicotine Policy**

Possession of, or use of, any recreational tobacco or nicotine product is forbidden at all times on the Westwood High School campus, or while attending or participating in school-related activities held off-campus. Though not exclusively tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, portable vaporizers, and other similar devices can act as delivery systems for nicotine, and are therefore prohibited under this policy. Students found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under the discretion of the administrator, and by other school policies and procedures. Athletes are additionally subject to penalties set forth by the M.I.A.A. policy concerning the use of tobacco products.

**Visitors**

Visitors will be limited to business that requires live interaction with staff and/or students. All visitors must adhere to all School Committee policies. Virtual meetings and remote participation will be offered when possible.

All visitors, including parents/caregivers, must sign-in at the office and pick up a visitor's badge to wear for the duration of their stay. Students may not bring visitors to school without permission from the principal. Visitors are allowed only if they are able to contribute to (and not distract from) the education experience for all students.

To drop-off items for a student during school hours, please use the Student Pick-up Table located in the Main Lobby of the high school.

**Weapons/Firearms**

The possession of weapons of any kind is prohibited on school grounds and may result in expulsion from school. See the complete policy in the "School Policies" section of the Handbook.

**Search Policy**

Lockers, lab tables, desks, and other equipment and facilities provided by the school for use by the students are the property of the school and are subject to search at any time for any reason. A student's person, personal belongings and automobile/bicycle/or other form of transportation are subject to search when a staff member has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of anything, the possession of which is a violation.

It is the practice of the administration to notify the police promptly in situations involving possible violations of state or federal law.

## VI. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### *Rules and Regulations*

The following regulations apply to all *extracurricular clubs and organizations and athletics.*

**Absence from School**

A student who is absent, tardy to school after 11:30 AM, or dismissed (non-medical) from school may not participate in any extracurricular activity or school-related activity that day unless specific permission to do so is granted by the Principal or other member of the administration.

**Attendance**

> Students are obligated to make advisors and coaches aware, in advance, of any anticipated absence from meetings or practices. Excused and unexcused absences for extracurricular purposes are defined the same as in the Attendance Policy (see Section V, Code of Conduct). Advisors will make students aware of the penalties for unexcused absences.

**Eligibility**

A student may participate in extracurricular activities providing they are passing a minimum of twenty-five (25) academic credits. If a student receives a report card that does not meet this standard, participation in extracurricular activities shall cease that day.

### *Athletics*

**Chemical Health (for athletes)**

*MIAA Rule 62.1*

"From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, VAPE pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer," inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one's mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by their doctor. This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render "guilt by association", e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation of the MIAA rule has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of

rehabilitation. All decimal part of an event will be truncated, (i.e., All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 25% of the season.)

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated, (i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 60% of the season.)

If after the second or subsequent violation the student, of their own volition, becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated, (i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.) (MIAA Handbook).

NOTE: "If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year."

For the complete policy regarding athletes, please refer to the MIAA website: www.miaa.net.

Westwood High School expects its students to have core values, among which responsible decisions regarding alcohol and drugs are essential. It is hoped that when any student arrives at a gathering and finds that alcohol is present, they will leave the area as soon as possible.

**Suspension from School**

A student who is suspended from school may not participate in any extracurricular activities or school sponsored events during the time of suspension and for the duration of the suspension (if covering more than one day). If a student receives an in-building suspension, they may not participate in athletics that afternoon or evening. All MIAA rules and regulations are in effect.

**Athletic Eligibility**

Any student is eligible for sports participation for four (4) consecutive years after completion of grade 8 providing:

1. They are under 19 years old, as of September 1st of the school year.
2. They are passing a minimum of 25 points of academic credit. Please note: credits for students enrolled in Learning Center part-time are prorated; the prorated number of credits they are passing will be used to determine whether they qualify to participate in athletics.
3. They have not been ejected from a contest by an official more than once during the current season.
4. They have not violated athletic rules, including both Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.) regulations and individual team rules presented by the coach to their players.
5. They have met all school obligations.

**ATHLETICS SPORTS OFFERED**

| Fall Sports | Winter Sports | Spring Sports |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Football | Girls Basketball | Baseball |
| Boys Cross Country | Boys Basketball | Softball |
| Girls Cross Country | Boys Ice Hockey | Boys Track |
| Field Hockey | Girls Ice Hockey | Girls Track |
| Golf (co-ed) | Swimming (co-ed) | Girls Tennis |
| Boys Soccer | Ski Team (co-ed) | Boys Tennis |
| Girls Soccer | Boys Indoor Track | Boys Lacrosse |
| Girls Volleyball | Girls Indoor Track | Girls Lacrosse |
| Cheerleading | Cheerleading | Unified Track |
| Unified Basketball | Gymnastics | Boys Volleyball |

**Fees**

Athletic fees for SY 26-27 WHS Sports are as follows:

$334 per season, per athlete for all sports except:
$501 for hockey
$167 for Unified Sports

Family Cap ~ Beginning Fall 2026 Westwood Schools have instituted a $1,336.00 maximum per family per academic year for athletic fees. Please email the Athletics Office if you have reached the family cap.

Financial Assistance ~ For those requiring financial assistance please contact Alyssa Provazza, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, at aprovazza@westwood.k12.ma.us.

**Medical Consent Form/Physicals**

Students are not allowed to practice until a completed medical consent form has been submitted electronically to the athletic department. Students must provide written documentation of a physical exam within thirteen months of the start of each season.

**Bona Fide Team Member**

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Any student who violates this standard is subject to the consequences described in the MIAA handbook.

## VII. SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICIES

### *Academic Integrity*

The Westwood High School community values integrity, authenticity, accountability, and respect for others. Academic Integrity is directly related to the central values of teaching and Learning in the Westwood Public Schools Mission and Portrait of a Graduate. The Academic Integrity Policy is founded on the principle that students should become educated about academic integrity and take ownership for the work they produce in order to be successful at WHS and beyond. All faculty and staff are committed to making educational resources readily available for students to support their growth in this area.

Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest behaviors undermine the integrity and credibility of the academic program. Therefore, students are expected to refrain from all types of cheating and plagiarism, including unsanctioned use of technology and allowing others to cheat or plagiarize from them. Major and minor assessments, including homework, quizzes, tests, essays, and presentations, are required to evaluate each student's individual progress and to supplement material covered during class time. As such, these assessments must reflect each student's own effort. While particular instances, such as group projects, may call for instructor-approved collaborative learning to better understand and appreciate course material, submitting any work other than one's own is not permitted unless explicitly stated.

**Expectations of Students**

1. Students will take responsibility for learning, understanding, and following the Westwood High School Academic Integrity Policy. Students with questions about the policy should seek clarification from a faculty member or administrator.
2. Students will take responsibility for learning each teacher's specific written policy regarding academic integrity.
3. Students are expected to report any concerns regarding possible violations directly to the faculty member involved.

**Expectations of Staff**

1. Staff will take responsibility for providing their specific written policy regarding academic integrity in their class.
2. Staff will take responsibility for reviewing the Westwood High School Academic Integrity Policy with students.
3. Staff are expected to report any concerns regarding possible violations directly to the student, the student's family, the department chair, and the student's administrator.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty consists of a student acting to obtain, or assist in another student obtaining, credit for work which is not the student's own, including cheating and plagiarism (see term clarifications below). Examples of academic dishonesty may include *but are not limited to* the following:

- Communicating with another student during an examination or quiz;
- Copying material during an examination or quiz;
- Copying another person's assignment;
- Allowing a student to copy from one's examination or quiz;
- Allowing a student to copy from one's assignment;

- Using unauthorized notes or devices during an examination or quiz;
- Using unauthorized notes, online resources, or devices;
- Using unauthorized artificial intelligence technology;
- Obtaining, removing, accepting, or sharing a copy of and/or information about an examination or quiz without the knowledge and consent of the teacher;
- Submitting a paper or project which is not the student's work, including issues related to plagiarism (see definition below);
- Sharing or supplying a student with a paper, project, or assignment that assists them in obtaining credit for that work, including issues related to plagiarism (see definition below);
- Changing answers and seeking credit on an assignment or examination after the work has been graded and returned;
- Altering a teacher's grading system;
- Using an electronic translator to look up any phrases or conjugated verbs to complete an assignment without the express consent of the teacher;
- Receiving inappropriate outside assistance that significantly alters or replaces the student's original work.

**Definition of Cheating**

Cheating is a very serious academic offense that can take a number of forms. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Using unauthorized books, notes, electronic aids such as artificial intelligence, electronic aids, translators, or other materials (such as SparkNotes, Wikipedia, Photomath, Wolfram Alpha, etc.) for an assessment in or outside of class, including homework;
- Aiding and/or obtaining help or work from any person or technology where such aid is not explicitly permitted in the assessment; this includes copying work from another student;
- Offering to others an unfair advantage on an assessment; i.e. informing others of test or essay questions in advance;
- Obtaining an assessment ahead of its authorized release;
- Submitting the same or similar work on more than one occasion or in more than one class without permission from both instructors;
- Deliberately plagiarizing (see below).

**Definition of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of presenting words, musical or artistic compositions, software programs, data, or any other work completed by someone else or something as one's own original creation without proper acknowledgment. Outside sources include but are not limited to books, articles, peer work, parent/caregiver work, tutor/coach work, electronic sources, artificial intelligence, and translators.

Plagiarism includes copying text or work directly from a source without acknowledging the source of ideas; presenting ideas as original when they have derived from a source without acknowledging that source; and presenting ideas, phrasing, and/or content from a parent, caregiver, tutor, or other coach as one's own. Examples of taking materials from other source(s) without adequate documentation may include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to cite with quotation marks the written words or symbols of another author;
- Failing to cite the author and sources of materials used in a composition;
- Failing to cite research materials in a bibliography or inaccurately attributing ideas to a source;
- Failing to name a person quoted in an oral report;
- Failing to cite an author whose works are paraphrased or summarized;
- Failing to cite words translated by an electronic translator;
- Failing to cite the words, work, or ideas of generative AI technology as one's own in essays, poems, music, art, computer programs or other projects;

- Presenting another person's creative work or ideas as one's own in essays, poems, music, art, computer programs or other projects;
- Presenting the work or ideas of artificial intelligence technology as one's own in essays, poems, music, art, computer programs or other projects;
- Copying or paraphrasing ideas from literary criticism or study aids without documentation.

**Plagiarism Checkers**

Plagiarism checkers may be used by faculty and staff to understand student thought processes while completing assignments. They provide the opportunity for both educators and students to review written work and identify areas for improvement, especially inappropriate documentation of sources. Approved digital tools, such as TurnItIn.com, are approved for comparison to any direct matches found in the student's work from both the site's internal database of submitted documents. The entirety of searchable internet material may also be used to verify the authenticity of student work. Educators may use checkers and, if appropriate, will notify their students of their use, and show them how to submit their coursework through applicable online portals.

**Learning Management Systems (Google Classroom) Expectations**

Classes at WHS employ Google Apps for Education, including Google Classroom. The ease of digital sharing comes with the responsibility of making ethical choices online. Students should not share their work with other students unless explicitly granted permission to do so. When an educator provides a document for an assignment, students are required to complete all individual work, including notes and drafting, in the document provided.

If students share their work with a parent/caregiver, another educator, or outside tutor, they must share the document with "Commenter" or "Viewer" permissions (not "Editor permissions') so the other person can make suggestions using the commenting feature in Google. No other person should ever directly type into the student's paper, even in "suggesting" mode. Such precautions help ensure the integrity and authenticity of student work.

**Artificial Intelligence Expectations**

Generative and agentic Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined as a system or algorithm that can be used to generate text, images, and other forms of creative expression; translate languages; write different kinds of creative content, and answer questions in an informative way. Because AI systems can be used to produce work that is indistinguishable from human-generated work, it is important to be responsible and transparent about their use. AI can include:

- Written work
- Images
- Videos
- Presentations
- Audio
- Ideas

Students may not use any artificial intelligence tools that generate ideas or create original products to produce work for a class without explicit educator authorization. If a student has permission to use AI to generate content for academic work, they must clearly indicate its use. Failure to do so is considered a form of plagiarism.

**Additional Resources**

WHS educators are the best and most appropriate resource to support students in maintaining academic integrity. Faculty in each discipline can provide supporting materials and guidance that aligns with this policy while addressing department-specific issues.

**Consequences**

If an educator suspects a student of academic dishonesty, the educator will consult their department head and/or administrator to determine if the student has violated the school's policy. If so, as an academic consequence, the student may receive no credit for any work involved in the violation. However, the educator, with department head or administrator approval, may discuss alternative ways for the student to receive credit.

The educator will discuss the assignment, the violation, and the academic consequences for the violation with the student and the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s). The educator may also make specific, appropriate recommendations for additional consequences, if this is not the student's first offense, to the administrator.

The educator will also notify the administration about the violation and its academic consequences. The administrator will also discuss the violation with the student and the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s). If this is not the student's first offense, the administrator will determine appropriate disciplinary consequences in addition to the academic consequence. The administrator will communicate these additional consequences to the student and their parents, according to school discipline protocol.

Students have the right to appeal disciplinary decisions to the Principal or designee.

A committee will continue to meet to review periodically the effectiveness of the Academic Integrity Policy.

***Discipline Policy***

**A. Basic Definitions**

1. ***Parent***: The parent or legal caregiver/caretaker of the student. In the case where a student's parents are not married or are separated, the parent, for the purposes of this policy, is the parent with legal custody. If both parents have joint legal custody, then the parent for purposes of this policy is the parent with both legal and physical custody of the student. In the event that the parents have joint legal and physical custody of the student, then the parent, for purposes of this policy, is the parent with regular contact with the schools.

2. ***Superintendent:*** The superintendent of schools or their designee

3. ***Principal***: The principal or their designee

4. ***School Committee*** - A quorum of the Westwood School Committee

5. ***In-School Suspension:*** *(M.G.L. 603 CMR 53.00)* Removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

6. ***Short-Term Suspension:*** *(M.G.L. 603 CMR 53.00)* Removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from

participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

7. ***Long-Term Suspension:*** *LONG-TERM SUSPENSION (M.G.L. 603 CMR 53.00)* Removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. No student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

8. ***Written Notice:*** Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/caregiver for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/caregiver.

**B. Referral Process**: Students may be referred by any faculty member to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, or Culture and Engagement Coordinator for disciplinary action. The student will report to the office or will be required to meet with an administrator when called subject to the following:

1. Upon request from a teacher, a referral may be postponed if it interferes with a time-sensitive assignment.
2. A student may be sent to the Assistant Principal or Dean of Students if a behavior disrupts and detracts from other students' learning AND all other appropriate measures have been exhausted by the classroom teacher.

**C. Grounds for Discipline:** Discipline may result from acts or omissions occurring on school and/or adjacent property, at school-related activities or to/from school or school-related activities, or which relate to/make an impact upon the educational process of the school system. Administrative action may include assignment of detention, Saturday School, Highly Structured Days, loss of privileges, inside suspension or out-of-school suspension. Subject to the foregoing general statement of the grounds for discipline, the grounds for suspension include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Academic dishonesty (see: Academic Integrity Policy)
- Arson
- Assault or battery upon any person
- Being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substance not prescribed for the user
- Bullying, retaliation, or related violations of the Anti-Bullying policy
- Burglary, breaking and entering, or unlawful entry
- Cell phone/personal electronic device policy violation
- Creation of an emergency situation without justification
- Cutting class
- Conduct or language which is obscene, abusive, threatening, offensive, disrespectful, or harassing
- Destruction, misuse of, or damage to school property or personal property of another individual on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity
- Disrespectful behavior
- Disruption of a school activity or the educational process
- Endangering the safety or well-being of others

- Extortion, or the attempt to extort or intimidate
- Failure to fulfill disciplinary obligations
- Failure to follow arrival procedures (in school not reporting)
- Fighting/Roughhousing
- Forgery or fraud
- Harassment - verbal abuse, intimidation by threat or innuendo
- Hazing/Initiation
- Insubordination
- Inviting unauthorized personnel onto school grounds during school hours (ex: food delivery drivers)
- Involvement with firecrackers, fire extinguishers, false alarms, snow balls, water guns, and other items
- Larceny or receiving or possessing stolen goods
- Leaving school grounds without authorization or without following dismissal procedures
- Lying to a faculty member or other deceptive acts
- Parking violation
- Possession, sale, purchase, consumption or use of, or the attempt to possess, sell, buy or consume, any drug, alcohol, tobacco product, or paraphernalia on school property (including school buses), or at a school-sponsored activity (includes all tobacco products)
- Possession or transfer of any firearm, knife, explosive, or any other object capable of being used to harm or threaten an individual
- Presence in unauthorized areas
- Profanity/Inappropriate language
- Theft
- Truancy
- Vandalism
- Violation of the Acceptable Use of Technology policy
- Violation of a school policy
- Any other action or omission which disrupts the educational process or which potentially jeopardizes the safety or well-being of another individual

**D. Degree of Discipline**: Detention is normally assigned for minor disciplinary offenses which are not judged to be habitual. Office detention is assigned only by the Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students. If the absence from detention is repeated, the student may be assigned additional, progressive discipline.

The degree of discipline, (i.e. detention; Saturday School; Highly Structured Days; loss of Privileges; restorative interventions; suspensions; exclusions), rests in the sound discretion of the administration of the Westwood Public Schools, or the Westwood School Committee, where required by law. In imposing discipline, the decision-maker will consider any and all relevant information. Such information may include some of the following: prior disciplinary record, academic progress, seriousness of incident, mitigating or exacerbating circumstances surrounding the incident. The student will know the reasons for the discipline prior to the discipline being imposed.

**Detention**

Students earn detention when they make choices that do not meet school expectations. These choices are typically minor infractions, such as accruing more than three (3) unexcused tardies in a term. Detention takes place after school, Monday-Thursday, from 3:00 - 3:45 PM. Students may serve their assigned detention(s) within the current term on dates that align with their availability. Please note: extra-curricular school obligations, such as club, team, and activity meetings, do not excuse students from serving detention. Students with outstanding unserved detentions at the conclusion of the term will be ineligible for privileges during the subsequent term and

may not participate in school social events, such as Homecoming, Prom, and/or Senior Week, until all detentions are served. Review this link for student Detention Protocols for this school year.

**Saturday School**

Students earn Saturday School when they make choices that do not meet school expectations. These choices are typically multiple minor infractions and/or larger infractions that require an alternative consequence to suspension. Students who earn mandatory Saturday School(s) will have their privileges suspended until they serve all Saturday School(s). Additionally, students may elect to serve a Saturday School as the equivalent of serving six (6) unserved detentions. Saturday School takes place on select Saturdays from 8:00 am-12:00 PM. Students with outstanding unserved Saturday School(s) at the conclusion of the term will be ineligible for privileges during the subsequent term and may not participate in school social events, such as Homecoming, Prom, and/or Senior Week, until they serve all Saturday School(s). Review this link for student Saturday School Protocols for this school year.

**Highly Structured Days**

The administration of Westwood High School is dedicated to minimizing suspensions and keeping students in class, even when their choices do not meet school expectations. In keeping with this goal, students may be assigned one or more "Highly Structured Day" as an alternative to suspension that keeps students in class and minimizes unstructured opportunities throughout the day. A "Highly Structured Day" requires students to:

- Report to all classes on time.
- Report to the Main Office for all non-academic periods (study hall, S-Block, lunch)
- Report to the Main Office if one or more classroom teachers is absent.
- Turn in to the Main Office all internet-enabled devices, such as phones, for the entirety of the school day.
- Earn a signature from each teacher, indicating the student was on time, completed assigned work, and met behavior expectations.
- Return the completed form to the student's building administrator by 3:05 PM that day.

Failure to meet all expectations of a Highly Structured Day and/or to submit a completed form by the deadline will result in additional disciplinary consequences.

**Disciplinary Due Process: Suspension and Expulsion**

The Administration has ultimate discretion to determine the proper disciplinary actions for any misbehavior. Depending upon their severity, certain violations of school rules and district policies may result in loss of privileges; restriction from school-sponsored events such as field trips, dances, and extracurricular events; in-school or out-of-school suspension; or, where authorized under Massachusetts law, expulsion from school.

Any specifics given in the policy are only guidelines; they are not absolute rules. The guidelines support administration's collaboration and discretion determining the best course of action to support student growth and development, as well as whole school safety. Disciplinary outcomes are specific to the student and the situation. Repetitive infractions of the same or similar behaviors will result in progressive discipline. All students and families will be provided with due process aligned with Massachusetts General Laws prior to the imposition of an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

There are three statutes under Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) that govern student discipline in Massachusetts public schools. Those statutes are:

- M.G.L. c.71, §37H which includes weapons, drugs and assault on a staff member
- M.G.L. c.71, §37H ½ which includes felony complaint or conviction
- M.G.L. c.71, §37H ¾ which includes school discipline not covered in 37 H and 37 H ½.

Below is a detailed description of what each statute consists:

**M.G.L. c.71, §37H – Policies Relative to Conduct of Teachers or Students: Student Handbooks**
*In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H:*

a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
b. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.
After said hearing, a principal may, in his or her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his **appeal**. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
e. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**M.G.L. c.71 §37H ½ –** This statute includes a felony complaint or conviction of a student and Right to Appeal

1. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

   The student shall have the right to **appeal** the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or caregiver within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

2. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the

student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to **appeal** the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or caregiver within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**M.G.L. c.71, §37H ¾ –** Suspension on Grounds other than Those set forth in Secs. 37H or 37H ½

a. This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.
b. Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.
c. For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or caregiver of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or caregiver of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or caregiver only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or caregiver in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under

this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

d. If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or caregiver of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.
e. A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or caregiver of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or caregiver of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or caregiver of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or caregiver of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or caregiver of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or caregiver. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.
f. No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

**Due Process Under M.G.L. 71 37H3/4**

**In-School Suspension**

Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the Principal or determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/caregiver 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/caregiver to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a 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/caregiver after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/caregiver of the in-school suspension. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the Principal shall also deliver written notice to the student and parent/caregiver about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent/caregiver to a meeting with the principal, if such

meeting has not already occurred. Said written notice shall be delivered to the parent/caregiver on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/caregiver for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/caregiver.

**Out of School Suspension**

**Notice Requirements**

- Short-Term Suspension - In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b)possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parent/caregiver will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and of the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.
    - Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent/caregiver and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

- Long-Term Suspension - Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent/caregiver of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses and evidence, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the Principal, the right to translation services if required to participate in the hearing, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped. Out-of-school suspensions are not appealable unless the consequence results in more than ten (10) cumulative days of suspension during that school year.

**Principal's Hearing**

- Short-Term Suspension: At the Principal's hearing, the student and parent/caregiver (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining disciplinary actions for the student.

- Long-Term Suspension: In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:
    - the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent/caregiver's expense;
    - the right 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 produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident (although the student may not be compelled to testify);
    - the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
    - the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

- Principal's Decision: Based upon a preponderance of the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or disciplinary actions to be imposed. In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning.The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the disciplinary action for the offense, and shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a disciplinary action until alternatives have been tried. If the Principal decides to suspend the student,

written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parent/caregiver in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension, and the process for appeal, when an appeal right exists. The Principal will also notify the student and parent/caregiver of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

**Long Term Suspension Appeal**

See M.G.L. 71 37H and M.G.L. 71 37H1/2 above for For long-term suspensions the Student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the Principal but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request. (2) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (d) 5.a. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion

There is no right to appeal an in-school or out–of-school suspension imposed under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 which does not result in the student's suspension for more than 10 school days in the school year.

**Expulsion**

The following infractions on school grounds/at school events may result in a student's permanent expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37H and §37H1/2:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance
- Assault of any member of the educational staff
- Admission or finding of guilt to a felony or felony delinquency charge

**Emergency Removal**

Emergency Removals pursuant to M.G.L c. 71, § 37H3/4: A Principal may remove a student accused of a school rules violation from school temporarily, and on an emergency basis, 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. In such a case, 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 emergency removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall:

1. make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/caregiver of the emergency removal,
2. the reason for the emergency removal;
3. the disciplinary offense;
4. the basis for the charge;
5. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
6. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/caregiver to attend the hearing;
7. the date, time, and location of the hearing; and
8. the right of the student and the student's parent/caregiver to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate

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/caregiver, the Principal must provide the student and parent/caregiver an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with either the short-term suspension due process or long-term suspension due process procedures, as applicable.

Additionally, the Principal is required to 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 of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth in this Handbook, whichever is applicable.

A Principal shall not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

**Academic Progress**

Any student who is disciplined pursuant to the three statues above shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the School's Education Services Plan. M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

**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 their 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/caregivers 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/caregivers 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/caregivers, 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/caregivers 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.

**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/caregiver had expressed concern in writing: or
   2. The parent/caregiver 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/caregiver 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 they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

C. The school district has developed procedures consistent with the federal requirements to expedite evaluations.

The disciplining of students with disabilities eligible for special education is governed by federal and state special education laws and the regulations promulgated thereunder. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq., its implementing regulations 34 C.F.R. 300 et seq.; and Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 71B and its implementing regulations, 603 C.M.R. 28.00. Students with disabilities who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten (10) school days per year, to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability.

Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from their current educational placement for more than ten (10) school days in any school year, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law.

These include, but are not limited to:

I. A review by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is referred to as a Manifestation Determination.
II. If the behavior *is* a manifestation of the student's disability, the student's team will conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and develop a behavior intervention plan (BIP), provided that such an assessment was not already conducted before the behavior occurred. In the situation where an assessment was already conducted and a behavior plan is already in place, the Team will review the plan and revise it accordingly. The student will also be returned to his educational placement unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.
III. If the behavior is *not* a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be removed from their educational placement to the extent that a regular education student would be removed, provided that the special education student must continue to receive educational services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general educational curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP. Additionally, the student should receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP) to prevent the behavior from happening again.

School personnel may order a change in educational placement of a special education student to an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability if the student: (i) carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; (ii) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or (iii) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

School personnel may also seek an order from the Department of Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) placing a student in an IAES for up to forty-five (45) school days.

Parents/caregivers and/or students, where appropriate, may request an expedited hearing at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals regarding a disciplinary action described above to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination.

For more information regarding the rights of special education students see the Massachusetts Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards Notice, which is available in many languages, at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/.

Additionally, copies of the state and federal special education law are available online or can be requested from the Director of Student Services at (781) 326-7500 ext. 1346.

1. **Discipline of Students on 504 Plans**: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute which prohibits a qualified individual with a disability from being excluded from the participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance because of their disability. 29 U.S.C. § 794 and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. 104 et seq. School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten (10) school days without first conducting a manifestation determination. Please contact the director of Student Services for more information on the discipline of students of 504 plans.

2. **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.

3. **Felony Complaint or Conviction**: Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend said student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student will be provided with written notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension, prior to the suspension, and the student will receive notice of the right to appeal this suspension to the superintendent in accordance with Massachusetts state law, chapter 71, section 37H 1/2.

   Upon a student being convicted of a felony, or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal may expel said student if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student will be provided with written notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension, prior to the expulsion, prior to the suspension, and the student will receive notice of the right to appeal this expulsion to the superintendent in accordance with Massachusetts state law, chapter 71, section 37H 1/2.

4. **Expulsion:** Pursuant to Massachusetts state law, chapter 71, section 37H, students may be expelled for the following reasons:

   A. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to a gun or knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
   B. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
   C. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, dean of students, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

   Any student who is charged with a violation of any of the above shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing before the principal.

   Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their appeal.

**Provisions Applicable to Suspensions and/or Exclusions**

1. **Extra-Curricular Activities/School Activities During a Suspension/Exclusion**: A student who is on suspension from the Westwood Public Schools shall not trespass on school property. School property involves the school buildings and any area of the school grounds. A student on suspension is also excluded from participating in or attending any school-related or school-sponsored functions, activities or

events. If the suspension or exclusion includes a weekend period, the student may not participate in or attend extracurricular or school-sponsored activities on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. If a suspension or exclusion includes a holiday or vacation period, the student may not participate in or attend any extracurricular or school-related activities occurring at any time during the holiday or vacation period.

2. **Readmission Conference After Suspension or Exclusion of Less Than One Marking Period**: On the first day of school following the suspension, the student and parent will meet with the Principal for a readmission conference.
3. **Readmission After Exclusion Longer Than a Marking Period:** A student who is excluded from school for longer than a marking period shall be readmitted to school only after they and their parent/caregiver has met with the Principal and the Superintendent to discuss the conditions for readmission. Such meeting must take place at least two (2) weeks prior to the student's readmission date

***Drug and Alcohol Policy***

**Philosophy**

The Westwood School Committee recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse is physically and mentally harmful, is disruptive and erodes the proper climate for learning not only for the students who are using drugs, but also for those who are not. Therefore, the School Committee sees the need to deal forthrightly with this issue.

The school's task is to maintain an educational curriculum that meets the needs of all age groups and at all levels. It is most difficult to make intelligent decisions when all the media promote the use of drugs and alcohol as being a necessary part of life. The public schools should provide education from the earliest grades regarding the consequences of substance abuse through an awareness of these issues. It is hoped that this will better enable our youth to make intelligent decisions based on all the facts.

The policy of the schools should set a clear standard of optimal and reasonable behaviors and specific consequences relative to the abuse of harmful substances within the setting of those public schools.

A primary purpose of a policy on drugs and alcohol should be to prevent problems of abuse. When problems are recognized, the priority should be to assist and rehabilitate the student.

The Westwood Public schools will work to remedy drug and alcohol abuse and to keep an appropriate balance between supervision and rehabilitation, to meet the needs of the students, and meet the requirements of the law, and to maintain school programs and policies.

**Policy Provisions**

Possession of any controlled substance or other intoxicant on school property, during a school event, or a school day upon which a student is truant is a violation of civil law and violation of this policy.

1. Any student found selling any controlled substance or alcohol or other intoxicant will be reported immediately to the Police Department for appropriate action.
2. Any student found in possession of such substances may be suspended.
3. Any student who is present in school, at a school function, or at any other place during a school day upon which they are truant and who is under the influence of any controlled substance, including alcohol or other intoxicant, is in violation of this policy. The parents/caregivers of such a student shall be immediately notified and they may be liable to a suspension, subject to the provision of paragraph 4 below.
4. The suspension provided for in this policy may be shortened in the case of first offenses, and if the student is promptly involved in an approved rehabilitation or prevention program.

**Procedure for Dealing with Substance Abuse Violations**

1. Any staff member who finds a student in violation of the Substance Abuse Policy in any respect or who suspects a pupil of such an offense shall report this immediately to the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students of the school. Such staff members will provide all the information of the substance and the extent of the offense.
2. The Principal, after investigating the report and conferring with the student, shall make a determination as to his courses of action. If there is a question of on-going use, the Principal may be advised by the school nurse or counselor trained in controlled substance abuse or other appropriate staff member.
3. If the Principal determines the charge is justified, he will notify the parents/caregivers of the student, and invoke suspension as called for in paragraph 2 of this policy.

**Police/School Agreement**

The Westwood Police Department and the Westwood School Department agree to coordinate their efforts to prevent and control substance abuse. The Police Chief agrees to assign a specialized officer in youth problems to all cases of substance abuse reported under the policy of the School Department.

1. The Officer shall on receipt of the report respond as soon as possible and conduct an investigation and take custody of any physical evidence.
2. Contact between the school official and the designated officer shall be maintained throughout the extent of the disciplinary action to allow for monitoring of the action.

**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:

Assistant Superintendent of Schools
220 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090
(781) 326-7500

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:

Director of Student Services
220 Nahatan Street

Westwood, MA 02090
(781) 326-7500

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 Westwood Public Schools Protocol for Reporting and Investigating Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation.

***Bullying Policy***

The Westwood Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

''Bullying'', the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

'Perpetrator'', a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying or retaliation.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- Wire
- Radio
- Electromagnetic
- Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the District;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the District if the act or acts in question:

- Create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or their designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and caregivers, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws.

Each plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. The plan shall include the specific steps that each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. A school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school may establish separate discrimination or harassment policies that include additional categories of students. Nothing in this section shall alter the obligations of a school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school to remediate any discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The current Westwood Public Schools Plan can be found here.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within their school.

**Reporting**

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying. Information regarding reporting can be found here.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or caregivers, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

**Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or caregivers of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target´s needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred they shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school´s resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or caregivers shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee shall contact the parents or caregivers as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

**Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying, shall be prohibited.

**Target Assistance**

The Westwood Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

**Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

**Publication and Notice**

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or caregivers, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

***Hazing***

HAZING : AN ACT PROHIBITING THE PRACTICE OF HAZING MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS-CHAPTER 269

C. 269, S.17. Crime of Hazing: Definition: Penalty

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or any other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage or drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.198, c.665.
C. 269, S.18. Duty to Report Hazing - Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably

practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine or not more than one thousand dollars. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

C. 269, S.19. Hazing Statutes To Be Provided: Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of postsecondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of postsecondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of postsecondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institution, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

***Physical Restraint***

The Westwood Public Schools is committed to providing an orderly, safe environment, conducive to learning for all students and staff members. As of 1/1/2016, 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.

***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.

## VIII. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

### *Student Records*

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school district to maintain information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal caregiver and/or the student in accordance with law, and be protected as confidential information.

The Superintendent provides for the proper administration of student records consistent with federal and state law requirements. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and corresponding regulations is a federal law that provides two basic rights to parents in regards to student records (20 U.S.C. § 1232; 34 C.F.R. § 99):

1. The right to inspect and review their child's education records
2. The right to prevent unauthorized persons from seeing the same records

The Commonwealth also has promulgated state regulations governing student records (603 CMR 23.00) that are designed to ensure parents and students of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of said records, and to direct the school district personnel regarding their responsibilities under state law.

Under federal law, FERPA, education records are defined as those records, files, documents, and other materials which contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a person acting for such agency or institution.

Under state law and regulations 603 CMR 23.00, school records are defined as the transcript and the temporary record, including all information recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public school.

### *Transcript and Temporary Records*

The following is a summary of the current Student Records Regulations. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure parental and student rights are protected regarding the confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records. For students aged 14-17, or in ninth grade or above, these rights shall be exercised by the student and their parents, or by either acting alone. If a student is 18 or older, they alone shall exercise these rights, although a parent may continue to exercise them until expressly limited by a student who has filed the appropriate form. The student record shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript shall contain records that constitute a minimum amount of data and shall be limited to the name, address and phone number of the student and of the parent or caregiver, the student's birth date, course titles, grades, grade level completed and year completed. The temporary record shall consist of all information not in the transcript that is of importance to the educational process. The transcript shall be maintained by the School Department and may only be destroyed sixty years following a student's graduation, transfer or withdrawal from the school system.

### *Access*

The eligible student and their parent/caregiver, or either one as applicable, shall have access to the student record and may obtain copies of any information in the record. Authorized school personnel shall also have access to student records. In general, no information in a student record shall be disseminated without the specific, informed, written consent of the eligible student or the parent. Please note that federal student record regulations under FERPA also apply. A log shall be kept to record the dissemination of any information in the student record.

A parent/caregiver has the right to see a copy of their student's academic record and can exercise this right by writing to the school Principal or guidance counselor.

***Amendment***

The eligible student and their parent/caregiver, or either one, has the right to add information or other relevant material to the record. They also have the right to request the deletion or amendment of any information in the record. The school Principal or their designee is required to make a decision regarding such a request which may be appealed first to the Superintendent and then to the School Committee.

"Parent" shall mean a student's father, mother, caregiver, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother or caregiver. The term, as used in these regulations, shall include a divorced or separated parent, subject to any written agreement between parents or court order governing the rights of such a parent that is brought to the attention of the school principal (M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H). Unless notified by the custodial parent to the contrary, and subject to the specific regulation below, the noncustodial parent may have access to the same information as the custodial parent.

***Transfer Students***

A student transferring into the school must provide the school system with a complete school record including, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act. M.G.L. c.71 s37L. Upon examination of the student's course of study and level of academic attainment, Westwood High School staff will place the student in the appropriate grade or determine their eligibility for high school graduation. Staff will consult with the handbook section entitled "Required Credits for Advancement" to make these determinations.

Additionally, the Westwood Public Schools releases a student's complete student record to authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without further notice to or receipt of consent from the eligible student or parent.

***Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents***

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

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

    d. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
2. The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
3. In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school Principal.
4. Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).
5. The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
6. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

***Release of Student Information***

The school may release for publication a student's name, class, photograph, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors and awards. Parents who do not wish to have such information released to the news media should indicate "No" in Aspen.

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), the school may provide student record information (including the special education record) to a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without the consent of the eligible student or parent, so long as the parent receives annual notification of this law/regulation.

***Right to Request That Student Information Be Withheld From Armed Forces Recruiters***

The National Defense Authorization Act requires that school officials provide military recruiters with student information including names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Parents and students of majority age have a right to request that their information be withheld from military recruiters. To do so, please update your annual permissions in Aspen.

***Complaints***

Parents and eligible students have a right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures of a school district to comply with the requirements of the student records laws and regulations with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148.

Complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing student records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-5920.

## IX. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

***Acceptable Use of Technology Overview***

The Westwood Public Schools maintains an official Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) statement, as required by federal mandates, that defines appropriate use of technology by students and staff. The CLEAR Responsible Use

Guidelines contained within this section are intended to consolidate the AUP into a more readable, student-friendly format.

- The district will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
- Copyrighted software or data shall not be placed on the district system/net-work without permission from the holder of the copyright and System Administrator.
- Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
- Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement.
- Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
- Students completing required coursework will have first priority use of equipment.
- Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
- The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy.
- Systems users shall not use another user's account.
- System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system/network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.

***Westwood Public Schools District Acceptable Use Policy***

**Policy Statement: IV**
**Acceptable Use Policy - Technology Purpose**

The Westwood Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the system/network, including access to external networks for limited educational purposes. Educational purposes shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality, self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/ network will also be utilized to provide information to the community, including parents, government agencies, and businesses.

**Availability**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

Access to the system/network, including external networks, shall be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

Access to the system/network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Westwood Public School. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Westwood Public School.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Westwood Public Schools as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

**Monitored Use**

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources including electronic information that may be automatically stored on the school computer's backup system, by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

**Liability**

The Westwood Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Westwood Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of usability of any information found on external networks.

REVISED: August, 2007

***Westwood Public Schools Grades 6 - 12 Responsible Use Guidelines***

The Westwood Public School District believes that the use of computer networked services, email, and the Internet have become, if used appropriately, an integral part of an engaging, student centered, and collaborative learning environment. It is understood that all of our computer networked services are provided exclusively for educational purposes.

The Westwood Public Schools filters all internet traffic for the purpose of safeguarding staff and students from harmful content. The Westwood Public Schools also provides supervision and education related to appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and regarding cyberbullying awareness and response. However, it is still the responsibility of all computer users to make sure they comply with providing a safe and secure learning environment when using technology. The District encourages parents/caregivers to supervise their child(ren) when using technologies from home.

CLEAR highlights the important points contained in Westwood Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy.

**CLEAR: Considerate, Legal & Ethical, Appropriate and Responsible**

**C**onsiderate: People in our community reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Digital communication should be respectful, polite and considerate of others.

**L**egal & **E**thical: Respect copyright laws by copying media including text, music and videos only with permission and by crediting and citing the source where the information was found. It is a good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Respect the privacy of others, ask permission before taking photographs, video or audio recordings. Illegally copied or downloaded software, files, pictures, music or games may not be used on WPS computers.

**A**ppropriate: School technology is used for educational purposes and only appropriate words and images may be used and viewed. If inappropriate material are viewed or received, it is the responsibility of the recipient to delete them.

**R**esponsible: Ensure that care is taken with all hardware, software, shared resources (i.e. printers, scanners) and use of the school network, so as to prevent damage or misuse whether intentional or not; your actions should not inhibit the work of others. Personal information and passwords will be kept private.

**If you see someone not being CLEAR, report the abuse/misuse to a responsible adult.**

REVISED: August, 2013

***Acceptable Use Policy Violations***

The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's system/network. Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:

- **Intentional harm or destruction of property**: Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data files or programs is prohibited.
- **Degrading or disrupting system performance**: Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.
- **Vandalism:** Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
- **Forgery:** Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
- **Unauthorized access:** Attempts to read, delete, copy or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
- **Inappropriate language:** Use of inappropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs and other inflammatory language is prohibited.
- **Falsifying identity:** Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
- **Inappropriate access and/or distribution:** Transmitting or viewing obscene materials is prohibited.
- **Unauthorized information sharing:** Revealing personal information, addresses, phone numbers, etc. is prohibited.

## X. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Westwood Public Schools has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Westwood Police Department. This document is available by contacting the Superintendent's Office at 781 326-7500 x1341.