

Section A

Foundations and Basic Commitments

Section A of the NEPN classification system contains policies, regulations, and exhibits on the district's legal role in providing public education and the basic principles underlying school board governance. These policies provide a setting for all of the School Committee's other policies and regulations.

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SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the District is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

"... Every town shall maintain ... a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein."

The public educational system of Worcester structurally is a department of the town operated under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Worcester Public Schools is coterminous with the City of Worcester.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Massachusetts, Part II, Chapter V, Section II
M.G.L. 71:1

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

Historical Note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony required towns to provide for a program of public education.

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens' expectations for the education of the community's youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizens' desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communication with citizens of the community. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.
2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.
3. Act as a truly representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

NONDISCRIMINATION

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

Complaints of Discrimination/Harassment should be directed to the following:

Human Resource Manager
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609
Telephone: (508) 799-3020

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment
Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L.76:16
BESE regulations 603CMR 26.00 Amended 2012

BESE regulations 603CMR 28.00

File: AC

CROSS REFS.:

ACA- ACE, Subcategories for Nondiscrimination OBA, Equal
Employment Opportunity
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school system does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school system's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

UPDATED: June 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Worcester Public Schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Since the Worcester School Committee takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action, where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a persons' employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student. The Worcester Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- A. A man, as well as a woman, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a woman, as well as a man, may be the harasser.
- B. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. He/she may also be an agent of the employer, a supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or in some circumstances even a non-employee (student, parent).
- C. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- D. The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may also be someone who is affected by such conduct when it is directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts of humor or sexual harassment of one female/male employee may create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment for another female/male or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

- E. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered a concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances which do not result in the loss of a promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education or unreasonably create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.

The Grievance Officers:

Chief Human Resource Officer
(508) 799-3020
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

Instructional Support Personnel Director
(508) 799-3027
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

The committee will annually appoint sexual harassment grievance officers who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to one of the grievance officers. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
 - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
 - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.
 - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
 - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:
 - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
 - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings, the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

State and Federal Remedies

Nothing in this policy or procedure shall be deemed to affect a complainant's right to pursue other remedies at law, including administrative appeals or lawsuits. Administrative agencies with jurisdiction in these matters include:

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")
One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
(617) 289-0111

Massachusetts Department of Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
(781) 388-3300

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
One Congress Street - 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

SOURCE: WPS

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition: A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the District.

Reasonable Modification: The District shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the District can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

Communications: The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the District shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the District. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the District shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: "Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Modification: The District is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the District shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. A written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion shall accompany the decision.

Notice: The District shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the District. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

Compliance Coordinator: The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The District shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified disabled person solely on the basis of disability is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified disabled persons should be in the mainstream of life in the school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of disability.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as amended
 Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
 Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended
 Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended
 through 3/28/78

CROSS REFS.: IGB, Support Services Programs

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY/SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION

The Worcester Public Schools provides learners with a quality education in a safe and healthy environment. We believe that all students can achieve at high levels as they prepare to become productive citizens in our changing technological world. We are committed to supporting students, parents, educators and citizens in their pursuit of learning.

SOURCE: WPS

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 270-6

CORI REQUIREMENTS

It shall be the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Sexual Offender Registry Information (SORI) from the criminal history systems board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI/SORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service.

The Superintendent, Principal or their certified designees may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Pursuant to a Department of Education CORI Law Advisory dated February 17, 2003, "Direct and unmonitored contact with children means contact with a child when no other CORI cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students."

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the criminal history systems board. In the event that a current employee has questions concerning the signing of the request form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the CORI request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

CORI is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. CORI may be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, upon his or her request, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the criminal history systems board.

Access to CORI material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, CORI material should be obtained only where the Superintendent has determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing CORI: the type and nature of the offense; the date of the offense and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records (see ADDA-E-2) which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: "An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all the legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

As soon as possible after the district obtains the certification from the criminal history systems board to receive CORI data, the Superintendent shall obtain such data for any person then providing volunteer service, as a condition of continued service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St.2002, c.385
MCAD Regulations and D.O.E. Advisory on CORI Law (Feb 17, 2003) 803
CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)

CROSS REFS: ADDA-R, CORI Requirements
ADDA-E-1, Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record
ADDA-E-2, CORI Requirements

SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

Wellness Committee

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1) parent, student, nurse, school food service representative, School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
 1. foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
 2. foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
 3. foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities; and
 4. refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
 5. specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

Nutrition and Physical Education

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.

Nutrition Education

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.

Physical Education Activities

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

Other School-Based Activities

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

Evaluation

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

ADOPTED: April 20, 2006

LEGAL REFS.: The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204,
P.L. 108 -265
The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 - 1769h
The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1771 - 1789

CROSS REFS.: EFC, Free and Reduced-Cost Food Services
IHAMA, Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs
KI, Public Solicitations/Advertising in District Facilities

SOURCE: WPS

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

The School Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for all facets of school operations. Because it is accountable to residents of the District, the School Committee will maintain a program of accountability consisting of the following elements:

- Clear statements of expectations and purpose as these relate to operations, programs, departments and positions.
- Provisions for the staff, resources and support necessary to achieve stated expectations and purposes, subject to financial support by residents of the District.
- Evaluation of operations and instructional and staff development programs to determine how well expectations and purposes are being met.
- Specific performance objectives to enable individuals to direct their own efforts to the goals and objectives of the District.
- Evaluation of the efforts of employees in line with stated objectives, with the first purpose of evaluation being to help each individual make a maximum contribution to the goals of the District.

Every effort will be made by the School Committee, Superintendent and staff to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in the concept of accountability.

SECTION B - BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

- BA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
- BAA** EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES
- BB** SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS
- BBA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
- BBA - E** SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
- BBAA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY
- BBBA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/
- BBBA-E** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE/VACANCIES
- BBBC** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION
- BBBE** UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT
- BCA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
- BCB** CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
- BDA** ORGANIZATION – MAYOR, VICE CHAIR
- BDB** SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS
- BDC** APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS
- BDD** SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP
- BDE** STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- BDF** ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- BDFA** SCHOOL COUNCILS
- BDFA-E-1** CONDUCT OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BUSINESS
- BDFA-E-2** SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- BDFA-E-3** SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- BDG** SCHOOL ATTORNEYS

BE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEC EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

BEDA NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEDB AGENDA FORMAT

BEDB-E AGENDA FORMAT

BEDD RULES OF ORDER

BEDF VOTING METHOD

BEDG MINUTES

BEDH PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEE SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

BG SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

BGB POLICY ADOPTION

BGC POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

BGD SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

BGE POLICY DISSEMINATION

BGF SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

BHC SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

BHE USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BIA NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

BID SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION

BJ SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
3. Establish practical and simple goals.
4. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee - Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and Committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the city's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of city government, the School Committee has, unlike other city boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process. According to the Worcester City Charter, the Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall chair the committee, and six members elected at-large. School committee members shall be elected for terms of two years each, beginning on the first secular day of January in the year following their election and shall serve until their successors are qualified.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees
Worcester City Charter, Article 4, Section 4-1(a + b.)

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Legislative or policymaking.** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. **Appraisal.** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. **Provision of financial resources.** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. **Public relations.** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. **Educational planning and evaluation.** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

Powers and Duties

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School Physician and School Nurses. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.
Worcester City Charter Sec. 4-1(d)

REF.: BBA-E, School Committee Powers and Duties

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

1. At all meetings of the School Committee, four (4) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHAIR

2. The School Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall be the Chair, and six (6) members. The six (6) members other than the Mayor shall be elected-at-large for terms of two (2) years each by plurality voting. The biennial election shall take place in every odd numbered year.
3. A Vice-Chair shall be chosen at the meeting in January of the year ensuing, from the members of the School Committee by a viva voice vote, each member present answering to his/her name of the person for whom he/she votes. The Clerk or other proper officer shall record every such vote.
4. The seats of the members, with the exception of the Chair, should be numbered and determined by lottery and they may not be changed unless by permission of the Chair.
5. The Mayor shall be Chair of the City Council and Chair of the School Committee. He/she shall have no power to veto but shall have the same powers as any other member of either such body to vote upon all measures coming before it.
6. The Chair shall call the School Committee to order at the time appointed for the meeting and shall preside and cause the records of the last regular meeting and subsequent special meetings to be presented or read, and if they are found correct, the School Committee shall declare them approved. The Clerk of the School Committee shall create and maintain an accurate record of all meetings of the School Committee and all of its committees, including executive sessions, setting forth the date, time and place, the members present or absent and a summary of the discussions on each subject. The record shall include all documents and other exhibits, such as photographs, recordings or maps, used by the School Committee or any committee thereof at any open session or executive session.
7. The Chair shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools and shall co-sign all contracts entered into and signed by the Worcester School Department.
8. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties, except the co-signing of contracts, unless authorized by the Mayor, or the Chair in his/her absence and shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools.
9. No member of the School Committee, including the Chair, shall exercise authority outside of Committee meetings nor exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools unless such authority has been specifically delegated to him/her by statute or is consistent with state statutes
10. The School Committee by its vote or as individual members of the School Committee shall deal with any School Department employee through the Superintendent, its executive officer, who under the general direction of the Committee, is charged with the care and supervision of the public schools. Individual School Committee members may deal with School Department employees, without notice to the Superintendent, concerning day-to-day matters of a routine nature regarding the administration of the school system, as long as such dealings would not cause any disruption in the course of the performance of that employee's duties. In those situations where the definition of "routine" is in question, that issue may be resolved by the Superintendent.

11. The Chair shall have the power to open the session at the time the School Committee is to meet, by taking the Chair, and calling the members to order; to announce the business in the order in which it is to be acted upon; to recognize members entitled to the floor; to state and to put to vote all questions which are regularly moved and to announce the result of the vote; to enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members; deciding all questions of order (subject to an appeal to the committee by any member who submits the question to the entire School Committee). The Chair cannot close debate unless by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the School Committee present.
12. The Chair shall observe the following procedures in conducting the meetings:
 - a. recognizing members in order of request to be heard
 - b. acting upon the motion on the floor before other motions are entertained
 - c. discouraging argumentative and repetitive discussion
 - d. relinquishing the Chair when desiring to engage in discussion or debate of the agenda item
13. When a question is under debate the Chair shall receive no motion but:
 - to refer
 - to hold to a certain day/indefinitely
 - to allow debate to continue on a motion to hold
 - to amend
 - to move the question
 - to file
 - to adjourn
14. As a matter of protocol, the Chair while presiding at regular School Committee meetings shall be seated between and flanked by the Superintendent and the Clerk of the School Committee.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

15. Every member, when about to speak, shall respectfully address the Chair, and wait until He/she is recognized, shall confine him/herself to the question under debate and avoid personalities, and speak for no more than five (5) minutes except with the consent by majority vote of the School Committee (excluding Committee reports). Discussion on a single subject at a School Committee meeting will be limited to one hour or until each School Committee member who wishes to speak is given an opportunity to do so.
16. No member speaking shall be interrupted by another, but by calling to order for explanation.
17. Motions shall be carefully worded to avoid confusion and more complicated motions shall be written and submitted to the Clerk to insure that all motions are clearly understood.
18. Agenda items filed by School Committee members shall be concise and specific, shall contain no redundant verbiage or opinions or conclusions and should be worded to avoid confusion.
19. Any member present must vote either "Yea", "Nay" or abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest in which case he/she shall state the nature of the conflict under Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws.
20. Motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote and a roll call of the members of the Committee present shall be as follows:

- a. amend, repeal, rescind or annul any part of the By-Laws or Rules of Order (It also requires previous notice.)
 - b. suspend the Rules
 - c. move the question
 - d. rescind previous vote
 - e. limit or extend one's limit of debate
21. Any action voted by the School Committee shall be effective 48 hours after said meeting.
 22. No action of the School Committee shall be reconsidered unless the motion to reconsider is made within forty-eight (48) hours of the date the vote to be reconsidered was taken, excluding legal holidays, Saturdays and Sundays, with the Clerk of the School Committee. The motion for reconsideration can be made during the meeting at which the action to be reconsidered was taken provided that the motion to reconsider is approved by two-thirds of the members of the School Committee who are present. The reason for reconsideration must be included as part of the backup with the caveat that the entire item would be open for discussion.
 23. An item to be reconsidered shall be the first item on the agenda for action at the next regular meeting. The motion cannot be postponed, amended or referred to Committee.
 24. Items to be reconsidered or held concerning personnel or organizational patterns shall be reconsidered or acted upon within two (2) weeks of the date of the vote to be reconsidered or held was to be taken.
 25. No more than one (1) motion for reconsideration of any vote shall be entertained.
 26. No member of the School Committee shall vote on any question or serve on any committee where his/her private interest is immediately concerned or where a conflict of interest exists as defined by state statutes and/or judicial interpretation.

No Mayor or member of the City Council or School Committee and no Officer or employee of the City shall directly or indirectly make a contract with the City, or receive any commission, discount, bonus, gift, contribution, or benefit from, or any share in, the profits of any person making or performing such contract, unless the Mayor, such member, officer or employee, immediately upon learning of the existence of such contract, or that such contract is proposed, shall notify in writing the Mayor, City Council or School Committee of the nature of his/her interest in such contract, and shall abstain from doing any official act on behalf of the City in reference thereto. In case of such interest on the part of an officer whose duty it is to sign such contract on behalf of the City, the contract may be signed by the Vice-Chair or any other officer of the City duly authorized thereto by the Mayor, provided, that when a contractor with the City is a corporation or a voluntary stock association, the ownership of less than five (5) percent of the stock or shares actually issued shall not be considered as involving an interest in the contract within the meaning of this section, and such ownership shall not affect the validity of the contract, unless the owner of such stock or shares, is also an officer or agent of the corporation or association, or solicits or takes part in the making of the contract.

A violation of any provision of this section shall render the contract in respect to which such violation occurs, voidable at the option of the City. A person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one (1) year, or both.

27. All School Committee meetings shall terminate no later than midnight. Items that are still pending action at that time shall be carried forward as the "First Items of Business" at the next regular or special School Committee meeting.
28. When an item is filed by a member of the School Committee and that item is to be referred either to a Standing Committee, Special/Ad-Hoc Committee or the School Administration, debate will be limited to opposition, amendment, clarification or supplementation of a motion except for the member who filed the item who, in addition to the debate, may also introduce the item.
29. The Clerk of the School Committee will e-mail, on the Wednesday prior to each Friday delivery, copies of the items for each agenda with the names of the makers on them. The School Committee members will then complete a form by checking off the items that they wish to co-sponsor and forward it back to the Clerk of the School Committee on or before Noon on the Thursday prior to each Friday delivery.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEES

30. All items, petitions or remonstrances addressed to the School Committee shall be filed with the Clerk and presented by the Chair or by a member in his/her place who may explain the subject thereof. No action shall be taken by the School Committee or one of its Committees on any petition unless the principal petitioner of any petition before the School Committee shall be notified that his/her petition is to be heard and/or final action is to be taken by the School Committee. Reports may be referred to the proper Standing Committee for discussion and recommendation before presenting the reports by a Standing Committee to the full School Committee.
31. All Committees shall be appointed by the Chair unless otherwise ordered by the School Committee. Each School Committee member shall serve on no less than two standing committees. The member first named shall be Chair. A majority of each Committee shall constitute a quorum. All reports made by Committees to the School Committee shall be presented by the Standing Committee Chair. No report of business and items voted shall be made to the School Committee unless agreed to in Committee actually assembled and approved by vote of majority of the members of the Standing/Special Committee. Minority reports may be given by members of the Standing Committee as long as the issues raised were discussed in the Standing Committee.
32. There shall be appointed Standing Committees of the School Committee as follows:
 - a. Accountability and Student Achievement
 - b. Finance and Operations
 - c. Governance and Employee Issues
 - d. Teaching, Learning and Student Supports
33. Each Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) School Committee Members.

34. If an item is referred to a Standing Committee and has no action for two consecutive Standing Committee meetings of the Standing Committee, the maker of the original item has the option to request the Clerk of the School Committee to return the item to the full committee.
35. The principal petitioner of any petition to be heard by a Standing Committee of the School Committee must be notified of the date, time and place at which his/her petition is to be heard. No petition may be voted by a Standing Committee of the School Committee unless the principal petitioner has been notified as specified above.

VACANCIES ON APPOINTED COMMITTEES

36. Whenever a vacancy occurs among School Committee Officers, or in any Committee, the same shall be filled by election or appointment in the same manner and by the authority which first elected the officer or appointed the Committee.
37. When an order, resolution, item or petition relates to a subject which may properly be examined and reported upon by a Standing Committee of the School Committee, such order, resolution, item or petition shall upon presentation be referred to such Committee.
38. All petitions, communications, items or any matter before the School Committee may be referred as follows:
 - a. to a Standing Committee of the School Committee
 - b. to a Special Committee of the School Committee
 - c. to the Superintendent/Administration
39. All items referred to Administration for study and recommendation shall include in the item a suggested date for a report back to the full Committee. The length of time allowed for the study shall be determined by its complexity. The Committee shall be aware of the limited time available for study items during budget preparation and hearing months. The direction, scope and intent to the study shall be specific.
40. On occasion, when there are items of interest involving participation by guests, residents and/or non-residents or groups in the audience, items may be brought forward early in the meeting.
41. A petition, resolution, order, communication or other matter acted upon unfavorably by the School Committee including placing on file such petition, order, or other matter or the substance thereof, shall not again be docketed on the School Committee Calendar for consideration by the School Committee within a period of three (3) months of such unfavorable action unless previously authorized by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Committee Members present.

MEETINGS

42. Regularly scheduled meetings may be of two (2) kinds: business and/or educational. The meeting may be held for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the School program, or the development and discussion of policy, and may be held at various schools throughout the City.
43. Special meetings or emergency meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee, or in his/her absence or disability by the Vice-Chair, by three (3) members collectively, in the event that the Chair fails to act, upon due notice as specified in the By-Laws. Ordinarily no business shall be transacted except that for which the meeting is called. For special meetings, at least forty-eight (48) hours notice must be given in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.
44. Recessed/adjourned meetings shall serve as a continuation of a regular meeting, and not as a special or called meeting.
45. The minutes of any open session, whether approved or in draft form, shall be made available upon request by any person within ten (10) days of the request to the extent required by subsection 22(e) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The minutes of any executive session, the notes, recordings or other materials used in the preparation of such minutes and all documents and exhibits used at the session, shall be withheld from public disclosure to the extent provided by subsection 22(f) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The Mayor shall, at reasonable intervals or as otherwise required by subsection 22(g)(2) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25, review any previously unreleased minutes of all executive sessions and determine whether continued non-disclosure under the Open Meeting Law is warranted. In conducting this review the Mayor may seek the advice and assistance of the Superintendent, Clerk of the School Committee, the City Manager or City Solicitor. The Mayor shall file a report containing such determinations at the next regular meeting of the School Committee.

46. All meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public except for executive sessions as described below:

Executive sessions shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 30A §§ 18-25.

No executive session shall be held until the School Committee has first convened in open session for which notice has been duly given, a majority of the members have voted to go into executive session, and the vote of each member is recorded on a roll call vote and entered into the minutes, the Chair has cited the purpose for an executive session, and the Chair has stated before the executive session if the School Committee will reconvene after the executive session.

47. Regular meetings of the School Committee shall be held on the first Thursday and the third Thursday of the month and shall convene at 7:00 p.m., at a place so designated on the School Committee Agenda of business, unless by a majority vote, the School Committee determines another day, time and/or place.
48. If a School Committee Meeting is scheduled during a school vacation period, it will be postponed to the following Thursday.
49. During the months of July and August, meetings will be held as follows:
- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| July meeting: | third Thursday in July |
| August meeting: | Thursday prior to the opening of school |
50. The School Committee shall conduct a public hearing relative to the Minority Deisolation Plan at its first meeting in December each year. At the hearing, the School Committee will review the results concerning the implementation of the plan and will make the necessary changes in an effort to maintain the correct minority/majority percent at each school. The School Committee will vote the revised plans for the schools that require changes and any other amendments necessary prior to the opening of school.
51. Individuals shall have an opportunity to be heard at a meeting of the School Committee in regard to any matter considered thereat; the time allowed for each person shall be limited to five (5) minutes unless the Chair, with the approval of the School Committee, suspends the rules.
52. The conduct of meetings of the business of the School Committee shall be in accordance with the laws of the State, and except as otherwise provided in accordance with the rules of parliamentary practice laid down in Robert's Rules of Order.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

53. An item not on the calendar of a special meeting shall not be considered nor acted upon.

ADJOURNED MEETINGS

54. The School Committee may recess/adjourn any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting to a time and place specified in the order of recess/adjournment. Less than a quorum may so recess/adjourn from time to time. If all members are absent from any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting, the Clerk of the School Committee may declare the meeting recessed/adjourned to a stated time and place, and he/she shall cause a written notice of the recess/adjournment to be given. When a regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting is recessed/adjourned, the resulting recessed/adjourned regular meeting, is a regular meeting for all purposes.

55. Any hearing being held, or noticed or ordered to be held, by the School Committee at any meeting, may, by order or notice of continuance, be continued or recontinued to any subsequent meeting of the School Committee provided, that if the hearing is continued to a time less than twenty-four (24) hours after the time specified in the order of hearing, notice shall be posted immediately following the meeting at which the order or declaration of continuance was adopted or made.

56. At every regular meeting of the School Committee the order of business shall be as follows:

Call to Order - Statement of Purpose of Meeting
Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem
Roll Call
Approval of Records
Motion for Reconsideration
Immediate Action
Communications and Petitions
Reports of Standing Committees
Personnel
Report of the Superintendent
General Business
Adjournment

57. An agenda of business shall be prepared on the Thursday prior to the meeting and sent or delivered to each Member of the School Committee the following day. All items of whatever description, including Standing Committee reports which may require action by the School Committee, shall be presented to the Clerk no later than 12 noon on the Wednesday in the week preceding the Thursday meeting. Papers or items presented after that hour on such day will not be considered until the next meeting except as follows:

A supplemental agenda may be prepared following the completion of the regular agenda if the item is of an emergency nature which requires the immediate attention of the School Committee and the item must carry an explanation of the emergency addressed. The Clerk shall prepare a list of all matters in the supplemental agenda to come before the School Committee and shall endeavor to deliver to each School Committee member a copy of the same no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to said meeting; or,

An item not on the calendar of the regular meeting may be brought up during such meeting only with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the School Committee present and then only for: 1) routine items introduced for referral to any committee or the Superintendent/Administration; or, 2) items introduced for immediate and final action for which time is of the essence.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

58. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.

59. All petitions filed, by a citizen, with the School Committee will be heard by the School Committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the School Committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
60. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.
61. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
62. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.
63. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.
64. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.
2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the city's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her share of the work.
5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
6. To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.
11. School Committee members, within 1 year after their initial election or appointment, shall complete at least 8 hours of orientation concerning the responsibilities of their office at no cost to individual School Committee members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the City of Worcester from which he/she is elected and must take an oath of office as required by law.

On the first secular day in the New Year, all newly elected School Committee members will take the oath of office before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the City Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Each new member will present to the Committee clerk official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee.

From the Municipal Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign a receipt for, within 30 days of taking office, a copy of the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's Summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. As municipal employees, all School Committee members shall receive a copy of said summary annually. All School Committee members shall, within 30 days of taking office, and every 2 years thereafter, complete the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's online training program. Upon completion of the online training program, members shall provide notice of such completion to be retained for 6 years by the Municipal Clerk.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity sexual orientation, marital status, disability or homelessness.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE/VACANCIES

Section 4-1 Composition. Term of Office and Powers.

- (a) Composition - The School Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall chair the Committee and six members elected at-large.
- (b) Term of Office - School Committee members shall be elected for terms of two years each, beginning on the first secular day of January in the year following their election and shall serve until their successors are qualified.
- (c) Eligibility - Any voter shall be eligible to hold the office of School Committee member, provided, however, that he/she shall have resided within the City for one year immediately prior to the election.
- (d) Powers and Duties - The School Committee shall have all the powers which are conferred on school committees by general law and such additional powers and duties as may be provided by the charter, by ordinance, or otherwise. Its powers and duties shall include, but shall not be limited to the following:
 - (1) To take general charge of all the public schools in the city, including the evening schools and evening high schools, and all special programs conducted by the school department.
 - (2) To appoint a Superintendent of the Schools who shall be charged with the day to day administration of the school system, subject to policy directives adopted by the school committee. The School Committee may award a contract to the Superintendent of Schools for a term not to exceed six years, in accordance with section 41 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter, Article Four, Sec. 4-1d

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates School Committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the city in which he or she holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, said vacancy shall be filled in descending order of votes received by the candidate for the office of School Committee who received the largest number of votes from the preceding regular municipal election without being elected, provided such person remains eligible and willing to serve. The City Clerk shall certify such candidate to the office to serve for the balance of the then unexpired term.

LEGAL REFS.: Worcester City Charter Article Four, Sec. 4-6 (a)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
4. refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. uphold the intent of Executive Sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in Executive Sessions.
4. not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

LEGAL REF: Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, May 22, 1964.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Section 4-3 Conflict of Interest

Except as otherwise authorized by law, no member of the school committee shall, while a member thereof, hold any other office or position in the school department, the salary or compensation for which is payable out the city treasury.

REF: Worcester City Charter, Section 4-3

ORGANIZATION – MAYOR, VICE CHAIR

1. Organization - The School Committee shall organize on the first secular day of January, in accordance with the procedures set forth for the organization of the city council in section. 2-2.
2. Chair - The Mayor shall serve as chair of the School Committee and shall have the same power to vote on every matter coming before the School Committee, as any other member.
3. Vice Chair - Once the School Committee shall have organized and at that meeting, the Committee shall elect one of its members, by majority vote of all the members elected, to serve as vice-chair. The vice-chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee at which the Mayor is not present.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter Section 4-2

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chair will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Clerk

The clerk will keep accurate Minutes of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the city.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36
 Worcester City Charter Article 4 Section 4-2(B&C)

Note: The treasurer of the city serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Committee may also establish and appoint the positions of:

- Assistant or Associate Superintendent
- Business Administrator
- Director of Special Education
- Legal Counsel for General Purposes
- Legal Counsel for Collective Bargaining
- School Physician
- Registered Nurse

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Ch. 71

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent may seek guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Chair of the School Committee appoints the chairs, vice chairs, and members of the following subcommittees for a period of two years:

Accountability and Student Achievement
Finance and Operations
Governance and Employee Issues
Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

These subcommittees are created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The Standing Committee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
2. All Standing Committees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

REF. Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #32

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory/ad hoc committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.
2. If an advisory/ad hoc committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory/ad hoc committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Chair of the School Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Tenure of committee members will be one year unless the member is reappointed.
6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. the length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. the assignment the School Committee wished the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. the resources the School Committee will provide.
 - d. the approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
 - f. responsibilities for the release of information to the press.
7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.
8. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.
9. Advisory committees created under this policy are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The chair will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school site council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school district.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school site council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school site council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a School Improvement Plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the school site council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school site council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School site councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school site council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Section 18-25, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school site council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive agendas and minutes of all school site council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school site council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school site council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent and review of the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and by the School Committee.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals
3. The means to address student performance
4. Professional development for the school's professional staff
5. The enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child
7. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school site council, shall consider appropriate, except that:
 - a. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and
 - b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written School Improvement Plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent for approval and the School Committee for review no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school site council be aware of certain expectations regarding the School Improvement Plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. focus on improvement of student learning
2. specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results
3. align with the mission of the school district and any goals and policies of the school district
4. be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements
5. clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented
6. include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed
7. indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources
8. delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results

If the School Improvement Plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school site council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent does not review the School Improvement Plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

SCHOOL ATTORNEYS

The School Committee may use the services provided by the city solicitor, and/or outside legal counsel.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. He/she will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school law to enable him/her to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, he/she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E; 71:37F
 Worcester City Charter

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

1. **Regular meeting**: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly
2. **Special meeting**: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an Executive Session is held in accordance with state law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

REF.: Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #42

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Standing Committees of the School Committee
BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
2. strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel
3. strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted
4. the deployment of security personnel or devices
5. allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints
6. transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party
7. to comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements
8. and to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the School Committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent). This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.
9. to meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business

10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in Executive Session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review Executive Session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of Executive Session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in Executive Session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Standing Committees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KE, Public Complaints about School Personnel

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all Standing Committee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings may be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. However, a minimum of 48 hours prior to each meeting the Committee shall cause to be posted a listing of each subject the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting (the agenda). Notification of a change in a regular meeting time, place, or agenda and notification, including agenda, of a special meeting will be filed with the city clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

AGENDA FORMAT

The agenda format shall be in full compliance with policy BBA-E, Paragraph 56.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members the Friday prior to each meeting or for additional materials or items, 48 hours prior to the meeting, to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

BEDB-E - AGENDA FORMAT

At regular meetings, the following will be the customary order of business:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of records
4. Motion for reconsideration
5. Immediate action
6. Report of the Superintendent
7. Communication and petition
8. Reports of the Standing Committees
9. Personnel
10. General business
11. Adjournment

RULES OF ORDER

The School Committee has an approved set of rules that govern the proceedings of the meetings.

If a ruling is needed on a topic being discussed which is not covered under the School Committee's rules, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

CROSS REF: BBA-E, Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

VOTING METHOD

Open Meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or roll call and shall be recorded in the minutes. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or Rules of the School Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

Motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote and a roll call of the members of the Committee present shall be as follows:

- a. amend, repeal, rescind or annul any part of the By-Laws or Rules of Order (It also requires previous notice.)
- b. suspend the Rules
- c. move the question
- d. rescind previous vote
- e. limit or extend one's limit of debate

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into Executive Session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in Executive Session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of Executive Sessions. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25;

REF: BBA-E Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the Clerk of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. a statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), indicating the time and the place.
2. names of the members present or absent, indicating arrival and departure times.
3. a complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, communications, and all business transacted. Motions and votes will be recorded in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding them. Reports and documents related to a formal motion may be referred to by subject and date.
4. notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of Executive Sessions, that have been declassified, will be in the custody of the Clerk of the School Committee who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

Specific comments and/or discussion should only be included in the minutes as a result of a vote of the Committee. The minutes are not a transcript of the meeting. Audio and/or videotapes of meetings may serve the purpose of preserving a record of discussions. They do not, however, have to be reflected in the minutes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive Sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.
2. All petitions filed by a citizen, with the School Committee will be heard by the School Committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the School Committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
3. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.

4. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
5. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.

6. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.
7. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

REF: Rules of the School Committee of the Worcester School Committee

CROSS REF: BBA-E

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others, as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The Chair of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing of the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and anytime limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee: to comment Citizens must be recognized by the Chair and all remarks must be addressed to the Chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the Chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to speak a second time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item - reading of the proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory Committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item - discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee's official policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the School Committee's office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for the meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its Standing Committees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text messages, social media postings, internet web forums, and internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic mail correspondence between and among members of the School Committee, or the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of law, each new School Committee member elected to the School Committee is required to complete, within one year of his/her election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given or provided direct online access to the following materials:

- A. a copy of the School Committee policy manual
- B. a copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. a copy of the Ethics/Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. a copy of the district's budget
- E. collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent determine to be necessary.

The Chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

- A. arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

CROSS REF: [BBBA/BBBB](#) School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36A

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The School Committee shall be made aware of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel reimbursement policy.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

CROSS REFS.: BID, School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
DKC, Expense Reimbursements

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION

The School Committee shall be compensated in accordance with the provisions of the Worcester City Charter.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:52
Worcester City Charter, Article 4, Section 4

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

1. The School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional School Committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

SECTION C - GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

[CA](#) - ADMINISTRATION GOALS

[CB](#) - SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

[CBD](#) - SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

[CBI](#) - EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

[CCB](#) - LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

[CE](#) - ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES

[CH](#) - POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

[CHA](#) - DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES

[CHC](#) - PROCEDURES DISSEMINATION

[CHCA](#) - APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

[CHCA-E](#) - APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

[CHD](#) - ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

[CL](#) - ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

[CM](#) - SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

ADMINISTRATION GOALS

The District employs qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and requires the Superintendent to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.

File: CB

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and set his/her compensation. The Superintendent shall act in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [71:59](#), [72:3](#)

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the appointment of a candidate to be Superintendent, will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent. In accordance with said contract or, in the absence of specific contract language, by vote of the members, the Committee may choose to negotiate a successor contract with an incumbent Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:41](#); [71:42](#)

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Evaluation can serve the purpose of helping educators and educational leaders continually improve their practice.

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Ensure the efforts of the Superintendent are focused on district goals and the standards of professional practice established by state regulation are met.
2. Ensure all Committee members and the Superintendent are in agreement and clear on the role of the Superintendent and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities.
3. Provide excellence in administrative leadership of the school district.
4. Develop a respectful and productive working relationship between the School Committee and Superintendent.

The School Committee and Superintendent will periodically develop a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school district and in keeping with state regulations for evaluation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent's performance will be reviewed in accordance with specified goals and standards. Additional objectives will be established according to the evaluation cycle agreed upon with the Superintendent.

All School Committee discussion and deliberation related to the Superintendent's performance evaluation shall be conducted in open session in accordance with the open meeting law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [30A:18](#)-25

603 CMR [35.00](#)

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

Personnel will be expected to refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator to whom they are responsible. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes. But, all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members, at all levels, in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility. When the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as he/she deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and procedures and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity, all councils, cabinets and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the School Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee. Authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at his/her discretion.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through procedures, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the procedures developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all School Committee employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and procedures and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.

DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school system will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school system will be governed.

In the development of procedures, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the procedures, including staff members, students, parents/guardians, and the public. He/she must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student, and community organizations. He/she will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of procedures and in presenting procedures for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, he/she may issue procedures without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of procedures be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

PROCEDURES DISSEMINATION

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the procedures developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school system are appropriately coded and included as procedures in the School Committee's policy manual.

A procedure concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the procedure.

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The District shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. The District shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes in the disciplinary policy to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of the District and individual school handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the school system or one of its schools be of a quality that reflects credit on the school department.

Committee approval will be necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval. However, all handbooks published will be sent to the Committee for informational purposes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

1. 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 or a controlled substance, may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults any employee of the School District may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either (1) or (2) above shall be notified in writing of their 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, the Principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.
4. Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent.
5. When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent or his/her designee of the sending school shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

File: CHD

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act.

File: CL

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent's reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school system.

File: CM

SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school system and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent and presented to the School Committee. Upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing the parents/guardians, citizens, Commissioner of Education and others of the programs and conditions of the cities public schools.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [72:4](#)

SECTION D - FISCAL MANAGEMENT

- DA** FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS
- DB** ANNUAL BUDGET
- DBC** BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES
- DBD** BUDGET PLANNING
- DBJ** BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY
- DD** FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS
- DGA** AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES
- DH** BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS
- DI** FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING
- DIE** AUDITS
- DJ** PURCHASING
- DJA** PURCHASING AUTHORITY
- DJE** PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS
- DK** PAYMENT PROCEDURES
- DKC** EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS

The district's fiscal management goals are based on a Seven Point Financial Plan for Advancing Student Achievement and Program Sustainability. This policy is a guiding document around the promise to the community on delivery high expectation and outstanding results for all students, and a framework document for resource allocation and budget planning

1. **Long Term Budget Planning:** The annual budget document will continue to conform to the Meritorious Budget Award criteria of the Association of School Business Officials, International. Included in the budget document will be three years of actual student enrollment and five years of projected student enrollment (in total and by school) as well as a five-year history and projection on revenues and expenditures. This will allow the public an opportunity to look at enrollment and spending trends as well as provide the community with budget trends that eliminates any budget status surprises when done only on an annual basis. The long-term budget planning also allows for the strategic allocation of resources over a multi-year period.
2. **Annual Budget Review:** The district will continue to utilize a "Zero-Based" budget development process. This budget building technique starts with each department, school, and division budget at zero and adds the cost of essential programs up to an established funding limit. Each year the process begins at zero again prompting scrutiny and prioritization of costs. This process allows the district to meet the existing and emerging needs of students and allows the district to reallocate resources accordingly in a very timely manner.
3. **Transparent Budget Process:** The budget process and method of instructional funding allocation will continue to be included in the annual budget document. This allows all readers to understand how staff is assigned to schools based on enrollment and student needs. The transparency ensures fairness in funding across the city while recognizing differentiated funding for schools based on their particular needs. The budget will continue to show budgeted expenses in detail by school or location. The Administration will make frequent budget presentations and updates to the School Committee and community throughout the budget planning and development phase in order to solicit input and priorities from as many stakeholders as possible. In order to promote frequent dialogue with the Worcester City Council, the Standing Committee of Finance and Operations will continue to meet with the City Council's Education Committee on a regular basis as determined by the Chairs of the Committees.
4. **Quarterly Financial Reporting:** Continuous on-going public review of current year spending and expenditure trends is an important component of the transparent budget process. On a quarterly basis, the Administration will present to the School Committee's Subcommittee on Finance and Operations, a detailed review of the current year budget and recommended adjustments in order to end each fiscal year balanced within the appropriation set by the Worcester City Council. The quarterly budget review occurs at

File: DA

televised meetings and the financial reports are available to the public through the district's website.

5. **Supplemental & Sustainable Programs:** The district will predominantly utilize state and federal grant funds to provide supplemental academic support to students, as well as high quality staff development opportunities. Any new programs or initiatives developed, supported, or otherwise funded by the district will include a multiyear budget as well as a stated source of funding to ensure program sustainability in future years.
6. **Cap Administrative Spending:** The state's education funding formula calculates a "foundation budget" (a minimum spending level) for school districts using a differentiated per pupil amount based upon student grade or program and provides additional funds for low income and English language learners. The per pupil formula is comprised of allocations for an adequate level of teachers, professional development, instructional equipment, guidance and student support, operations and maintenance, employee benefits, special education tuition, instructional leadership, and administration. This funding formula indicates that 4% of the district's operating budget is allocated to District Administration. The district will continue to demonstrate a commitment of placing as many dollars of the budget for direct instructional services but the budget must also realistically recognize that important administrative functions are needed to lead, manage, and operate one of the largest school districts in the Commonwealth and one of the largest employers in the city. As a result, a spending cap of no more than **1.5%** of the district's foundation budget will be allocated on Administration (in accordance with DESE chart of account format) from the School Committee's general fund budget.
7. **Target on New Revenues:** All new revenues from the School Committee's general fund appropriation will be earmarked for instructional, student or school support, school safety, building maintenance, or student transportation cost areas, except to address increases in health insurance, retirement assessments, unemployment, or workers compensation, or other areas for statutory compliance. All other new spending within the other areas of the budget will only be achieved through the reallocation of existing funds or cost savings identified through operational or programmatic efficiencies.

The Worcester Public Schools is committed to delivering on high expectations and outstanding results for all students. Using strong fiscal discipline, collaborative budget planning, and the alignment of resources results in a student-centered financial plan in order to support student achievement and prepare students for college and career readiness

SOURCE: Adopted, Worcester School Committee, ros #4-5, May 1, 2014

ANNUAL BUDGET

Article 5 of the City of Worcester Home Rule Charter and MGL Chapter 44, Section 32 governs the municipal budget process. According to the Home Rule Charter, the “City Manager is required to submit to the City Council an annual budget which shall be a statement of the amounts recommended by him/her for proposed expenditures of the city for the next fiscal year. The annual budget shall be classified and designated so as to show separately with respect to each city agency or undertaking for which an appropriation is recommended, to include a recommendation for the Worcester Public Schools.” In accordance with state law, the City Manager is required to submit an annual budget to the City Council within one hundred and seventy days after the annual organization of the city government. The annual budget shall be classified and designated so as to show separately with respect to each department the appropriation is recommended:

- Ordinary maintenance, which shall also include debt and interest charges matured and maturing during the next fiscal year, and shall be subdivided as follows:
 - Salaries and wages of officers, officials and employees other than laborers or persons performing the duties of laborers; and
- Ordinary maintenance not included under (a); and
- Proposed expenditures for capital equipment with an estimated cost that exceeds one thousand dollars.

The City Council may, by majority vote, make appropriations for the purposes recommended and may reduce or reject any amount recommended in the annual budget, but except on recommendation of the City Manager, shall not increase any amount in or the total of the annual budget, nor add thereto any amount for a purpose not included therein, except as provided in section 33 of chapter 44 of the MGL.

MGL Chapter 71, Section 34 requires that “every city and town shall annually provide an amount of money sufficient for the support of the public schools as required by this chapter, provided however, that no city or town shall be required to provide more money for the support of the public schools than is appropriated by vote of the legislative body of the city or town. In acting on appropriations for educational costs, the city or town appropriating body shall vote on the total amount of the appropriations requested and shall not allocate appropriations among accounts or place any restriction on such appropriations. The superintendent of schools in any city or town may address the local appropriating authority prior to any action on the school budget as recommended by the school committee notwithstanding his place of residence. The city or town appropriating body may make nonbinding monetary recommendations to increase or decrease certain items allocating such appropriations.”

“The vote of the legislative body of a city or town shall establish the total appropriation for the support of the public schools, but may not limit the authority of the school committee to determine expenditures within the total appropriation.”

File: DB

Once the City Manager recommends an amount for the Worcester Public Schools, the Superintendent prepares a recommended budget that is submitted to the Worcester School Committee no later than the Friday before the first Thursday in June in order for the School Committee to hold budget hearings open to the public.

MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N requires each school committee in Massachusetts to “hold a public hearing on its proposed annual budget not less than seven days after publication of a notice thereof in a newspaper having general circulation in such city, town or district. Prior to such public hearing said committee shall make available to the public at least one copy of said proposed budget for a time period of not less than forty-eight hours either at the office of the superintendent of schools or at a place so designated by said committee. At the time and place so advertised or at any time or place to which such hearing may from time to time be adjourned all interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard for or against the whole or any part of the proposed budget. Such hearing shall be conducted by a quorum of the school committee. For the purposes of this section a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of said school committee.”

The School Committee typically holds two public budget hearings: the first and third Thursdays in June (with the fiscal year beginning on July 1st).

During the budget hearings, the School Committee reviews the recommended budget as presented by the Superintendent and approves line items or makes adjustments to the recommendations, subject to majority vote of the Committee.

Legal Ref: City Charter and M.G.L 71:34; 71:37; and 71:38N

File: DBC

BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES

The Superintendent shall prepare a budget calendar for the development process of the annual budget and the calendar shall include the approximate date for the budget submission to the School Committee and the dates for final adoption of the recommended budget.

Using the total dollar amount as recommended by the City Manager and presented to the City Council for the Worcester Public Schools, as well as any other amounts from other special revenue sources, the Superintendent shall develop and present a budget for the proposed expenditures for the school district for the next fiscal year.

The School Committee will also observe the statutory requirement of holding a public hearing on the proposed budget not less than seven days after the notice for this hearing has been published in a local newspaper.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38N](#)
City of Worcester Home Rule Charter, Article 5, Section 5-1

BUDGET PLANNING

The budget is a financial planning tool that allocates resources based upon strategic analysis of student achievement, enrollment, mandated services, high quality teaching and learning, and community values. The budget shall be a comprehensive document that reflects all sources of revenue and explains the purpose for which those funds will be used.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the Superintendent is charged with:

1. Engaging in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establishing levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all students of the Worcester Public Schools.
3. Using the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

File: DBJ

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

The School Committee shall consider revisions to the adopted budget throughout the fiscal year as recommended by the Superintendent. The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and to expedite financial record keeping for the school system.

All requests for transfers between the general fund accounts adopted as part of the budget must be submitted to the School Committee for approval.

The School Committee may authorize the Superintendent to transfer funds at the close of the fiscal year to balance all surplus and deficit accounts. This request for transfer authority will be submitted to the School Committee on an annual basis for consideration. All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be returned to the municipality.

FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS

In accordance with state law, the School Committee shall review and accept grants and donations to the Worcester Public Schools.

Generally, there are five different grant types that are administered by the Worcester Public Schools: (1) Federal Entitlement, (2) State Allocation, (3) Competitive, (4) Continuation, and (5) Other grants. These grants are defined as follows:

1. **Federal Entitlement** grants are awarded to recipients on the basis of formulas set forth in laws or regulations. Recipients are entitled to receive funds if they comply with the programmatic requirements outlined in the RFP.
2. **State Allocation** grants are awarded to recipients based on formulas developed to promote Department priorities. The programmatic requirements outlined in the RFP must be met before the grant will be awarded.
3. **Competitive** grants are open to applicants that meet eligibility criteria listed in the RFP. Reading teams and rating sheets are used in the review process to ensure a fair and open competition among eligible applicants.
4. **Continuation** grants are those in which the recipients of grants in one year are awarded funds at the same level for the following year. These are grants that were initially competitive and are funded for multiple years on a continuation basis.
5. **Other** grants are awarded on a first come, first served basis, or to a limited number of recipients based on certain eligibility criteria, or on a continuation basis to the same recipients but at a higher level of support

All federal entitlement and state allocation grants shall be included in the annual budget document for review and approval by the School Committee. The annual budget document includes all general fund appropriation recommendations and the School Nutrition revolving fund, and already includes most of the federal entitlement and state allocation grants.

The Administration will provide an annual report to the School Committee through a budget update memo (once the grant budget allocations are known) on the status and funding for all continuation grants if they are not contained in the annual budget document.

All competitive or other grants will be placed on the School Committee agenda for acceptance at the time the funding authority notifies that Worcester Public Schools of the award of the grant.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The City Manager shall authorize the Superintendent and other designees as recommended by the Superintendent to sign payrolls, timecards, cash advances, stop payments, data changes, MTRS forms, journal entries, intergovernmental charge forms, direct payment requests, purchase orders, refunds and appropriation forms, and all warrants as presented for approval.

The City Auditor shall keep and have charge of all of the accounts of the city and shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the city council or by law. The city has established an auditing department, in part, “to perform the pre-audit of financial transactions of municipal departments, boards, commissions and committees of the city, including the school department.”

The City Treasurer signs all checks drawn against school department funds. No other signature is valid.

LEGAL REF.: City of Worcester, City Charter, Article Two, Section 2-8(b)

City of Worcester Revised Ordinance, Part Two, Article 11, Section 2

City of Worcester Revised Ordinance, Part Two, Article 11, Section 9

File: DH

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The district will pay the cost of the bond.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [40:5](#)

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent is responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR [10:00](#)

AUDITS

As a department of the City of Worcester, all aspects of the financial operation of the Worcester Public Schools are subject to an annual review by external auditors. This review is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. This audit considers the City's internal control over financial reporting. As part of this review, the auditors generally make recommendations for strengthening internal controls and operating efficiency.

Worcester Public Schools' general ledger chart of accounts follows the format and numbering of the City's chart of accounts which is defined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue under the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System (UMAS) structure. The UMAS account structure was most recently updated in August 2007 and is applicable to all political subdivisions in the Commonwealth.

End of Year Financial Compliance Report: Every Massachusetts school district is required to, within nine months of the close of its fiscal year, arrange for and undergo an independent audit of its financial records, to include using the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education Compliance Supplement, and submit the report of this audit to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE). Each city, town and regional school district is required to submit an End-of-Year Financial Report (EOYR) to the DESE on or before September 30 of each year. The EOYR must be consistent with Department Regulations and Guidelines. The EOYR consists of several schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1 Revenue and Expenditure Summary
- Schedule 3 Instructional Services by School
- Schedule 4 Special Education Expenditures by Placement
- Schedule 7 Pupil Transportation
- Schedule 19 Annual School Budget

GASB 34: As a department of the City of Worcester, the revenue and expenditures of the Worcester Public Schools are part of these governmental financial statements. GASB 34 requires a report on overall financial health, not just on individual funds. It requires more complete information on the cost of delivering services and value estimates on public infrastructure assets, such as bridges, roads, sewers, etc. It also requires the presentation of a narrative statement analyzing the government's financial performance, trends and prospects for the future.

Federal Grant Audits: Since Worcester spends above certain thresholds in federal grant awards, these federal grants received by the Worcester Public Schools are subject to the Single Audit Act; a federal law that establishes audit guidelines of the various federal agencies from which grants have been received.

Student Activity Account Agreed upon Procedures: The Worcester Public Schools annually engages the services of an independent auditor to evaluate the systems of internal controls and

File: DIE

compliance with the Massachusetts Student Activity Law (Massachusetts General Law [MGL] Chapter 71, Section 47) related to the department's student activity funds.

In addition, the Committee may request a private audit of the school system's accounts at its discretion.

Legal Ref: City Charter and M.G.L 72:3; 71:47

PURCHASING

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent:

- A. To procure materials, supplies, equipment, or services at the lowest possible cost consistent with the quality necessary for the proper operation of the various departments, thereby attaining the maximum value for each public dollar spent.
- B. To maintain the City's reputation for fairness and integrity and to promote impartial and equal treatment to all who wish to conduct business with the City.
- C. To encourage a mutually cooperative relationship with requesting departments recognizing that successful purchasing is a result of team planning and effort.
- D. To promote social and economic goals such as encouraging small, minority and women-owned businesses to participate in bidding of City purchases.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be centralized within the central administration of the school system.

The Superintendent will designate the district's purchasing agent. He/she will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by an authorized administrator.

PURCHASING AUTHORITY

Authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is extended to the Superintendent through the funding appropriated as part of the budget process.

All contracts made by any city agency where the amount involved is two thousand dollars or more shall be in writing, and no such contract shall be deemed to have been made or executed until the approval of the city manager and also of the officer or the head of the department or of the chair of the board, as the case may be, making the contract is affixed thereto.

The purchase of items and services requires no further School Committee approval except when such approval is mandated by law or other Committee policy.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30B](#)
City of Worcester Home Rule Charter, Article Five, Section 5-7

File: DJE

PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

All purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance for the Worcester Public Schools will be based upon competitive bidding in accordance with state law and City of Worcester purchasing policies.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [7:22A](#); [7:22B](#); [30B](#)

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from school department funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Committee will receive monthly lists of bills (warrants) for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee and then forwarded to the municipal auditor for processing and subsequent payment by the municipal treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee." This is mandated by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 56, and nothing in the City Charter or City of Worcester Revised Ordinances Part Two, Article Eleven, Section 2 (attached) affects this requirement. Until we make this part of our policies and practices, we are in violation of Massachusetts law.

The Superintendent and authorized designees shall submit invoices or payrolls for payment to the City Auditor to perform a pre-audit of financial transactions for municipal departments, including the school department.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school building administrators will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [41:41](#); [41:52](#)

City of Worcester Revised Ordinances, Part Two, Article 11, Section 2

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school department officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent.

When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Committee.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee. Staff travel requests within budgetary limits may be approved by the Superintendent. Staff travel requests that exceed budgetary limits will require the approval of the School Committee and the identification of funding sources by administration. Each request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [40:5](#); [44:58](#)

SECTION E - SUPPORT SERVICES

- EB** SAFETY PROGRAM
- EBAB** PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY
- EBB** FIRST AID
- EBC** EMERGENCY PLANS
- EBCD** EMERGENCY CLOSINGS
- EC** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
- EC-1** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
- ECA** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY
- ECAC** VANDALISM
- ECAF** SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS
- EDC** AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS
- EEA** STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
- EEAE** SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM
- EEAEA** BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING
- EEAEA-1** DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND
COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS
- EEAEC** STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
- EEAJ** MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS
- EFC** SCHOOL MEAL AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences--bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking precautions to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plant, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the schools. Instruction will include accident prevention as well as fire prevention; emergency procedures; traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school system. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:55C](#)
[603 CMR 36:00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [EEAE](#), School Bus Safety Program
[GBGB](#), Staff Personal Security and Safety
[IHAM](#), Health Education
[JLI](#), Student Safety

PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Worcester Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the school district will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.

I. OVERVIEW AND GOALS

- A. The Worcester Public Schools has developed and implemented an integrated pest management program.
- B. An integrated pest management program is a pest control approach that emphasizes using a balanced combination of tactics (cultural, mechanical, biological, chemical) to reduce pests to a tolerable level while using pesticides and herbicides as a last resort to minimize health, environmental and economic risks.
- C. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.
- D. The integrated pest management program shall strive to:
 - 1. Reduce any potential human health hazard.
 - 2. Reduce loss or damage to school structures or property.
 - 3. Minimize the risk of pests from spreading in the community.
 - 4. Enhance the quality of facility use for school and community.
 - 5. Minimize health, environmental and economic risks.

II. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used, they must be classified as an EPA Category III or IV. Application of any pesticide or herbicide may be performed only by certified applicators.
- B. Application of pesticides and herbicides may only be accomplished during a school break or when the building will be clear of students for at least 48 hours.

III. NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used outdoors, notice of their use will be provided to parent/guardians, staff and students and will also be posted in a common area.
- B. When pesticides and herbicides are used in a building, the site will provide a 48-hour pre-notification in the form of posting the product name, purpose, application date, time and method and the Material Safety Data Sheet on all entrance doors. A contact person will also be listed.
- C. In the event of an EPA registered pesticide or herbicide application in or around a building site during the school year or summer session, a notice (including the product name, purpose, contact person, and application date, time and method), will be sent home in writing with students in the affected building at least 5 days prior to application.

IV. RECORD-KEEPING

- A. The District will keep a record of pesticides and herbicides used, amounts and locations of treatments and will keep any Material Safety Data Sheets, product labels and manufacturer information on ingredients related to the application of the pesticides or herbicides.
- B. All records of pesticides and herbicides used and correspondence will be available for public review upon notice and during normal school hours.

V. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EDUCATION

- A. Designated staff (School Nutrition, Buildings and Grounds, etc.) will participate in sanitation and pest exclusion procedure appropriate to their roles. For example: keeping doors closed, repairing cracks, removing food waste within 12 hours, keeping lids on garbage receptacles and keeping vegetation properly cut.
- B. Ongoing education of all appropriate District staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.

LEGAL REF.: Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000, "An Act to Protect Children and Families from Harmful Pesticides."

FIRST AID

The district attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call emergency medical services. In the case of illness that may include an infectious disease the school physician shall be notified in accordance with law.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
3. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or Principal may make arrangements for immediate transport to a hospital of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.
4. The teacher or other staff member to whom a child is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.
5. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and, if the Superintendent deems appropriate, to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:55A](#); [71:56](#)

CROSS REF.: [JLC](#), Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

The Superintendent shall develop, in consultation with school nurses, school physicians, athletic coaches, trainers, and local police, fire and emergency personnel, an Emergency Medical Response Plan for each school in the district.

Each Plan shall include:

1. A method establishing a rapid communications system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities, to local Emergency Medical Services along with protocols to clarify when EMS and other emergency contacts will be called.
2. A determination of EMS response times to any location on the campus.
3. A list of relevant contacts with telephone numbers and a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of experts to help with post-event support.
4. A method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any location on campus, including the location of available rescue equipment.
5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the school campus.
6. A method of providing access to training in CPR and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff which may include CPR training for High School students; Provided that School Committees may opt out of instruction in CPR pursuant to [Section 1 of Chapter 71](#).
7. In the event the school possesses Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the location of all available AEDs, whether the location is fixed or portable, and a list of personnel trained in its use.

The Superintendent shall annually review the response sequence with local police and fire officials. Plans shall be submitted to local police and fire officials and the DESE at least every 3 years by September 1 or when changes occur. Plans must be updated in the case of new construction or other physical changes to the school campus.

File: EBC

Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and Emergency Response drills (at least once per year) to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [69:8A](#)
Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000

CROSS REF.: [EBCD](#), Emergency Closings
[JL](#), Student Welfare
[JLC](#), Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools, delay opening, or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

Students, parents and staff will be informed through local media, school-to-home communications, social media, and district website about school closings, delays, or early dismissals. School-year staff members will follow collective bargaining procedures on these emergency non-school days and other full-year staff members will follow the direction of the Superintendent about reporting to work.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:4](#); [71:4A](#)

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

A proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient is an important part of learning environment for students and staff.

The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school department will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent. He/she will develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that each school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

The Superintendent will establish procedures and employ such means as may be necessary to provide accurate information in regard to the nature, condition, location, and value of all property used by the school department; to safeguard the property against loss, damage, or undue depreciation; to recover and restore to usefulness any property that may be lost, stolen or damaged; and to do all things necessary to ensure the proper maintenance, cleanliness and safekeeping of school property.

Within the separate schools, the building administrator will be responsible for proper care, maintenance, and cleanliness of buildings, equipment and grounds.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:68](#)

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

Public school buildings and grounds are one of the greatest investments of the city. It is deemed in the best interest of the school department and city to protect the investment properly.

Security should mean not only maintenance of a secure (locked) building, but protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment, and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. The Committee expects close cooperation with fire and law enforcement departments and with insurance company inspectors.

Access to school buildings and grounds outside of regular school hours will be limited to personnel whose work requires it. An adequate key control system will be established, which will limit access to buildings to authorized personnel and will safeguard against the chance of entrance to buildings by unauthorized persons.

Funds and valuable records should be kept in a safe place and under lock and key.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism will be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of security personnel may be approved in situations where special risks are involved.

VANDALISM

The School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen of the city, staff members, students, and members of the police department are urged by the School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school department, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the Principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press the charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the community. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings 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. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

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. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality 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 after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee.

The Superintendent may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

Adopted: August 2015

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other city departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment may be granted by the Superintendent upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

School equipment may be used by staff members when the use is related to their school employment, and by students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Free transportation is granted to pupils in grades kindergarten through 12 who reside two (2) miles or more from the school which they are entitled to attend. The legal obligation of the School Committee in this respect is limited to provision for transportation for elementary school children and the School Committee does have the right, if necessary, to charge for transportation or not provide transportation at the secondary level regardless of where students may live.

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms to applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Exceptions to these guidelines apply particularly to students in grade K - 6 who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school where a crossing guard is not available. These students will be transported regardless of the mileage limits listed.

All eligible K-12 students are expected to ride only the bus to which they are assigned both to and from school and be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stops. Students will be asked to walk to a common bus stop. In that situation, students in grades K-6 should be accompanied to the stop by a parent or guardian. The safety responsibility for escorting a child to and from the bus stop shall rest with the parents or guardians of the student involved. Parents or guardians of students are responsible for supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once the child boards the bus – and only at that time – does he or she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to escort the child to and from the bus stop where there are no sidewalks, where sidewalks are only on one side, where the bus stop is on the opposite side of the street, or where the parent/guardian has other traffic concerns.

It is also expected that all students will be outside at the bus stop TEN minutes before the bus arrives. Bus drivers have been instructed NOT TO STOP if no child is waiting. Students should be visible and not in cars, stores or otherwise not easily seen by the school bus driver. For safety reasons, it is most important that a parent or guardian be at the bus stop to receive the homecoming child.

Students in kindergarten who are transported will receive an identification tag at their school to ensure that they are not discharged from the school bus without a parent/guardian being present. Students not released from the school bus because no parent/guardian is present will be taken to a designated school site to be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Students who are assigned a school bus pass through their secondary school are expected to carry the pass with them at all times when riding the school bus and to display it to the driver for inspection, if requested. Only students with valid passes will be permitted to ride the school bus.

Transportation eligibility is based solely on the student's home address and is only for the transportation between the student's home bus stop and the school he/she attends.

Additionally, transportation shall be provided at city expense for children whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A; 71:68; 71B:5

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted by properly licensed school bus drivers at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986 M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2;
713:7L Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

CROSS REF.: EB, Safety Program

BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING

The Superintendent reserves the right to approve or disapprove persons employed by bus contractors to drive school transportation vehicles.

1. Courteous and careful drivers will be required.
2. Each driver will file with school officials a medical certificate and proof of freedom from tuberculosis.
3. No person under 18 years and only persons of high character will be allowed to operate school buses.
4. Only persons who are properly licensed by the state and have completed the driver-training program will be permitted to drive school buses.
5. The contractor will furnish the Superintendent with a list of names of drivers and their safety records for the last three years.
6. The contractor will notify school officials as soon as possible of any change of bus drivers.

LEGAL REFS.: Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17 M.G.L. 90:7B; 90:8A; 90:8A ½

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS

The District shall adhere to federal law and Department of Transportation regulations requiring a drug and alcohol-testing program for school bus drivers and commercial vehicle drivers. Such testing will be conducted for five different situations: pre-employment, randomly, following an accident, following an authorization to return to duty, and upon reasonable suspicion that a driver is under the influence of alcohol or using drugs.

The District will comply with Department of Transportation protocols regarding the collection and testing necessary to establish whether alcohol or drugs are present in the driver's system, and regulations will be established for the steps to be taken in the event that test results are positive.

This program shall comply with the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Section 382 et seq. The Superintendent or designees shall adopt and enact procedures consistent with the federal regulations, defining the circumstances and procedures for testing.

LEGAL REF.: 49 U.S.C. sec. 2717 et seq. (Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991)

49 C.F.R. Part 40 Procedures for Transportation Workplace and Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs

49 C.F.R. Part 382 Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use and Testing

49 C.F.R. Part 391 Qualification of Drivers

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

In view of the fact that a school bus is an extension of the classroom, the Worcester Public Schools shall require each student to conduct himself/herself in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct and Safety and Behavior Rules for Pupils Riding School Buses as stated in the student handbook. School bus drivers have the authority and the responsibility to maintain good order while operating the bus. Additionally, bus drivers are instructed to inform the building principal about any student misconduct that creates an annoyance or distraction while driving. The building principal will inform the parents/guardians of the misconduct and request their cooperation in monitoring the child's behavior. Any student who becomes a disciplinary problem on the school bus may have riding privileges suspended on a temporary or permanent basis. In such cases, the parents/guardians of the child involved become responsible for seeing that the child gets to and from school safely. Worcester Public Schools' school buses may be equipped with cameras to create a video and audio record of each trip. This video and/or audio may be used to assist the school principal in determining what discipline, if any, is appropriate in cases of reported violations of safe riding practices. It may also be used as a tool to teach and reinforce safe riding practices for all students. As always, safety is of primary importance. At the bus stops and on the school bus, students are expected to be well behaved and cooperative at all times.

The following safety and behavior rules for pupils riding school buses are published as a guideline for students entitled to transportation by the Worcester Public Schools. A breach of these rules may result in loss of busing privileges.

1. Only pupils and school personnel assigned to the bus shall be allowed to ride in a school bus unless permission is granted by the Director of Transportation.
2. Students should be at the pick-up point at the time designated and prepared to get on the bus with the least possible delay in order to keep the bus on schedule.
3. While at a bus pick-up point, students must:
 - Conduct themselves in an orderly manner
 - Stay out of the street
 - Respect nearby private property rights
 - Remain at least eight (8) feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move toward the bus only when the door opens
4. Students should ride only the bus to which they are regularly assigned.
5. Students should take seats promptly after boarding the bus and remain in their seats while the bus is in motion.
6. Students shall not open or close windows or emergency doors except when asked to do so by the driver or the bus monitor. Students must keep arms and heads inside the bus.
7. While a passenger on a bus, a student must not:
 - Smoke
 - Throw any objects on the bus or out the windows
 - Disturb the driver or other students
 - Litter
 - Make loud or unnecessary noises
 - Eat food or drink

File: EEAEC

- Transport items which may endanger the health or safety of any other passengers
 - Damage or deface any part of the bus
8. Students must remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
 9. Students who exit from the bus should pass ten (10) feet in front of the bus and look in both directions before crossing.
 10. In the event of a road emergency, students are to remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the driver of the bus.
 11. After exiting the bus, students should enter the school directly for safety purposes.
 12. A student who has been issued an identification card by school authorities should carry such card with him/her at all times and show it when requested.
 13. Bus drivers/monitors must report violations of the above rules and regulations to the school official on Bus Conduct Forms. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently when the student's behavior.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No person shall cause, suffer, allow or permit the unnecessary operation of the engine of a motor vehicle while said vehicle is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five minutes. This section shall not apply to (a) vehicles being serviced, provided that operation of the engine is essential to the proper repair thereof, or (b) vehicles engaged in the delivery or acceptance of goods, wares, or merchandise for which engine assisted power is necessary and substitute alternate means cannot be made available, or (c) vehicles engaged in an operation for which the engine power is necessary for an associate power need other than movement and substitute alternate power means cannot be made available provided that such operation does not cause or contribute to a condition of air pollution. Whoever violates any provision of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars for the first offense, nor more than five hundred dollars for each succeeding offense.

NO IDLING

PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500 FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES

M.G.L. C. 90, § 16A AND 540 CMR 27.00

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the Worcester Public Schools District and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16A and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16A shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. c. 71:37H, c. 90:16A and 540 CMR 27.00

SCHOOL MEAL AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The school system will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to assure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, and in accordance with the wishes of the Committee, no child who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a lunch or other meal simply because proper application has not been received from his/her parents or guardians.

As required by state and federal regulations, the School Committee approves this policy statement pertaining to eligibility and access to the school meal programs.

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)

Child Nutrition Act of 1966

P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended

M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [15:1L](#); [69:1C](#); [71:72](#)

SECTION F - FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

FA FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

FCB RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

FE NAMING NEW FACILITIES

FFA MEMORIALS

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The School Committee believes that an educational program is influenced greatly by the environment in which it functions. The development of a quality educational program and of school facilities that help implement that program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee's goal to provide the facilities needed for the number and educational requirements of students in the school system and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support the educational program. To best use local resources, it is the Committee's intent, wherever possible, to partner with the Worcester City Manager, Worcester City Council, and/or the Massachusetts School Building Authority on school renovation or replacement projects.

Recognizing that school facilities are long-term community investments, the Committee will work with the aforementioned partners to develop projects that reflect cost-effective designs, are consistent with good engineering practice, and use high quality construction, with attention to current and future technological practices for students, faculty, and school staff. Sites will be chosen to meet the educational need, maximize the use of any available community resources, and minimize any possible adverse education, environmental, social, or economic impacts on the community.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 70B

963 CMR 2.00

City of Worcester, Home Rule Charter, Article 5, Section 5-5, Capital Outlay Program

RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

When a school building becomes inadequate by virtue of age, condition, size of site, lack of need, or other overriding limitations, and cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, the building should be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent will recommend to the School Committee, which facilities appear to justify further analysis.

The School Committee may seek both professional advice and the advice of the community in making its recommendations as to the retirement of any school facility. This will permit the public, which originally acquired the property, to benefit from its recycling or retirement.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those neighborhoods considered in the study and will be concerned with all or some of the following factors:

1. Age and current physical condition of the facilities, its operating systems, and program facilities
2. Adequacy of site, location, access, surrounding development, traffic patterns, and other environmental conditions
3. Reassignment of children, including alternative plans according to Committee policy
4. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bused, time, distance, and safety
5. Alternative uses of the building or transfer of ownership to the City Manager.
6. Cost/Savings
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Plant Operation
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Capital Investment
 - e. Alternative Use
7. Continuity of instructional and community programs

NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Naming a school facility is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a name for a school, a portion of a school, or a portion of school grounds. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents and students, should be considered in naming school facilities.

The School Committee has the authority to approve the naming and renaming of buildings, structures, and facilities located on school property. The School Committee also has the authority to name subsections of existing structures or facilities, such as classrooms, auditoriums, and gymnasiums.

Names and/or wording associated with school facilities shall be consistent with school district policies and promote messages aligned with the mission, vision and goals of the school district. To the extent possible, names and/or wording should be designed not to restrict the use of a space or inhibit changing the function of the space should that become necessary in the future.

When the opportunity to name or dedicate a new school or school related property, structure or facility is forthcoming, an orderly procedure will be communicated at a School Committee meeting. The Committee's agendas should clearly reflect the intent to consider, review, and vote on naming opportunities.

Submission of a name for a school space may be made by any resident or by the Superintendent, in writing, and should be made to the School Committee. If a name is being initiated at the local school level, the Principal must take reasonable steps to include the School Council in the nomination of the name before submission to the School Committee.

The written request should specify the intent of the requestor and the reasons why this particular name would fit the facility. It should offer appropriate background information on the person or organization after which the facility will be named. An offer of a financial contribution to the School District may accompany the naming request, but the School Committee is not obligated to accept or reject a name based upon financial considerations alone. Philanthropic contributions in support of the School District are encouraged by the School Committee. The School Committee may acknowledge generous donors by designating appropriate spaces within the School District's facilities consistent with the level of financial commitment.

Following the submission of a naming request, the School Committee Chair will specify a consideration period that allows for public comment, following which the Committee will deliberate and vote on the name.

File: FFA

MEMORIALS

The School Committee recognizes that the death of a student, member of the staff, or prominent community member is deeply felt by the school community. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for permanent memorials.

Permanent memorials within the schools shall be limited in form to perpetual awards or scholarships and can be erected as deemed appropriate.

Any permanent memorials in existence before the adoption of this policy can only be removed by a vote of the School Committee.

SECTION G - PERSONNEL

Proposed

- GA PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS**
- GBA EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**
- GBEA STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
- GBEB STAFF CONDUCT**
- GBEBC GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF**
- GBEC DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**
- GBED TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS**
- GBGB STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY**
- GBGF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**
- GBI STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**
- GBJ PERSONNEL RECORDS**
- GBK STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**
- GCA PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS**
- GCBA PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES**
- GCBB EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS**
- GCBC PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS**
- GCE PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/ POSTING OF VACANCIES**
- GCF PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING**
- GCG SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT**
- GCIA PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT**
- GCJ PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS**
- GCK PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS**
- GCO EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF**
- GCQD RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS**
- GCQE RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS**
- GCQF SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS**

GCRD TUTORING FOR PAY

GDA SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

GDB SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

GDD SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

GDO EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

GDQC RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

GDQD SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

File: GA

PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that an efficient staff dedicated to education is necessary to maintain a constantly improving educational program.

The District's specific personnel goals are:

1. To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that will result in the employment and retention of individuals with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the district's learning program.
2. To develop a general staff assignment strategy that will contribute to the learning program, and to use it as the primary basis for determining staff assignments.
3. To provide positive programs of staff development that contribute both to improvement of the learning program and to each staff member's professional development.
4. To develop and use for personnel evaluation positive processes that contribute to the improvement of both staff capabilities and the learning program.

File: GBA

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, creed, color, age, sex, gender identity, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

If you believe the adverse employment action happened to you because of your race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, age, criminal record (inquiries only), disability, sexual orientation, genetics, active military personnel, or past involvement in a discrimination complaint, it could be discrimination.

LEGAL REF: [M.G.L. 151B](#), (civil rights)

[M.G.L. 151B Sec. 3A](#), (sexual harassment)

[M.G.L. 149 Sec 105D](#), (Parental Leave)

File: GBEA

STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All employees of the Worcester Public Schools are required to adhere to the requirement of Massachusetts General Law 268A (Conflict of Interest Law). This law addresses issues such as but not limited to restrictions on acceptance and giving of gifts; political activities; and awarding contracts.

Additionally, many professional associations have codes of conduct for their members, and the School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with these codes of ethics as they apply to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system.

No employee of the district will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his duties and responsibilities in the school system. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him/her.

Every 2 years, all current employees, including School Committee members, must complete the State Ethics Commission's online training. New employees must complete this training within 30 days of beginning employment and every 2 years thereafter. Upon completing the program, employees should print out the completion certificate and keep a copy for themselves. Employees will be required to provide a copy of the completion

certificate to the municipal or district Clerk through the Superintendent's office.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent shall file public notice with the School Committee and the City Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:52](#); [268A:1](#) et seq.

File: GBEB

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the procedures designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the School Committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the School Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of school property.
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

File: GBEBC

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc.), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may

be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

File: GBEBBC

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

Legal Ref: M.G.L. [268A:3](#); [268A:23](#); 930 CMR [5.00](#)

File: GBEC

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The School District will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

1. Put all employees on notice, via this policy, that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the District's workplace. Violations of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
2. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.
3. Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the District of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
4. Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.
5. Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
6. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

CROSS REFS.: [IHAMB](#), Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs
[JICH](#), Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

File: GBED

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS PROHIBITED

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited at all times. Staff members who violate this policy will be referred to their immediate supervisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

File: GBGB

STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the School Committee will seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours.

Applicants offered a position in the district must successfully pass a pre-employment physical examination prior to the date of employment.

The Superintendent may require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician appointed by the school system whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to children or others in the school system or when a doctor's certificate is legally required to verify need for sick leave.

The district provides an employee assistance program for the benefit of its employees.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:54](#); [71:55C](#)

File: GBGF

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The School System shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, procedures setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those procedures either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"

File: GBI

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school system have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school system facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances, will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:44](#)

File: GBJ

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the district's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information. Personnel records will be maintained in compliance with state regulations.
2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent to use the files for the reasons cited above.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his/her own personnel file.

5. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his/her written response in the file.

6. Lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247

Title IV, as amended

88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations

M.G.L. [4:7](#); [71:42C](#)

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

File: GBK

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators; reduce potential areas of grievances; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and School Committee. It is the School Committee's desire that grievance procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of a Principal or other administrator to the Superintendent.
2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent to the School Committee, except in those areas where the law has specifically assigned authority to the Principal and/or the Superintendent and School Committee action would be in conflict with that law.
3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent or School Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in the particular contract.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [150E:5](#) and [8](#)

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contract Agreements

File: GCA

PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

All professional staff positions in the school system will be created initially by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. It is the School Committee's intent to activate a sufficient number of positions to accomplish the school system's goals and objectives and to provide for the equitable staffing of each school building. Although such positions may remain temporarily unfilled, only the School Committee may abolish a position it has created.

Each time a new position is established, the Superintendent will present for the School Committee's information a job description for the position, which specifies the jobholder's qualifications and the job's performance responsibilities. The Superintendent will maintain a comprehensive set of job descriptions for all positions.

File: GCBA

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases for Principals. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for salary increases.

Administrators

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Superintendent may, upon the request of the School Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:40](#); [71:43](#)

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCBB

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the School District under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Initial contracts issued to Principals may be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

The length of second and subsequent contracts of employment for Principals shall be in accordance with state law.

As a condition of employment, each Principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee, and the directives of the Superintendent and annually must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under his/her direction.

LEGAL REF: MGL [71:41](#); [71:59B](#)

File: GCBC

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

Certain assignments require extra responsibility or extra time over and above that required of other staff members who are on the same position on the basic salary schedule. When such supplemental assignments require extra time and responsibility beyond that regularly expected of teachers, they will be rewarded with extra compensation. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

Assignments that are to be accorded extra compensation will be designated by the School Committee through collective bargaining when such extra compensation is articulated in the collective bargaining agreement or by the Superintendent for assignments which are not subject to the collective bargaining agreement.

Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent for District-wide positions or by the Principal with the approval of the Superintendent for building based personnel. The amount of compensation for the position will be established by the School Committee at the time the position is created.

A teacher who is offered and undertakes a supplementary pay assignment will receive a supplementary contract specifying the pay, duration and terms of the assignment. If a teacher will not be extended the assignment for the following school year but will remain on the teaching staff, he or she will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease.

LEGAL REF.: Collective Bargaining Agreement

File: GCE

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

The search for teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the town and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds.

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which he or she has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted in sufficient time, before the position is filled, to permit current employees to submit applications.

LEGAL REFS.: Collective Bargaining Agreements

File: GCF

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the District will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon awareness to candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, and of persons to whom he or she delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children.

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the School Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, ancestry, military status, or disability.
2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.
3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member (in the case of District-wide positions, for the position of Principals, it is the Superintendent; for building-based personnel, it is the Principal) is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is recommended that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the

hiring authority rests with the School Committee a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making his/her recommendation to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:6](#); [71:38](#); [71:39](#); [71:45](#)

BESE Regulations 603 CMR [7:00](#), [26:00](#), and [44:00](#)

File: GCG

SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

The school system will employ as substitute teachers, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign teachers substitute-teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school department needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas. All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student-supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The School Committee will set the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers, including extended-term substitutes. The latter will be granted such additional benefits as approved by the School Committee.

File: G C I A

PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve or deny released time for conferences and visitations and reimbursements for expenses, provided such activities are within budget allocations for the purpose.

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File: GCJ

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the School District for three school consecutive years under a valid Massachusetts teaching license shall be entitled to professional teacher status. The school year shall count towards professional teacher status if the teacher is hired and has begun working by September 15 of the school year. The Superintendent, upon recommendation of the Principal, may award such status to a teacher who has served in the Principal's school for not less than one year or a teacher who has obtained such status in any other public school district in the Commonwealth. The Superintendent will base his/her decisions on the results of evaluation procedures conducted according to School Committee policy.

At the end of each of the first three years of a teacher's employment, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify each employee promptly in writing of the decision on reappointment. Notification to a teacher not being reappointed must be made by June 15.

A teacher who attains professional teacher status will have continuous employment in the service of the school system subject to satisfactory evaluations. A teacher with professional teacher status whose position is abolished by the School Committee may be continued in the employ of the school system in another position for which he/she is legally qualified in accordance with the language of the collective bargaining agreement.

Nothing in these provisions will be considered as restricting the Superintendent from changing teaching assignments or altering or abolishing supervisory assignments except that, by law, no teacher may be assigned to a position for which he/she is not legally qualified.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38](#); [71:38G](#); [71:38H](#); [71:41](#); [71:42](#); [71:43](#)

File: GCK

PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The basic consideration in the assignment of professional staff members will be the needs of the students and the instructional program.

Therefore, the assignment and transfer of professional staff members will be accomplished by the Superintendent in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and on the basis of the employee's qualifications, the needs of the school system, and the employees' expressed desires.

Care will be exercised by the Superintendent to assure that all schools are staffed with effective teachers.

Within an individual school, the building administrator will have the authority to assign classes and courses, provided this is done with full regard for the teacher's area of certification and the policies delineated above.

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCO

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to assure a high quality of teacher and administrator performance and to advance the instructional programs of the schools, a continuous program for teacher and administrator evaluation will be established by the School Committee. Regular reports will be made to the Superintendent concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

Teachers and Administrators of the Worcester Public Schools shall be evaluated in accordance with regulations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Copies of the written document will be signed by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the teacher or administrator. The signature should indicate that the evaluation has been read and discussed.

The written evaluation should be specific in terms of the person's strengths and weaknesses. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:38](#); [71:38Q](#); [150E](#); [152B](#)

603 CMR [35:00](#)

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCQD

RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Professional staff members may discontinue their service in the school system during the school year by submitting a written notice of intent to resign to the appropriate hiring authority.

Such written notice of intent to resign will be given to the Superintendent. The staff member will be notified in writing of the Superintendent's action on the resignation.

When a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent the employee may be expected to continue in service at his or her assigned duties in accordance with his/her employment contract; or, for a period of 30 days after submission of the resignation when such time period is not otherwise specified.

File: GCQE

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Annually, the Superintendent will inform the School Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intention to retire. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits.

LEGAL REF.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Contract

File: GCQF

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent will strive to assist personnel to perform their duties efficiently. However, the Superintendent may dismiss any employee in accordance with state law. Further, the School Committee recognizes the constitutional rights of the District's employees and assures them the protection of due process of law. To guarantee such rights, a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures will be followed in each case of suspension or dismissal of an employee.

When the Superintendent or a Principal determines that sufficient cause exists that a professional employee be suspended or dismissed from service in the school system, he or she will:

1. Be certain that each such case is supported by defensible records.
2. Determine if the individual is to be suspended immediately with the understanding that the suspension will be subject to restoration of salary and position if an appeal is decided in favor of the individual.
3. Follow the procedures for dismissal or suspension that are contained in applicable laws as well as those included in the current agreement with the teachers' bargaining unit.
4. Provide the individual involved with a written statement that will:
 - a. Indicate whether the action the Superintendent is taking is dismissal or suspension.
 - b. State the reason for the suspension or dismissal.
 - c. Guarantee that due process will be accorded to the individual.

d. Inform employees who have a right to request a hearing under appropriate laws that they may be represented at such a hearing by counsel of their choice.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:42](#); [71:42D](#)

File: GCRD

TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the School Committee.

A teacher cannot recommend that one of his or her own students get tutoring, and then be paid to tutor that same student in a second job.

A teacher may not tutor students who are currently in his/her class. Even if the teacher does not recommend that the current student receive private tutoring, the teacher should not tutor current students.

Teachers and other public employees may not approach a student, or the student's parents, seeking private tutoring work. A teacher may provide tutoring when the relationship is initiated by the parents or a student, but, if the student is, or in the future may be, under the teacher's authority, the teacher will need to provide a written disclosure.

A teacher cannot use school resources such as classrooms or materials in connection with a private tutoring business. A public school employee cannot use a school or district website to advertise private tutoring services. Schools cannot send home brochures for a particular tutoring service with the children.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the Principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which he or she is to be tutored.

LEGAL REF: M. G. L. [268A](#) Mass. Ethics Commission FAQs for Public School Teachers

File: GDA

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school system must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school system will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the School Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the School Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the School Committee may abolish a position it has created.

File: GDB

SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

In establishing rates of pay and levels of compensation for support staff personnel, the School Committee will take into account the responsibilities of the position, the qualifications needed, past experience of the individual, and years of service in the school department.

The School Committee will set the rates of pay for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Overtime

Non-exempt support staff employees will be paid overtime wages for work performed in excess of 40 hours in a work week. All overtime must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.

Every effort must be made to minimize overtime by scheduling duties during the regular workday. Overtime will be authorized only by the Superintendent or his/her designee. All such work will be assigned in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements or in the best interest of the district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:38](#)

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contracts

File: GDD

SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Holidays

The school calendar, as adopted by the School Committee, establishes holidays and school recess periods for the employees who work on teacher and/or student days.

Employees who work on a 12-month basis will be granted paid holidays on all legal holidays and such other holidays as designated by the School Committee. They will also be expected to report to work during school recess periods unless days during these periods are considered official and designated as paid holidays by the School Committee.

To qualify for holiday pay, the employee must be at work on the day before and the day following the holiday, unless his absence is approved on the basis of current leave policies.

Vacations

All 12-month employees will be eligible for paid-vacations in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or individual employment agreement.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [136:12](#)

CONTRACT REFS. All support staff contracts

File: GDO

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable workloads, and establish wage and salary policies that encourage employees to put forth their best efforts.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee's responsibilities and their job descriptions.

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which he/she is to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.

CONTRACT REFS.: All support staff agreements

File: GDQC

RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in a public pension system.

Periodically, the Superintendent will present to the School Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire.

LEGAL REFS.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

File: GDQD

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

Support staff employed by the School District may be terminated by the Principal of the building in which they serve, with the approval of the Superintendent. However, employees may request the Superintendent to review the circumstances of their termination.

In the event of failure to perform as required, the Superintendent may immediately suspend or terminate employment depending upon agreement language.

Support staff employees may or may not be given prior notice of their dismissal depending upon the circumstances.

The Superintendent, or the Principal, with the approval of the Superintendent, may also suspend/remove employees from their individual assignments.

SECTION H - NEGOTIATIONS

HA NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

HB NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

HF SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of this community. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The School Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the School Committee and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the School Committee's legal responsibilities nor will any employee's statutory rights and privileges be impaired.

NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 2 of that chapter, as follows:

"shall have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join, or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, and to engage in lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion. An employee shall have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities, except to the extent of making such payment of service fees to an exclusive representative as provided in section twelve."

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of "bargaining in good faith." It is the legal responsibility of both the School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 150E:1 et seq.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

1. The School Committee will appoint the negotiator and the fee or salary for his services will be established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.
 - a. The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:
 - b. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, and working conditions of employees represented by the units.
 - c. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Committee.
 - d. He/she will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.
 - e. He/she will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will report on the progress of negotiations.
 - f. He/she will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.
2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G .L. 71:37E

SECTION I - INSTRUCTION

IB ACADEMIC FREEDOM

IC/ICA SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

ID SCHOOL DAY

IE ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

IGA CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

IGB SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

IGD CURRICULUM ADOPTION

IHA BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

IHAI OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

IHAM HEALTH EDUCATION

IHAM-R HEALTH EDUCATION

IHAMA PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

IHAMB TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

IHB SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

IHBA PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

IHBAA OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

IHBD COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

IHBEA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

IHBF HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

IHBG HOME SCHOOLING

IHBG-R HOME SCHOOLING

IHBH ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

IHCA SUMMER SCHOOLS

IJ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

IJ-R RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

IJL LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

IJLA LIBRARY RESOURCES

IJND ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

IJNDB EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY

IJNDC INTERNET PUBLICATION

IJNDD POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

IJOA FIELD TRIPS

IJOB COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS

IJOC SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

IK ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

IKE PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

IKF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

IL EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

ILD STUDENT SUBMISSION TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

IMA TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

IMB TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/ CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

IMD SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

IMG ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth.

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of MA

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
2. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

According to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Per 603 CMR 27.05, school districts are encouraged to schedule high school graduation as close as possible to the scheduled closing date of the high school, and graduation may be held up to twelve days before the regularly scheduled closing date. The earliest permissible release day for seniors is twelve school days prior to the regularly scheduled closing date of the school, which means that high schools operating on a 180 day year for students may release the seniors as early as the 168th day of school. If the date for high school graduation has been set and subsequently a few more days are added to the school year to make up for snow days or other emergencies, the original graduation date does not need to be changed, as long as it is no more than twelve school days before the originally scheduled closing date for the school year.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in service days; and parent conferences.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1G; 71:1; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12
603 CMR 27.00.

The category "School Year" is designed for policies about the year for students, rather than the working year for teachers and other staff members.

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until the start of the official day unless bus schedules require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 69:1G; 71:59
603 CMR 27.00

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The structure will consist of multiple levels (for example, Primary/Elementary, Middle and Secondary levels).

At the elementary level, students may receive instruction in Pre-K to 6 and K to 6 schools. At the middle school level, students may receive instruction at grade 6 – 8 and 7 – 8 schools. At the secondary level, students may receive instruction at 7 – 12 and 9 – 12 schools.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level in all schools with specialized programs located at selected schools Pre-K to 12.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established within the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Time and Learning regulations, and to serve the needs of all students.

CROSS REFS: IC/ICA School Year / School Calendar

LEGAL REFS: 603 CMR 27.00

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools.

Faculty and administration will regularly evaluate the education program to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 69:1E

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

The Student Services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and support services programs.

CROSS REF.: ACE, , Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap

CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Professional staff will design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

State law requires that schools:

....shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...

The law further states that American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills

The business of schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and solving numerical problems.

The first claim of the community's and School Committee's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities.

CROSS REFS: ADF, School District Wellness Program

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1,2,3: 71:13

603 CMR 26:05

OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

The School Committee recognizes that students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should:

Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.

Be aware of the many vocations available to them.

Develop a respect for the dignity of work.

Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational and cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to such aspects through creative problem solving experiences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.

603 CMR 4:00

HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive, research-based health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the system's health education program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

HEALTH EDUCATION

(Exemption Procedure)

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with law, the School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each Principal by September 1 of each year.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:32A

TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K – 12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:1, 71:96

CROSS REFS: GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy
JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

(PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of students with disabilities, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all students with disabilities between the ages of three and twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education services.

The School Committee believes that most students with disabilities can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. Students with disabilities should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide students with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to students with disabilities. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In the event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

The District will secure properly trained personnel to work with the children requiring special needs services. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

LEGAL REFS: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)
Rehabilitation Act of 1973

M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq.

603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parent/guardian requests to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent/guardian(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a student with disabilities or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his/her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent/guardian(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71B:3

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009.

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

ADOPTED: September 2009

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English, observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to comply with federal law.

LEGAL REFS.: PL114-95 Every Student Succeeds Act
42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil rights Act of 1964)
603 CMR 14.00

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The schools may furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for at least two consecutive weeks due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school he/she will not be at a disadvantage because of the missed school days.

To qualify for the program, the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the school principal.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Certified teachers shall be assigned to homebound instruction by the Superintendent or designee.

HOME SCHOOLING

Parents/guardians who choose to educate their children at home, as allowed under Massachusetts law, can fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance statute by having their educational programs reviewed and accepted in advance by the Worcester Public Schools. The notifications to home school (elementary and secondary versions) are available upon request from the office of the Child Study Department at (508) 799-3175.

Parents are expected to provide evidence of their child's Home Schooling Program once a year. Students completing high school through Home Schooling Programs are not eligible for a Worcester Public Schools' Diploma.

A student being educated through Home Schooling may have access to public school activities of an extra-curricular nature (e.g. sports, clubs) with the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

The district reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the home schooled student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment provided that he or she does not displace an enrolled student. Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the Worcester Public Schools athletic eligibility guidelines.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1D](#): [76:1](#). Care and Protection of Charles

Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Some children have great difficulty coping with the conventional school program and as a result will drop out of school. Some children require more support and direct supervision than is reasonably available in conventional school settings.

The School Committee will provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the public school system.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate structured academic setting to aid these young people either to reenter the regular school system, move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J

603 CMR 17.00

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual orientation.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30B:7; 71:48; 71:49; 71:50

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [KEC](#), Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child of the family making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel, teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26:05](#)

CROSS REF.: [KEC](#), Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those print, non-print, and digital materials found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student

Based on knowledge of students

Based on requests of parents and students

- Needs of the individual school

Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school

Based on requests from the professional staff

- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered some materials superfluous (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.

- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed "standards" or "classics", will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to digital resources and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources. Guidelines will address ethical use of digital resources and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines will prohibit use of digital resources for prohibited or illegal activities or damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
- Safety and security of minors when they are using e-mail, instant messaging applications, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including hacking, viruses, and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

Annually the district will provide the Committee with an update of its student acceptable use policy to be published in the student handbook. The Committee will review this policy in conjunction with the student handbook.

PERMISSION/AGREEMENT FORM

All students and faculty must agree to and sign the Student Handbook prior to being granted independent access to digital resources and district networks. The required form, which specifies guidelines for using digital resources and district networks, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. The document will be kept on file as a legal, binding document. All staff must agree to and sign the Employee Acceptable Use form.

Employee Use

Employees will use email, district devices, and district networks for work related activities only.

Community Use

The Superintendent or designee will determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community.

Disregard of Rules

Individuals who refuse to sign the student handbook or Employee Acceptable Use form, or who violate district rules governing the use of district technology or networks will be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, and/or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

Responsibility for Damages

Individuals may be responsible for the repair or replacement of any district property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

Responding to Concerns

School officials will apply the same educational suitability criteria used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to digital resources.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

The Worcester Public Schools will provide access for employees and students to interactive technology, including but not limited to, access to external networks for appropriate educational purposes. Educational purposes will 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 for communication (staff, parent, and student), productivity, and to assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be used to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

Availability

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

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

Access to the information systems and network is a privilege, not a right. All users will be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and will 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 Worcester Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Worcester Public Schools.

Acceptable Use

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Worcester Public Schools as well as with applicable law.

Monitored Use

Official emails, documents, and other district digital resources used by students and staff will 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 Worcester Public Schools will 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 Worcester Public Schools will not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

WEB PAGE PUBLICATION

Purpose

The Worcester Public Schools has established a district-wide website for district, school, and program use. The district maintains these web pages for educational, informative purposes, and support only, in furtherance of its educational mission. In addition, the district maintains a social media presence on several platforms to expand the district communication reach where the public at large consumes online media.

Supervision and Approval of Web Pages and Social Media Posts

Only those web pages and posts maintained in accordance with Committee policy and established procedures will be recognized as official representations of the district or individual schools. All information on a school or district web page or social media site must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and district. Web pages and posts must have a purpose that falls within at least one of three categories:

1. Support of curriculum, instruction, and employees – intended to provide educational and employee resources and information.
2. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools, community, and district to students, staff, parents, community, and the public at large.
3. District technology support – intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

The Superintendent (or designee) may select the person or persons (the Online Media Specialist) responsible for overseeing the district's web pages/posts and maintaining the web pages/posts in a manner consistent with this policy and Policy IJND: Access to Digital Resources. The Online Media Specialist must approve all links from the main district web pages/post to other sites on the Internet. The Online Media Specialist will review the links to ensure the links fall within the categories specified above.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their school, class, or courses on their school's website. Building principals or managers must periodically review staff members' online material for appropriate content.

Student or staff work (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork) may be published on district web pages, as detailed below.

Content Standards

All web page/posts are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard depending upon the age and grade level of the student. Web pages/posts should be well organized and professional in appearance. Web pages/posts must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the district's website.

The district is ultimately responsible for any post that appears on the district, school web pages or official social media site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the principal, manager, or to the Superintendent's office.

Safety Precautions

1. Student photographs
 - A. Student photographs will be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
 - B. Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).
2. Student work
 - A. Student work (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic

or other artwork) may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

3. Staff photographs, identifying information and work
 - A. Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
 - B. Staff work, (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork), may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent and principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students and any/all other Internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting, or telephone
 - A. Teachers may not list current students as "friends" on networking sites
 - B. All electronic communication with students should be through the district's official communication system and telephone system, except in emergency situations
 - C. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district
 - D. Inappropriate contact via any means of communication is prohibited
2. Inappropriateness of publicly posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of publicly posting items exhibiting or advocating use of illegal or inappropriate substances, including but not limited to drugs, alcohol, tobacco or e- cigarette products, and prescription/over-the-counter/herbal medications
4. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers, tablets, and all relevant digital resources
5. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct
6. The importance of professionalism in all communication
7. Adherence to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information
8. Records retention requirements for student data and transcripts

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the Superintendent. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

The Worcester Public Schools does not condone or take responsibility for privately funded trips without authorization of the school principal.

CROSS REF.: [JJH](#), Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS

Community resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators, and following District volunteer guidelines such as C.O.R.I. checks.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parent/guardian. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

Reports depicting a student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Assistant Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from the Worcester Public Schools, a student must have earned at least 24 credits and complied with all state accountability requirements. Course requirements are the following:

Grade 9 beginning 2013-14

4 credits English

4 credits Mathematics (Effective with the graduating class of 2019, three of the four courses must include Algebra I and II, Geometry or Trigonometry)

3 credits Science and Technology/Engineering

3 credits History/Social Science (including 1 credit World History and 2 credits U.S. History)

2 credits Foreign Language (of the same language)

1 credit Arts

5 credits additional core courses

Additionally, students must complete a physical education course each year

Other requirements may be established by the school administration in relation to the particular program, otherwise the additional credits needed for a graduation may be selected from among elective courses. For the total number of credits required please see the high school program of studies or student handbook.

Credit for Foreign Study: Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing in the District.

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent/guardian evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.
3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted to non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will

be processed in accordance with the policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A Principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspects of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26:05](#)

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the School District:

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs, * cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.,) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability." The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability."

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF.: 28 CFR, Part 35

SECTION J - STUDENTS

Proposed

<u>JB</u>	EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
<u>JC</u>	ATTENDANCE AREAS
<u>JCA</u>	ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS
<u>JEB</u>	ENTRANCE AGE
<u>JF</u>	SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
<u>JFABC</u>	ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS
<u>JFABD</u>	HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES
<u>JFBB</u>	SCHOOL CHOICE
<u>JFBB-1</u>	SCHOOL CHOICE
<u>JH</u>	STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES
<u>JHD</u>	EXCLUSION AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
<u>JI</u>	STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<u>JIB</u>	STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING
<u>JIC</u>	STUDENT DISCIPLINE
<u>JICA</u>	STUDENT DRESS CODE
<u>JICC</u>	STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
<u>JICE</u>	STUDENT PUBLICATIONS
<u>JICF</u>	GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES
<u>JICFA</u>	PROHIBITION OF HAZING
<u>JICFA-E</u>	HAZING
<u>JICFB</u>	BULLYING PREVENTION
<u>JICH</u>	ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED
<u>JIE</u>	PREGNANT STUDENTS
<u>JIH</u>	SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS
<u>JII</u>	STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
<u>JJ</u>	CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
<u>JJA</u>	STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
<u>JJE</u>	STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES
<u>JJF</u>	STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS
<u>JJH</u>	STUDENT LATE NIGHT OR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL
<u>JJH-R</u>	STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS
<u>JJIB</u>	INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS
<u>JJIF</u>	ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY
<u>JK</u>	STUDENT CONDUCT
<u>JKA</u>	CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
<u>JKAA</u>	PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS
<u>JL</u>	STUDENT WELFARE
<u>JLA</u>	STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM
<u>JLC</u>	STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS
<u>JLCA</u>	PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS
<u>JLCB</u>	INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS
<u>JLCC</u>	COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
<u>JLCD</u>	ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS
<u>JLD</u>	GUIDANCE PROGRAM
<u>JP</u>	STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

[JQ](#)

[JRA](#)

[JRD](#)

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

STUDENT RECORDS

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or homelessness.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

UPDATED: June 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

M.G.L. [76:5](#); [76:16](#) (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [28.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination

ATTENDANCE AREAS

Attendance areas for the various schools of the city will be drawn up by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. The primary considerations that govern the establishment of a school attendance area are school capacity and transportation considerations. Generally, students will attend the school in the attendance area in which they live.

In establishing an attendance area, the following general guidelines will also be applied:

1. Use of safe walking conditions consistent with the Committee's transportation policies; where possible, major traffic thoroughfares and natural barriers will be used for boundaries.
2. Honoring community of interest; where possible, school attendance zones will incorporate community patterns.

From time to time an overcrowded condition in an existing school, the development of new residential areas, or the opening of a new school may require the establishment or change of previously established school attendance areas.

The Committee will confer with community representatives prior to setting new attendance lines. However, the Committee's primary basis for judgment must be equality of educational opportunity for all students rather than the personal desires of any one group.

The Superintendent is authorized to make exceptions to attendance lines for individual children in the best interests of the student and/or the school.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37C](#); [71:37D](#); [71:37I](#); [71:37J](#)
603 CMR [17.00](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [JCA](#), Assignment of Students to Schools

ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS

Generally, students will be required to attend school in the attendance area in which they reside, unless the Superintendent has granted special permission.

Special permission may be granted for the following reasons:

1. If the change involves a hardship case, or if there are medical considerations.
2. If the change appears to be in the interests of the child, of the schools, and for disciplinary and administrative reasons.
3. If the legal residence of a child changes from one attendance area to another during the school year and the parents wish the child to remain in his former school; permission will not extend beyond the current school year.
4. To permit secondary school students to take courses not offered in their assigned schools.

School bus transportation will not be provided for students attending schools outside their attendance area unless they can be accommodated on existing bus routes and schedules, or a hardship is involved; or unless specific permission is granted by the School Committee.

Registration Policy

Elementary (K-6)

Students in the Worcester Public Schools shall attend schools based upon neighborhood district lines. They are also eligible to attend the six citywide magnet schools based on conditions of space availability and the magnet school being in compliance with the Worcester Public Schools' Deisolation Plan. The five citywide magnet schools are: (1) Chandler Magnet School, (2) City View Discovery School, (3) Jacob Hiatt Magnet School (4) Norrback Avenue School and (5) Worcester Arts Magnet School. Elementary students residing in the North quadrant are eligible to attend the North quadrant magnet school, Roosevelt School, based on space availability. Under the Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy, transfers are permitted to any school within that school's quadrant provided the transfer has a positive effect on the minority percentage of the school and space is available.

Secondary (Grades 7-12)

Depending on the school district in which the student resides, he/she can attend his/her local high school. This is determined by the last grade the student completed and passed, unless special permission has been requested by the parent/guardian to attend a different school. Attendance at Worcester Technical High School is based upon an application and selection process approved by the State Department of Education.

Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy

I. Conditions for Out-of-District Transfers

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools that students shall attend schools based upon neighborhood district lines. Exceptions to this policy are allowed under the "Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy" which permits transfers to other elementary, middle and high schools or to citywide magnet schools under the following conditions:

- a. There must be space available in the receiving school.
- b. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage greater than 15 percentage points above the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- c. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage less than 15 percentage points below the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- d. Voluntary transfer requests will be considered for properly documented medical disabilities and other unique circumstances.
- e. Spanish Bilingual, Structured English and Special Education Programs are offered in certain schools. Any student requiring these services will be enrolled in the school that will meet his/her assessed needs.
- f. When a student changes residence and would enter grade 6, 8 or 12, he/she may finish the year in that school provided that he/she is a resident of Worcester and has received the out-of-district principal's permission to remain in that school.
- g. Students who enroll in an out of district magnet program or the Worcester Technical High School must complete the year in the out-of-district school.

II. Procedures for Applying for a "Voluntary Transfer"

- a. Applications and a policy statement are available at the Parent Information Center or the Office for Instruction and School Leadership:
 - Parent Information Center: (508) 799-3194
 - Burncoat/South Quadrants (508) 799-3264
 - Doherty/North Quadrants: (508) 799-3221
 - *Technical Quadrant: (508) 799-3499
- *Applications for Worcester Technical High School may be obtained in all secondary guidance offices or at the Technical School Admissions Office.

- b. The application must be filled out and returned to the appropriate office. Parent Information Center or the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.
- c. A written approval or denial will be sent to the home of the parent/guardian and copies will be forwarded to the principals of both the sending and receiving schools.
- d. A copy of the application and the approval or denial letter will be kept on file in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

III. Hardship Appeals Process

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Office for Instruction and School Leadership, an appeal must be filed before the first day of the school year. A maximum of two weeks will be allowed to appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of the Hardship Appeals Board, Parent Information Center, 768 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610.

The Board will review each case referred to it and make timely decisions relative to the disposition of the appeal. A copy of the decision will be sent to the parent/guardian and the Office for Instruction and School Leadership. Proceedings of the Hardship Appeals Board will be recorded and maintained by personnel in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

ENTRANCE AGE

In an attempt to permit children to enter school at the time most appropriate for them individually, the School Committee establishes the following policy on entrance age:

1. Children who will be five years of age by the last day of December of the school year during which they wish to enroll will be eligible to enter kindergarten for that school year.
2. Initial admission of children to the first grade (or other grades) will involve a consideration of both chronological age and the readiness of the children to do the work of those grades.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#)
603 CMR [8.00](#)

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the city will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the city but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the District and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency and of legal guardianship may also be required by the District.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [76:1](#); [76:5](#); [76:15](#); [76:15A](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [JLCA](#), Physical Examination of Students
[JLCB](#), Inoculations of Students
[JFBB](#), School Choice
[JFABD](#), Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

The school district will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter [12, Section 11](#) of the Acts of 2010

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

LEGAL REFS.: The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of this School District to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice Law and under the following local conditions:

1. Every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, if consideration is being given to withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision.
3. That resident students be given priority placement in any classes or programs within the District.
4. That the selection of non-resident students for admission be in the form of a random drawing when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces.
5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the District until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
6. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, homelessness, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical disability, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.[71:6](#); [71:6A](#); [76:6](#); [76:12](#); [76:12B](#)
BESE Regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

SCHOOL CHOICE

If it is the policy of this school district **not** to admit nonresident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice Law (M.G.L. [76:12B](#).) This decision must be reaffirmed annually prior to June 1st by a vote of the School Committee following a public hearing. In the event the School Committee votes to participate, the following local conditions would apply:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, a public hearing will be held to review participation in the school choice program.
3. That resident students be given priority placement in any classes or programs within the district.
4. That the selection of nonresident students for admission when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces be in the form of a random drawing. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place during the last week of the current school year but no later than July 1st. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.
5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the district until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
6. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, homelessness, ancestry, athletic performance, physical disability, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:6](#); [71:6A](#); [76:6](#); [76:12](#); [76:12B](#)
BESE Regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

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

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Student Absence Notification Program

The District will notify a student's parent/guardian daily of a student's absence based on morning attendance via a ConnectEd automated phone call.

Beginning with 5 absences, parents/guardians will receive an attendance letter via U.S. Mail with each absence. Each Principal, by whatever title they may be known, or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:1](#); [76:1B](#); [76:16](#); [76:18](#); [76:20](#)

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Failure to meet the requirements of age by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [76:12](#); [76:12A](#); [76:12B](#)
603 CMR [26:00](#)

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure their rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:82](#) through [71:86](#)

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

As appropriate to the age of students, class or school organizations and school government organizations, such as student councils, may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expression of students' ideas and opinions.

The Committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

Students will be welcomed at Committee meetings and granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

Student Advisory Committee

As required by state law, the Superintendent will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee, which is composed of at least five students elected by the high school student body.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:38M](#)

CROSS REF.: [BDF](#), Advisory Committees to the School Committee

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

The District shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed (except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy), a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension:

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

Emergency Removal

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; 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 applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension - not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing - Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

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

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

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

Principal's Hearing - Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

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

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

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

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the designee's determination on appeal.

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

Superintendent's Hearing

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing - Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

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

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, 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. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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, through the school-wide education service plan.

The District shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The District shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); [71:37H ¾](#); [76:17](#); 603 CMR [53.00](#)

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents.

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 cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent/guardian groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

Students' Dress Code Policy

Students' clothing shall not disrupt or distract from the school's educational process. While in school, students will wear clothing that meets the following standards:

- No hats, bandanas, scarves or sweatbands
- No bare backs
- No low cut shirts/blouses that expose cleavage
- No bare midriffs (must be able to tuck in shirts/blouses)
- No bare feet, or unsafe footwear
- No clothing that uses see-through material
- No clothing that displays words (in whatever language)/graphics that are obscene and vulgar, violent, sexist, racist and/or promote the use of illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco
- No gang-, violence- or cult-related apparel (refer to Rule 17, policy on gang and obscene clothing)
- No droopy pants or clothing that reveals undergarments
- The length of shorts and skirts must be longer than the tip of the student's fingers when his/her extended arm is by his/her side
- No outerwear. Example: jackets/parkas/windbreakers

The school principal, having discretion to render judgments regarding what is and what is not appropriate, may, if necessary, waive these policy restrictions in religious and/or medical situations. The principal will determine what consequences should follow when a student does not comply with this policy.

Worcester Technical High School Shop and Uniform Policy

Shop instructors, with the respective department heads, have a responsibility to provide a safe shop environment for all students. All trades require specific uniforms or clothing, and adherence to workplace standards of appearance beyond the requirements for school dress described in the Worcester Technical High School Handbook. Shop instructors with the respective trade department heads identify the necessary dress as described in the Worcester Technical High School supplement. The Administration enforces these requirements.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

The School Committee will at least annually review their support of student publications, and encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views subject to the limitations as contained in this policy.

Student publications will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

Distribution of Literature

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:82](#)

GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

PROHIBITION OF HAZING

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [269:17](#), [18](#), [19](#)

HAZING

CH. 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 by 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 other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, 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 be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 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 of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college 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 the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the

organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, 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 a report.

BULLYING PREVENTION

The School Committee 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" is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"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 school 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 school 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 his/her 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 guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her 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.

The District has 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 guardians, 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 guardians 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 he/she 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 guardians 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 his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians 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.

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 school district 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 guardians, 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.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
603 CMR [26:00](#)
M.G.L. [71:370](#); [265:43](#), [43A](#); [268:13B](#); [269:14A](#)

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination
[ACAB](#), Sexual Harassment
[JIC](#), Student Discipline
[JICFA](#), Prohibition of Hazing

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

CROSS REFS.: IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

PREGNANT STUDENTS

The School Committee wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The school district does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:84](#)
Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681
34 CFR § 106.40(b)

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Searches by Staff

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent/guardian or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students and their parents and/or guardians, who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

CROSS REF: [J1C](#) Student Discipline

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. The schools will observe a complementary relationship to the home and community, planning activities with due regard for the widespread and rich facilities already available to students.
2. The assistance of parents in planning activity programs will be encouraged.
3. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities to be determined by the school, the parents, and the student. This should be a shared responsibility.
4. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.
5. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:47](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Organizations

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

The District has developed general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the Superintendent.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school system or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate District administrator for review of the Principal's decision.

CROSS REF: [JICF](#), Gang Activities/Secret Societies

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

While the School Committee recognizes that fundraising activities have become a part of the school environment at all levels, the Committee wishes to ensure that students are not exploited by the process.

The Committee supports student involvement in the sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events, school dramatic and musical performances, and other school events where sales are required. Also, student publications which require the sale of advertising to sustain themselves and serve the student body and/or the community may involve students in such sales.

Charitable fundraising activities, especially those that are part of a community service event or program are encouraged provided such proposals are submitted to and approved by the building Principal.

Other fundraising activities that wish to involve students in the fundraising process shall be submitted to the Pricipal for approval.

For safety reasons and because the School Committee recognizes that community members receive requests for support from many worthy causes, activities such as canvasing and door-to-door sales are strongly discouraged.

CROSS REFS.: [JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Student Activities are sponsored by the school, under the guidance and supervision of the staff of the Worcester Public Schools. The goal of these activities is to provide students with experiences that offer motivation, enjoyment, and improvement of skills.

The Superintendent shall approve student organizations. An annual list of student activities shall be maintained in the district's Business Office. The composition of these organization include a student body, student president, student treasurer, and faculty advisor. New student activity groups may be added with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Student activity funds are moneys raised by an approved student organization by student efforts through approved fundraising activities. Student activity funds are raised by students, spent by those students, for their benefit. No staff member shall benefit from student activity funds.

The purpose of student activity funds are to provide financial support for approved extra-curricular activities.

The Superintendent of Schools, or his designee shall have the responsibility and authority to implement all policies and rules pertaining to the supervision and administration of student activity funds in accordance with the statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and policies of the Worcester School Committee and procedures developed by the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The school principal is designated as the trustee of the student activity fund, and shall give bond to the City in the maximum amount authorized to be maintained in the school's checking account and the principal shall be responsible for the operation of the student financial activities in his/her building. The maximum balance of the Student Activity Checking Account shall be \$25,000.00 but the Superintendent may approve temporary requests from schools to exceed this maximum amount during the year when necessary based on the level of student activity payments needed during that time of year.

The City Auditor will establish a Student Activity Agency Account for each school's student activity funds in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 66 of the Acts of 1996 (M.G. L. Chapter 71, Section 47).

The City Treasurer shall deposit Student Activity Funds revenue into an interest-bearing account as required by Ch. 66.

The School Principal will appoint a member of the school staff, designated to maintain the required financial records for the school's student activity funds.

Student activity records and financial procedures shall be subject to audit by staff of the Worcester Public Schools as well as outside independent auditors

as the School Committee may prescribe following the recommendations of the City Auditors, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and/or the Department of Revenue. Audit reports shall be referred to the Principal and the Central Administration for informative purposes and possible improvement of procedures. Annual reports shall be prepared by the Principal and forwarded to the Chief Financial and Operations Officer. These reports shall reflect the status of the student activity checking account and proof of reconciliation of the account. Each account must be accounted for so that the identity of its resources, obligations, revenues, and expenditures are continuously maintained.

The Principal of each school shall designate one person, in addition to himself or herself, who shall be authorized to receive and deposit funds into the Student Activity Agency Account following procedures established by the City Treasurer and providing detailed documentation to the Treasurer for each deposit. Two signatures, the Principal and the Student Activity Treasurer, shall be required for all checks drawn on the Student Activity Checking Account. Supporting evidence shall be required prior to signing the check. Blank checks shall never be signed.

Interest earned of the Student Activity Agency Accounts and the Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be accounted for separately from the individual student activity fund accounts and may be used to pay for bonding costs, bank account fees, bookkeeping costs, the costs of checks, or any audit costs that may be required. Interest earned not for these purposes may be distributed to the individual subsidiary accounts if documented methodology is maintained by the Student Activity Treasurer.

Fundraising activities such as commissions on sale of yearbooks, rings, pictures must be conducted in connection with approved student activities and the proceeds shall be handled as other student activity revenue and deposited and expended by the students involved in those activities. Other earnings, if based on student use, must be distributed to student activity accounts in a manner that may be determined and documented by the principal.

Collection and Deposit of Cash

All moneys collected from any source must be substantiated by duplicate-copy receipt. A receipt will be issued immediately upon receipt of funds of student activity account bookkeeper or advisor. A copy of the receipt is to be given to the person from whom the money is received. The second copy is to be retained by the Principal or designee as permanent record of money received. A third copy shall be provided to the City Treasurer as part of the documentation of deposits made into the Student Activity Checking Account. (No deposits shall be made directly into the Student Activity Checking Account). All moneys collected shall be placed in the school safe, or other secure location, for security. Said moneys shall remain in the school safe, or other secure location, only until such time as deposit can be reasonably completed. All checks to be deposited in the student activity agency account shall be endorsed immediately upon receipt, showing a restrictive endorsement, making it payable for deposit only to the City of Worcester, and showing the School's student activity agency account number.

Disbursements

Disbursements from the Student Activity Checking Account shall be made on pre-numbered checks which serve as the basis for making an entry recording the disbursement. Disbursements shall be supported by an invoice or documentation bearing signatures certifying to receipt of merchandise or delivery of services. When a check is written, the invoice, and supporting documents, shall be marked "Paid by check Number XXXX" and "Date of Payment" XX/XX/XX" and shall be filed for auditing purposes.

A check register, copy of invoices, and copy of checks shall be considered documentation supporting a warrant to receive funds from the Student Activity Agency Account for deposit into the Student Activity Checking Account returning the checking account to the maximum balance.

Record of Transactions

The Principal or designee shall maintain a complete set of books recording all moneys deposited and disbursed. A Cash Receipts Journal (*Record of Receipts*) and a Cash Disbursement Journal (*Record of Expenditures*) shall serve as a control whereby the total amount of money deposited and expended for all funds is maintained continuously. All transactions shall be entered and categorized to permit appropriate analysis.

Reconciliation of Bank Statements

The balance shown by the bank statements will rarely agree with the balance reflected by the books of the fund because of outstanding checks, deposits in transit, bank charges and possible errors. The bank statement will be reconciled with the activity fund books as soon as possible after it has been received. A copy of the reconciliation shall be retained for the annual audit. Should a balanced reconciliation not be made, the school administration and City Auditor shall be informed immediately.

Monthly Financial Reports

At the end of each month, a financial statement shall be prepared by the Principal or designee. The information contained in the statement shall include the financial status of each activity comprising the activity fund. Copies of the statement shall be forwarded monthly to the school administration and City Auditor for the purpose of reporting the overall financial status of the fund as well as to provide an internal audit.

Other

Fund raisers must keep accurate records of inventory received and inventory distributed.

When receiving money for trips, an accurate record of student deposits and destination costs must be kept.

Under no circumstances are advisors to open student accounts using their own signatures or names of parents.

When obtaining service such as transportation, for example, it is important that providers have satisfactory liability insurance to protect students and the public schools in the event of accidental losses due to property damage or injury. Guidance should be sought from the central administration if there are questions regarding this matter prior to committing to a provider.

Source: M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 47
Worcester School Committee gb #6-197.1 (1996)

STUDENT LATE NIGHT OR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

All student trips which include late night or overnight travel must have prior approval of the Superintendent. Initial approval by the Superintendent is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The Superintendent will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The Superintendent requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The Superintendent will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The Superintendent will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

CROSS REFS.: IJOA, Field Trips

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:37N](#)

STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS

1. Transportation

The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is discouraged. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI and/or background checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and School Committee Policy.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory". FMCSA ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org/>.

The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

2. Trip Scheduling

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered "optional school programs" and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (Refer to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide)

Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

3. Fundraising

The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.

Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.

If students are charged individual fees for participation, every effort should be made to provide scholarships where needed.

Additional Resources

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) <http://www.fmcsa.gov>

United Motorcoach Association - Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide
(includes "Motorcoach Safety Checklist")
<http://www.uma.org/consumerhelp/studentguide.asp>

Department of Defense's approved list of motor carriers
<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>

CROSS REFS.: [IJOA](#), Field Trips
[ADDA](#), Background Checks

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:37N](#); [71:38R](#)
603 CMR [27.00](#)

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in interschool sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics will be subject to approval by the School Committee and will be in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition will include a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire. Additionally, intramural athletic activities will be offered as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education.

The School Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that "away games" be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:47](#); [71:54A](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination (and subcodes)

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities [1](#) including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be "fine" on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [111:222](#); 105 CMR 201.000

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Massachusetts General Laws require the School Committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules not inconsistent with the law nor in conflict with School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); [71:37H ¾](#); [71:37L](#); [76:16](#); [76:17](#)
603 CMR [53.00](#)

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#)

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR [46.02](#).

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR [46.03](#), shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent/guardian of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR [46.03](#)(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR [46.00](#),
- A process for obtaining principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint".

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

ADOPTED: August 2015

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#)
603 CMR [46.00](#)

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

Student Safety

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment;
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

Fire Drills and Reporting

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The Principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the Principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The Principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:37L](#); [148:2A](#)

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

A noncompulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parent/guardian(s) have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parent/guardian(s) shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

- Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;
- Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parent/guardian(s). Requests made by parent/guardian(s) for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;
- Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;
- Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

LEGAL REF.: [71:53](#); [54](#); [54A](#); [54B](#); [55](#); [55A](#); [55B](#); [56](#); [57](#); [69:8A](#)

CROSS REF.: [EBB](#), First Aid

[EBC](#), Emergency Plans

[JLCD](#), Administration of Medications to Students

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined for screening in sight, hearing, BMI*, and for other physical problems as provided in the law and regulation. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

Every student will be given a general physical examination four times: upon entering school and upon admittance to the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

Every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of parent or guardian in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school Principal.

The school physician will make a prompt examination of all children referred to him/her by the school nurse. He/she will examine school employees when, in his/her opinion, the protection of the student's health may require it. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

Whenever the school nurse finds a child suffering from any disease or medical problem, the situation will be reported to the parent or guardian in writing, or by personal visit if remedial treatment is recommended. A copy of the report will be filed at the school.

The school nurse will make a monthly report to the Superintendent of the number of students examined; the number excluded; and the number recommended for treatment or special adjustment of work. In all cases of exclusion or recommendation, the causes will be included in the report.

** NOTE: Department of Health Regulations call for vision screenings in Grades 1-5, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; hearing screenings in grades 1-3, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; BMI in grades 1, 4, 7, 10.*

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:53](#); [71:54](#); [71:56](#); [71:57](#)
105 CMR 200

CROSS REF.: [JF](#), School Admissions

INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [76:15](#)

CROSS REF.: [JF](#), School Admissions

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases.

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:55](#)

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). If a student has been approved for self-administration, a student who needs medication during the school day may be reminded to take the medicine by the school nurse or other individual designated by the school nurse in the student's medical administration plan. This provision only applies when the school nurse has a medical administration plan in place for the student. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

Exceptions:

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, the School Committee shall vote to approve such training and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.
4. Students with life threatening allergies may possess and administer epinephrine.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:54B](#) Dept. of Public Health Regulations:
105 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR 3.00

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Guidance is defined as helping individuals understand themselves in the light of their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process should assist students in the development of their potential; their decisions relating to personal, educational, and vocational matters, and also in becoming capable of mature self-guidance.

The school system's guidance program will be based on this definition and developed from these broad fundamental principles:

1. Individuals are different from one another in their capabilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, goals, desires and values.
2. Conditions may be improved. Equality of educational opportunity will benefit the individual and society.
3. Guidance is a continuous and developmental process. Every experience of the individual influences his/her performance in some way.
4. Guidance does not propose to program an individual's course of action but rather tries to assist him/her in arriving at his/her own satisfactory solutions.

Guidance services will include: educational guidance; testing programs; occupational, career, and higher education assistance and information; study aids; consultation services; and personal developmental guidance as needed. These services will be available to all students.

While some of the problems of the individual may relate to behavior and consequently entail guidance on behavior, student discipline will not be a regular function of guidance personnel.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38A](#) through [71:38F](#); [71:46G](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Because of the embarrassment that might result among children, students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel, but gifts can be given at appropriate times. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school system will be made only as approved by the Superintendent.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent or the designee.

CROSS REFS.: [GBEBC](#), Staff Gifts and Solicitations
[JJE](#), Student Fund-Raising Activities
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools
[KHB](#), Advertising in the Schools

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. While no student will be denied access due to an inability to pay fees, all students will be required to remit charges and fines.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon the Superintendent approval. The schools, however, may:

Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.

Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees. However, indigent students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the denial of participation in extra class activities and graduation exercises and activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due 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 and not to a particular school.

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal 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 guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations. The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
P.L. 93-380, Amended
P.L. 103-382, 1994
M.G.L. [66:10](#) [71:34A](#), [B](#), [D](#), [E](#), [H](#)
603 CMR: [23.00](#)

CROSS REF: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent/guardian organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.

Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.

Provide a service to parents and students.

Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.

SECTION K - COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

KBA SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

KBBA NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

KBE RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

KCB COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

KCD PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

KDB PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

KDD NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

KE PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

KF COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

KHA PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

KHB ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

KI VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

KLG RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

KLJ RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

KLK RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that the District is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the District's operation and achievement of excellence. The School Committee and District staff members recognize that community support is based on a mutual exchange, a dynamic process in which the District contributes to the community's success and, in turn, benefits from the community's resources.

In order to maintain productive relationships with the community, the District is committed to sustaining:

Effective, accurate, and meaningful communications that facilitate dialogue, encourage involvement in District programs, and create community advocacy for its public schools.

Volunteer programs that provide mutually enriching experiences for our students, staff, and community volunteers.

Recognition programs that publicly honor the contributions of our students, employees, and community partners and express pride in our individual and collective accomplishments.

Community service efforts which enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community.

SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
 - 1. 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
 - 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
 - 3. 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
 - 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) 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 regulation.
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) 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 regulation.

- (e) 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.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to law, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:34D](#); [71:34H](#)

603 CMR [23.07](#) (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning.
2. Help parents understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement.

To accomplish the above and to enhance communications between parents and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations, including Parent Teacher and/or booster organizations, at each school building. For this purpose the Committee will officially recognize parent organizations. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations will be officially recognized upon request by the building Principal who will file a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent.
2. A vote, open to all parents of children enrolled, will designate the organization to be recognized if more than one organization with the same purpose makes the request.
3. All parent organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders.

LEGAL REFS: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

CROSS REFS: [ACA](#) - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or questions about the schools to the school administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics, will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, these people may be invited by the Committee to act as advisors, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF.: [BDF](#), Advisory Committees to the School Committee

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Superintendent will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school system. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee, handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37A](#)

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other classified matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

All commonly available public record documents of the School District shall be posted on the district's website. The length of time such records shall remain posted on the district website shall be in accordance with the Municipal Record Retention Manual. In addition, the official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [66:10](#); [30A:18](#)-25

CROSS REFS.: [BEDG](#), Minutes

[GBJ](#), Personnel Records

[JRA](#), Student Records

NOTE: The cross references are to related categories in this manual.

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the challenges, programs, planning, and activities of the school system.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school system publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent. The Superintendent should preview releases and be informed of statements made to the press.
3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Superintendent's Chief of Staff.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school system.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Manager
4. Deputy Superintendent
5. Superintendent
6. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

It is the School Committee's desire that maximum use of school property be enjoyed by the city residents. It is the Committee's intent that such use will maintain safe conditions and preserve the property for school program use.

Use of school buildings and other facilities by organizations will be permitted only when a worthy educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served; or a substantial group of citizens from the community will be benefited.

School facilities will be used according to the regulations and rental fee schedules recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Permission for the use of facilities must be obtained through the Facilities Office, where applications are available for this purpose.

Eligibility

School facilities will be available for the following:

1. Public school activities
2. Parent-teacher activities
3. Official town public hearings and political activities
4. Meetings and activities sponsored by the School Committee and school personnel
5. Parks and playgrounds activities
6. Local nonprofit and noncommercial organization activities
7. Metropolitan civic, educational, social, and religious organization activities if a substantial portion of the members are residents of the community
8. The activities of other organizations when approved through the permission process

School Preference

The priority given requests for use of school facilities will be as follows:

1. School activities
2. City meetings have preference over other community activities
3. Parks and playgrounds

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:71](#); [71:71B](#); [272:40A](#)

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The school system should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.
3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent and Principals may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA PTG and PTO groups and groups representing school system employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [44:53A](#)

CROSS REFS.: [GBEBC](#), Staff Gifts and Solicitations
[JJE](#), Student Fund-Raising Activities
[JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHB](#), Advertising in the Schools

NOTE: The cross references are to related categories in the NEPN classification system.

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee may grant permission for advertising of commercial products or services in school buildings or on school property under guidelines or regulations it may approve. Otherwise, no advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school property. Publications of the school system will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

The Worcester School Committee desires to promote positive relationships between schools and the community in order to enhance community support and involvement in the districts' schools. Prior to the execution of advertisement agreements, the Superintendent or designee shall review and approve all advertising for the electronic sign or other areas at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium in accordance with School Committee policy.

The Superintendent or designee may selectively approve or disapprove of any advertising based on the criteria below, but may not disapprove advertising material in an arbitrary or capricious manner or in a way that discriminates against a particular viewpoint on a subject that would otherwise be allowed. The advertisement on the electronic sign or other areas within the Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium does not imply district endorsement of any identified product or services.

The Superintendent or designee shall not approve advertising at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium that:

1. Are obscene (as defined by prevailing community standards throughout the district), libelous or slanderous.
2. Incite students to commit unlawful acts, violate school rules, disrupt the orderly operation of schools, or any act prohibited by the student Policy Handbook.
3. Promote any particular political or religious interest.
4. Promote, favor or oppose the candidacy or candidate for election, party or ballot measure.
5. Promote the use or sale of materials or services that are illegal or inconsistent with school objectives, including but not limited to advertisements for tobacco, intoxicants, and movies or products unsuitable for children.
6. Promote products that are contrary to the district's wellness practices for staff and students.
7. Solicit funds or services for an organization, with the exception of solicitations authorized by School Committee policy.

8. Would override the school district or school district's identity.

The Superintendent or designee also may consider the educational value of the advertisement, the age or maturity of students in the intended audience, and whether the advertisements support the basic educational mission of the district, directly benefit the students or are of intrinsic value to the students or their parents/guardians. All advertisements must comply with all local ordinances.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school system to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

SOURCE: Worcester School Committee gb #0-181 (2000)

CROSS REF.: [JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee welcomes parents and guests to visit classrooms to support, observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals. These will most often be scheduled by the school or teacher for the purpose of volunteer support or for student demonstrations or exhibits.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
2. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
3. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
4. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

CROSS REF.: [IHBAA](#), Observations of Special Education Programs

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

SECTION L - EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

LA EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

LB RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

LBC RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

LDA STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the Committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.
2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The School Committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision-making.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for children to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the School Committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy the Superintendent will include in reports to the Committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [40:4E](#); [71:48](#); [71:71D](#); [71B:4](#); [74:4](#) through [74:7A](#); [76:1](#)

NOTE: Policies under this category and its subcategories are usually specific in naming the cooperatives, collaborative, and special agencies with which the school system is associated to provide special services and programs.

RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Private Schools

In accordance with state law, the School Committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the instructional program of the school equals that of the town's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

The Committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when law does not expressly prohibit this cooperation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [40:4E](#); [71:48](#); [71:71D](#); [71B:4](#); [74:4](#) through [74:7A](#); [76:1](#)

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The Committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system.

The Committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school system will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will ensure there are procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet requirements of the sending institution and fit with the Committee's policies.