

The Worcester School Committee approved a robust Code of Conduct policy and a comprehensive Student Discipline policy that aligns with the new State regulations set forth by Chapter 222. As such, any student who is in possession of a firearm, in school or in a school sponsored event, will be excluded from school following the due process protocol.

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Section III LONG-TERM SUSPENSION/EXPULSION FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER MGL c. 71 §37H:

The long-term suspension or expulsion of a student from school will be in accordance with MGL c. 71 §37H. The grounds for long-term suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

- I. 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, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school by the principal or his/her designee.
- II. 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 long-term suspension or expulsion from the school or school district by the principal or his/her designee.
- III. Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of possessing drugs/weapons or assaulting school staff includes:
  - a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
  - b. The student shall be given an opportunity for a hearing and the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence. The student may have an attorney at their own expense.
  - c. Following the hearing, the principal or his/her designee may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel the student.
  - d. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within ten (10) calendar days following the long-term suspension or expulsion.
  - e. At the appeal hearing, the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.

- f. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of MGL c. 71 §37H.
- g. The superintendent's decision is final.
- h. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

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Rule 7. - Policy on Possession or Use of Weapons

If any device which may be considered a weapon under this policy is distributed by a teacher, for use in the classroom, then no student receiving such a device shall be charged with an offense under Rule 7 provided the device remains in the class- room and provided the device is only used for the classroom purpose. A student shall not possess, use, or attempt to use, any weapon on school premises or at a school related situation, including but not limited to travel to and from the situation. In order to protect the students of the Worcester Public Schools, 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 may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the principal regardless of the size of the knife.

- i. For purposes of this policy, a dangerous “weapon” includes but is not limited to a gun (including a B.B., pellet or other replica device), knife, sling shot, blowgun, blackjack, metallic knuckles including a ring intended to be worn on more than one finger (“fused rings”) or knuckles or any substance which could be put to the same use with the same or similar effect as metallic knuckles, nunchaku, zoobow, also known as klackers or kung fu sticks, or any similar weapon consisting of two sticks of wood, plastic or metal connected at one end by a length of rope, chain, wire or leather, a shuriken or any similar pointed star-like object intended to injure a person when thrown, or any armband, made with leather which has metallic spikes, points or studs or any similar material weighted with metal or other substance and worn on the hand, or a manrikigusari or similar length of chain having weighted ends. Any other device or object used or attempted to be used to inflict bodily harm on a person may be considered a weapon. This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students.