



WHITMAN  
HANSON

## 2023-2024 Elementary Handbook

Louise A. Conley School  
100 Forest Street  
Whitman, MA 02382  
781-618-7050

John H. Duval, Jr. School  
60 Regal Street  
Whitman, MA 02383  
781-618-7055

Indian Head School  
726 Indian Head Street  
Hanson, MA 02341  
781-618-7065

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## WHRS D ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Whitman-Hanson Regional School District  
 610 Franklin Street  
 Whitman, MA 02382  
 Telephone: 781-618-7000

Mr. Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent  
 Mr. George Ferro, Assistant Superintendent  
 Mr. John Stanbrook, Director of Business and Finance  
 Mr. Michael Losche, Director of Special Education  
 Mrs. Nicole Semas-Schneeweis, Director of Equity & MTSS  
 Mr. Michael Discroll, Operations Coordinator  
 Mrs. Nadine Doucette, Director of Food Services

Notification: The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, in compliance with Title II, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5 hereby gives notification to students, parents, employees, and the general public that all programs, activities, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, gender, religious affiliation, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. For more information, please contact the persons listed below.

Title I, II	Mr. George Ferro Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources/Support Services	781-618-7466 George.Ferro@whrsd.org
Section 504	Mr. Michael Losche, Director of Special Education	781-618-7428 Michael.Losche@whrsd.org
Title VI, IX	Dr. Nicole Semas-Schneeweis, Director of Equity and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)	781-618-8737 Nicole.Semas Schneeweis@whrsd.org
Whitman-Hanson Regional School District 610 Franklin Street Whitman, MA 02382		

# WHRSD MISSION, VISIONS, EQUITY/DIVERSITY STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

## *Mission*

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District provides a safe learning environment and comprehensive student-centered learning opportunities that are relevant and challenging. In supportive partnership with all stakeholders, our District is committed to developing an academic foundation that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. Each student, as a life-long learner, is prepared to face the challenges of the future with the skills needed to become a responsible citizen.

## *Vision*

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District is committed to providing each student with a high-quality education that promotes student success and responsible citizenship.

## *Vision of a W-H Student*

A Whitman-Hanson student is equipped with the skills to choose their own path and contribute to an ever-changing community in a healthy, vibrant way.

## **Equity/Diversity Statement**

Whitman-Hanson Regional School District strives to provide an inclusive environment for students, employees, and families by respecting the race, ethnicity, national origin, languages, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, family composition, and socioeconomic status of each community member. The District is committed to providing all students with meaningful opportunities to explore interests and safely engage in learning.

## *Core Values*

We believe our schools:

- Make all decisions in the best interest of students.
- Are committed to providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment.
- Set high academic standards that provide an opportunity for all students to reach their full potential.
- Model personal responsibility and an understanding and respect for others.
- Provide student-centered learning environments where successes and mistakes are valued as part of the learning process.
- Support staff initiative, innovation, and professional development.
- Share the responsibility for education with students, families, and community.
- Promote broad-based communication and school-family-community partnerships.
- Utilize technology as an essential part of teaching and learning.

## *Theory of Action*

A theory of action is a statement that outlines an organization's beliefs and assumptions about what will lead to long-term success and change. The statement articulates how an organization will move from its current state to its desired future state.

WHRSD believes that if we...

- Commit to developing and sustaining a culture of inclusivity and belonging to meet the diverse needs of all students;

- Increase the District and school teams' capacity to collaborate, learn, and design sustainable systems that positively transform learning in a fiscally responsible manner;
- Promote professional dialogue that allows people to explicitly articulate, appreciate, and extend their understanding of teaching and learning practices;
- Expand the District's focus on Social Emotional Learning as a means of supporting the well-being of all individuals in the school community;
- Develop practices and culture that promote the recruitment, development, and retention of a highly qualified, diverse staff;
- Enhance communication with member towns that stresses the educational needs of Whitman-Hanson students and promotes consistent, fiscally sustainable resource allocation;

Then...

Each school will be able to provide all students with access to high-quality, appropriate learning experiences as well as the supports they need to succeed;

So that...

Every Whitman-Hanson student will be equipped with the skills to choose their own path and contribute to an ever-changing community in a healthy, vibrant way.

## SECTION I: Elementary School Information



## **Elementary School Contact Information**

### **Louise A. Conley School**

Mrs. Karen Downey, Principal

Mr. Jeffrey Maynard, Asst. Principal

Telephone: 781-618-7050

Clinic: 781-618-7050 ext. 1356

Grades K-5

### **John H. Duval, Jr. School**

Dr. Darlene Foley, Principal

Mr. Daniel Mulhall, Asst. Principal

Telephone: 781-618-7055

Clinic: 781-6187055 x 5356

Grade K-5

### **Indian Head School**

Dr. Joel Jocelyn, Principal

Ms. Jennifer Costa, Asst. Principal

Telephone: 781-618-7065

Clinic: 781-618-7065 ext. 3356

Grades K-4

**District Website:** [www.whrsd.org](http://www.whrsd.org)

## **School Hours**

### **Conley School**

8:40 AM - 2:40 PM

Doors open at 8:25 AM

Early Release Day Dismissal time is at 11:40 AM

### **Duval School**

9:15 AM - 3:20 PM

Doors open at 9:00 AM

Early Release Day dismissal time is at 12:10 PM

### **Indian Head**

9:05 AM - 3:05 PM

Doors open at 8:50 AM

Early Release Day dismissal time is at 12:00 PM

Students should arrive no later than ten minutes after the doors open so they are in homerooms by the official start time.

## **Walking and Biking to School**

The crosswalk area should always be used by students walking or riding their bikes to school. At WHRSD Elementary Schools, always wait until the crossing guard gives directions before crossing. Upon dismissal from school, bus students should take their assigned bus home; walkers are expected to go directly home. Walking or cycling home unsupervised by an adult requires responsibility and children should take it seriously. Please review the following safety tips with your child:

- Wait for the crossing guard to signal a safe crossing
- Always look both ways before crossing the street—look left, look right, look left again— then proceed carefully
- Walk, don't run or bike across the street or crosswalk
- Always cross at the corner. Don't cross in the middle of the block or walk in between parked cars
- Watch out for cars making right turns on a red light
- Pay attention to traffic sights and sounds; don't wear headphones or talk on a cell phone on the way to school.
- Always stick to the same safe route in going to and coming from school, and never hitchhike!
- Never talk to strangers and never accept rides from strangers
- We suggest traveling with a friend. Two heads are better than one, especially if there's an emergency. Strangers usually pick on one person, not two.
- If a car follows or beckons you while you are walking, do not approach the car; instead, turn and quickly walk the other direction.

- If you think you are in any danger, yell and run to the nearest store, home, or back to school. • Avoid strangers who seem to be hanging around public restrooms or school campus. Tell your teacher or another adult you trust.
- If you're ever in a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable in any way, you have the right to say no, loudly and clearly, and leave
- If you are approached inappropriately, be sure to report it to an adult and/or call 911 immediately.

The WHRSD Elementary Schools support and will enforce the Massachusetts General Law and Regulation of Bicycle Operations Ch. 85, Section 11B. Students 12 years of age or younger must wear a helmet when riding a bike. Failure to comply with this law will result in immediate and permanent loss of the privilege of riding a bike to school. Students should secure their bicycles to the bike rack with a lock.

**NOTE:** The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District is not responsible for damaged or stolen bikes on school property. Ride and park them at your own risk.

### **No School (Emergency Closings) – Policy EBCD**

When it is felt, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Schools, that weather conditions do not allow the safe transportation of pupils, he/she will cancel school for the day or institute a delayed opening. Parents will be notified by a “School Messenger” phone call.

Notification will be made over the previously mentioned radio and television stations and their websites. If necessary, shuttle buses may be used until walking conditions improve. Shuttle bussing routes will be posted on cable TV.

### **Early Dismissal**

In very rare instances, such as a rapidly approaching storm or other emergency conditions, it may be necessary to dismiss school early and/or cancel after-school activities. School Messenger phone calls will be made notifying families of such emergency dismissals. Information is posted on the district’s website at [www.whrsd.org](http://www.whrsd.org). When school is unexpectedly dismissed, each family should arrange some type of Contingency Plan for their child, and office personnel need to be notified of such a plan.

Please note that Contingency Plans that involve children going to the home of a neighbor or friend must be accomplished within the confines of each child's assigned bus route if he or she is a bus student.

Early emergency dismissal will be given through the following radio/TV stations and their websites:

- WBZ -4, Boston.
- WCVB-5, Boston
- WHDH -7, Boston
- WATD-FM (95.9), Marshfield
- WFTX-25, Boston
- WPLM-FM (99.1), Plymouth
- Local Educational Cable T.V. (Channel 98)

In case of emergencies that result in the early dismissal of surrounding communities' schools, we would ask parents not to call their child's school as such calls severely inhibit our efforts to contact parents.

Please call the Storm Emergency Number at 781-618-7495.

## **Fire and Crisis Drills**

### **Fire Drills**

For the safety and protection of all students and staff, periodic drills are conducted. Instructions are posted in each room outlining directions in case of fire. Each student is obligated to know their assignment for evacuating the school. Once the student knows their class schedule, they will be informed of the exits or areas to be used while in a given room by the teacher. Attendance will be taken in the assigned area after the building has been evacuated. It is most important that students follow a teacher's directions and that they move quickly and silently.

### **Crisis Drills**

In consideration of the safety of all students and staff in the school district, periodic crisis drills will be conducted. The crisis drills will be planned, organized, and implemented through the joint efforts of the police and fire departments of the communities and school district safety and security personnel.

## **Elementary Classroom Mangement**

WHRSD combines social-emotional learning approaches with *Responsive Classroom* to create supportive and safe learning environments for students. Responsive Classroom is an evidence-based approach to teaching and discipline that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness.

Teachers use Responsive Classroom strategies to bring together social and academic learning throughout the day and foster safe, challenging and joyful elementary classrooms. Educators using the strategies of the Responsive Classroom report increases in student investment, responsibility and learning and a decrease in problem behaviors. The Responsive Classroom approach includes the following main teaching strategies and elements:

- Morning Meeting is a daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning and reinforces academic and social skills.
- Rules and Logical Consequences encompass a clear and consistent approach to discipline that fosters responsibility and self-control.
- Guided Discovery is a format for introducing materials that encourage inquiry, heightens interest, and teaches care of the school environment.

- Strategies also include classroom organization that maximizes learning and ideas for involving families as true partners in their children’s education.
- The ultimate goal of Responsive Classroom is for children to adopt a specific set of social skills so they can flourish, both socially and academically.

### **Homework**

Students can benefit from homework to practice previously taught skills. It helps develop the acquisition of academic skills as well as organizational and time management skills. At the elementary level, reading, and math fact fluency are priorities often assigned as homework. Homework is generally not graded, but teachers may check homework for completion. The amount of homework assigned will be developmentally appropriate for the grade.

Students must make up work not completed due to absence from school. The general rule is two (2) days to make up work for each day of absence. Pupils who have long-term absences or hardship cases due to extreme circumstances should have their parents contact the school office for an exception to this rule.

### **Grading System**

Kindergarten through Grade 4

The following performance levels for Collaboration and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Engineering, Art, Music, Wellness are used:

- 4 - Student consistently and independently exceeds grade level standards in skills, knowledge and performance
- 3 - Student consistently and independently meets grade level standards in skills, knowledge and performance
- 2 - Student is meeting grade level stands in skills, knowledge and performance with teacher support
- 1 - Student is progressing towards grade level stands in skills, knowledge and performance with teacher support

Grade 5

Grade 5 transitions to letter grades in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Art, Music, and Wellness :

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 50-59
A 94-96	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-66	I Incomplete*
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63	

\*Incomplete: The student is allowed time to make up work not done due to extended illness

Each subject area also includes Conduct and Effort using the following performance levels:

- 4 - Exemplary
- 3 - Appropriate

2 - Needs Improvement

1 - Unsatisfactory

US - Unscorable

Parent-Teacher Conferences and marking period dates will be according to the district and school calendar.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance will be conducted in every classroom each morning, and a moment of silence will be observed.

### **Library/Media Center**

1. The Library/Media Center is a place to get books
2. Students are responsible for returning all books on time and in good condition.
3. Students will be expected to pay for lost or damaged books.
4. Books are allowed to circulate for a two-week period and may be renewed for one period more.
5. Reference materials are to be used only in the Library/Media Center unless special permission is granted by the Librarian.

### **Cafeteria**

All students are to use proper table manners and school-wide expected behaviors. Lunch is an important time during the school day when a student can relax, enjoy a meal and talk to friends. Students are required to enter their student identification number when purchasing food. It is the responsibility of students to clean up after themselves, leaving tables clear of food and trash, dumping trash in the proper receptacles, and delivering used trays and utensils to the proper area of the café for cleaning.

Students may leave the cafeteria for bathroom use or dismissal only with the permission of the staff or administrator on duty.

### **All School Meetings/Assemblies**

During the school year, students will see educational as well as entertaining presentations by organizations that have come from outside the school. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a polite and respectful manner.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, iWatch, iPods, laser pointers, handheld games, and similar devices is at the discretion of the building principal. Calling, texting, or taking photos on the bus and on school grounds is prohibited. If a student brings a personal device to school, it must remain in the student's backpack and must be on silent or vibrate when the student is in class. The district is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property.

## **Chromebook – 1:1 Technology Program**

WHRSD participates in a 1:1 Chromebook program for all students in grades K-12. Students in grades 3-12 can bring their assigned devices to and from school to support access to online resources for learning at any time. All parents/guardians and students must review and sign both the WHRSD 1:1 Chromebook User and GoGuardian User Agreements as a condition of receiving a Chromebook. GoGuardian monitors student Google accounts for Self-Harm language, explicit material/language, and inappropriate sites.

Parents/Guardians may be contacted by the school if an issue occurs. Students are responsible for keeping their district-issued devices safe, secure, and in good working order. We expect students to use all district technology responsibly, per the WHRSD Network Access Policy. Students must return their assigned Chromebook if they transfer out of the district or at the end of the allotted timeframe. Failure to do so will result in being charged the total replacement cost.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are to be considered educational experiences and privileges. Only chaperones selected by school personnel will be allowed to go on field trips. If a pupil has engaged in repeated or continuous misbehavior, he or she may not be permitted to attend the field trip with the class. This measure is to ensure the safety of all pupils and to provide a worthwhile learning experience. With the exception of an emergency situation, parents will be notified in advance. Please call or write a note to the school nurse to make arrangements if your child needs to take medication while on the field trip. Issuance of medication on all field trips shall only be as managed by the parent, school nurse, or designee based on the prescription issued by the physician.

## **Dress Code**

The primary responsibility for appropriate dress is with the student and their parents or guardians. An atmosphere of professionalism should be considered when determining appropriate dress. Any form of dress that becomes a safety hazard in the classroom, is detrimental to the educational process or is unhealthy, is not suitable for school. Inappropriate dress may result in parents being called to bring appropriate dress or to pick up a student. Special dress may be allowed on occasions for special purposes, but this dress is left to the discretion of the school administration. In the interest of maintaining the required school climate essential to meaningful teaching and learning, the Principal may ban dress that is inappropriate due to health, safety, and/or disruptive to the educational process. Standards of Dress for students shall comply with the following guidelines:

1. Dress, including jewelry, must not contain obscene or profane language or contain drawings or words related to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or firearms that create distractions and /or interfere with the educational process or the rights of others; messages on clothing may not be inflammatory in nature.
2. Dress must not be destructive to school property (cleats, etc.)
3. Clothing must be worn in such a way as not to reveal undergarments or expose skin normally covered by clothes.. Undergarments may not be worn as outer clothing.
4. Students are not allowed to wear hoods during the school day.



## SECTION II: Attendance and Support Services

**Dismissal from School**

Students will be given permission to be dismissed upon receipt of a written note or email from a parent/guardian stating the time and reason for the change in dismissal. Parents must notify the school by 9:30 AM of any change in dismissal for student safety purposes. No dismissals in the Whitman-Hanson Schools will be allowed until a parent, or person designated by the parent, picks up the student at the office after showing proper identification.

Students who become ill during the school day shall be dismissed by the parent or responsible person upon request of the school nurse or secretary. Parents or persons designated will be required to sign a register located in the school's office when dismissing a student from school.

**Attendance - Policy JH**

Attendance at school is expected of all children on a regular basis. Violations of this regulation will be governed by the provisions of Section 1, Chapter 76 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth. When a child is absent, parents are asked to call the school office prior to 9:30 AM. A signed letter from parents or guardians is expected explaining absenteeism or tardiness to school.

The school shall notify the parent or guardian if the school has not received notice of an absence within 3 days of the absence, and shall notify the parent or guardian in the event of the following:

- the student has at least 5 days in which they have missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year
- the student has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year

The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance.

The following will be considered excused absences:

- Personal illnesses verified by a doctor's note;
- Recognized religious holidays;
- Death in the immediate family;
- Court or other official business

Students are considered tardy if they arrive beyond the school's official start time. Students must be signed in at the school's main office by a parent/guardian/caregiver. Tardiness is highly disruptive and students are expected to be on time for school. Chronic tardiness and dismissals will be carefully monitored by the assistant principal and may result in disciplinary action.

## **Home/Hospital Tutoring**

### **Educational Services in the Home or Hospital 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c)**

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis or any combination of both, for medical reasons for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the principal arranges for the provision of educational services in the home or hospital.

Such services are provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal coordinates such services with the administrator of special education for eligible students.

Such educational services are not considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP.

## **Family Vacations during the School Year**

Parents are discouraged from taking students out of school for family vacations. A school calendar is published each year and should be reviewed prior to making vacation plans. Every school day is important and cannot be duplicated by providing assignments that are taken on a family trip during the school year. Teachers are not responsible for providing assignments to students prior to family vacations. Please note that these absences will not be considered excused absences.

## **Meal Program-My Payments Plus**

My Payments Plus is a simple, safe, and secure portal for funding your child's meal account with the school. My Payments Plus will ensure that your money is quickly deposited directly into your child's electronic account at their school. With My Payments Plus, parents can set up automatic payment plans, view account balances, purchase history, and receive automatic notifications on balances, and more. Your child will receive a student ID, which allows them to access their meal account. Students enter their ID number on the pin pad at the register in the cafeteria. When students access their account, their picture and account information comes up on the cashier's screen. This ensures the correct student is accessing the account. Once the account has been funded, balances will remain and can be moved between buildings in the district. Participation is entirely voluntary. Students may continue to bring and use cash each day if desired.

Parents may deposit money into student accounts by the following methods:

- Using an electronic check or credit card via the secure online website, [www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com)
- Using an electronic check or credit card via My Payments Plus pay-by-phone feature by dialing toll-free at 877-237-0946
- Sending cash or check with the student to school. The cafeteria staff can deposit funds into the student's account.

A 4.75% transaction fee will be charged by My Payments Plus to process credit card or EBT transfers.

Whitman-Hanson does not pay to use this service, and we do not receive money from this fee. The fee is

used to cover credit card or electronic check processing costs. There is no fee to use MyPaymentsPlus.com to review your child's purchase history, review their current meal balance, or set up low-balance email reminders. If you have specific questions not answered, the My Payments Plus Support team is available at 877-237-0946. They will be able to answer questions regarding the use of either web or phone support. Whitman-Hanson has established a separate support number for parent questions. Whitman-Hanson support may be reached by dialing 781-618-8100. Lunch will be served on Early Release Days, at the discretion of the building principal.

### **Special Education Support Services**

Children receiving Special Education services have their services outlined on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students may receive Special Education services within their regular classrooms from assigned instructional aides and/or Special Education teachers. Students may also receive services in a supportive environment outside the general educational classroom. Support and help will be tailored to the learning needs of the student, and delivered in small groups or on an individual basis. In addition, if specified in the student's IEP, the student may receive other services such as speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral support, or counseling.

### **Counselors**

Believing that every child is an important person who is able to learn and grow, the school counselors listen to children and attempt to help them find ways to handle their problems. The problems that come up may involve the classroom, the home, the community, or their circle of friends. These problems range from small to serious.

The counselors work with some children individually and with some in groups. The counselors are also available to meet with parents in school. One of the most important jobs the school counselors do is to make the school and community more aware of and sensitive to the needs and problems of children.

How does a child receive help from a counselor? Children may walk in and ask for an appointment. A shy child may ask a teacher or parent to contact the counselor. Some referrals are made directly by parents, teachers, administrators, and previous counselors.

In addition to these services, the guidance counselor helps eighth graders and their parents make decisions about high school choice and course selection. All private school applications are processed through the guidance office. Parents may be asked to provide self-addressed stamped envelopes to assist with this process.

**English Language Learners**

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District honors requests made by students and families who speak English as a second language for the translation of documents, notices, handbooks, and other pertinent school-related information. Requests should be directed to the building principal, director of guidance, or to Mr. Michael Losche, Director of Special Education, 610 Franklin Street, Whitman, MA 02382 by letter, by phone at 781-618-7428 or by email at [Michael.Losche@whrsd.org](mailto:Michael.Losche@whrsd.org).

**Title I**

Title I is a federal program that provides financial assistance to public school districts to offer supplementary educational services for identified children. In order to receive federal funding, the District annually determines school eligibility and program design by conducting a needs assessment and by calculating poverty indicators. The purpose of the program is to help the children succeed in the regular classroom, attain grade-level proficiency, and improve their academic achievement in basic and more advanced skills. The program emphasizes and encourages parent involvement. Children may be referred for Title I services by their classroom teachers, principal, or parents. After a child is referred, multiple, educationally related objective criteria are used to determine eligibility for the program.

Parents must give written permission before a child can receive Title I services. The Title I services are provided during a related arts period using a pull-out model. Children are tested annually to determine individual progress in the Title I Program. Questions regarding this program should be addressed to the Building Principal.

## SECTION III: Health Services

## **Student Health Services Program - Policy JLC**

The School Health Services Program is an integral part of the total educational curriculum. The school nurses work in collaboration with the school physician for medical supervision and consultation. The Whitman Hanson Regional School District (WHRSD) has a full-time Registered Nurse assigned to each school. The WHRSD school nurse provides preventive and supportive health services to facilitate the students' optimal physical, mental, emotional, and social growth and development in the educational setting. The school nurse provides nursing services to allow students with healthcare needs to successfully access education. The WHRSD school nurse supports the education process by working to assure the health of the entire school community.

Our nurses are available for cross-coverage of the schools as needed when the regular building nurse is not available. Unfortunately, the district **cannot guarantee** that a registered nurse is always present in each building each school day. If your child requires medical attention, a medical procedure, or medication when a nurse is not physically present in the building, you or your designee will be contacted. If the school staff determines that a child may need immediate medical attention, 911 will be called. District nurses do not routinely go on school-sponsored field trips unless the school administrator and the building school nurse deem it necessary.

Prescription rescue medications, such as inhalers and emergency epinephrine, are always accessible in the clinic with physician documentation and written parental permission.

### **Emergency Contact Form**

With each new school year, every student is required to have a completed and signed emergency contact form (census verification), which is kept on file in the office. The parent/guardian should promptly notify the school of any changes in the emergency information.

### **Student Health Information Update Form**

These forms need to be completed each school year in order to provide the school nurse with updated health information and for parental permission for over-the-counter medication administration such as Tylenol and Motrin.

### **Medical Conditions**

It is very important that any child who has any medical condition (allergies, diabetes, seizures, etc.) leads as normal a life as possible. It is imperative that the parent notifies his/her child's school nurse regarding any existing medical concerns in order to enable the school to provide assistance in a timely manner.

### **Modified Meal Plans**

To ensure all children receive the nutrition they need, please contact Nadine Doucette, Director of Food Services to request any meal modifications at 781-618-7477 or email [Nadine.Doucette@whrsd.org](mailto:Nadine.Doucette@whrsd.org). All meal modification requests require documentation from your child's physician to be submitted to your school nurse for review. All approved modified meals will be provided to your child at no additional costs. Therefore, if your child receives free or reduced-price meals or pays full price, meal modifications will not be above your set cost.

## **Screenings and Examinations**

### **Physical Examinations – Policy JLCA**

The Department of Public Health requires periodic physical examinations of students to ensure proper growth and development, identify any new medical problems, and to evaluate any existing health problems. These physical exams are required to be performed in kindergarten and grades 4, 7, and 9. Your child's primary care physician can provide a copy of the physical exam form, which needs to be submitted to the school nurse prior to or during the school year as listed above. Any new students entering the Whitman-Hanson schools are required to submit a recent physical exam form prior to entrance. If the child does not have a primary care physician, arrangements may be made for the school's physician to provide a physical exam. In addition, ALL middle and high school students must pass a physical examination within 13 months of any athletic participation (MIAA policy). The physical exam must be on file in the nurse's office prior to participation.

### **Hearing and Vision Screenings**

As mandated by the Department of Public Health, hearing and vision screenings are conducted annually for students in grades 1-5 (vision), K-3 (hearing), 7, and 10(vision and hearing). Students in other grades will be screened on a referral basis as needed. The screenings are conducted by the school nurse or by a trained staff person under the supervision of the school nurse. If there are further concerns as a result of the screening, the school nurse will notify the parent/guardian in writing.

### **Postural Screening**

Screening for scoliosis is conducted in grades 5-9 by the physical education teachers and/or the school nurse as mandated by the Department of Public Health. This program identifies children who should have a further medical evaluation. Re-screenings are done by the school nurse, who then notifies parents with any concerns or positive findings.

### **Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening**

Screening for BMI is conducted in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 by the school nurse or by a trained staff person under the supervision of the school nurse as mandated by the Department of Public Health. BMI is calculated with a child's height and weight. It is a way of checking to see if your child has a healthy weight. The results of the screening compare your child's height and weight to other children of the same age and sex. The results are given as a "percentile." Parents may request their child's BMI results, along with recommendations if the child is not in a healthy weight range, by contacting the school nurse.

**NOTE:** A parent/guardian may decide not to have their child participate in the mandated screenings. A written letter, indicating this request, needs to be sent in to the school nurse by September 15th of each school year.

## **Immunizations**

### **School Immunization Law M.G.L. c. 76, § 15, 105 CMR 220.000**

"No child shall, except as hereinafter provided, be admitted to school except upon presentation of a physician's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles and poliomyelitis and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health."

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health mandates that every child must be current with all required



immunizations before entering school unless there is documentation provided for a medical exemption or a religious exemption. A physician-certified immunization record needs to be submitted to the school with registration. The following immunizations are required before school entry:

1. DTP or DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis) – 4 or 5 doses
2. Polio – 3 or 4 doses
3. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) – 2 doses
4. Hib (Haemophilus Influenza type B) – 1 to 4 doses (pre-K only)
5. Hepatitis B – 3 doses
6. Varicella (Chicken Pox) – 2 doses or documentation of illness/immunity
7. Tdap Booster (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) – 1 dose prior to entering grade 7 – All students entering grade 7 are required to provide an updated immunization record by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Lead Testing:** All children must show proof of screening at least once in order to enter kindergarten

### **Communicable Diseases**

Infectious diseases that can spread from one individual to another are called contagious or communicable diseases. To prevent the spread of infection, WHRSD follows the MDPH and DESE guidance. If your child shows symptoms of having a communicable disease, you should keep the child home. If symptoms are noticed during the school day, your child will be dismissed as soon as possible. If parents are not available, the child is dismissed in the care of a person named on your Emergency Contact Form. A child is excluded from school until he/she is no longer considered contagious. Some communicable diseases include chickenpox or shingles, impetigo, strep throat, conjunctivitis, pertussis, salmonella, and meningitis. When a child is ill with something other than a communicable disease, the dismissal procedure is the same.

### **Too Sick For School**

In order to prevent the spread of illness and to protect the health and well-being of our students, the following is recommended:

#### **Fever**

Fevers are generally signs of infection. Your child's temperature should be less than 100 degrees for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin, before they can return to school.

#### **Stomach Ache, Vomiting, Diarrhea**

A child with vomiting and or diarrhea should be kept at home until their symptoms have resolved for approximately 12 hours, and the child has demonstrated they can keep down food and liquid.

#### **Cold Symptoms, Cough, Sore Throat**

Your child may attend school if their symptoms are not associated with a fever. They should also be free from significant discomfort from their cold symptoms so they are able to participate in their schoolwork. If your child has, symptoms of a persistent cough, or thick, yellow or green nasal discharge, which lasts longer than a week, or he or she complains of an earache, you may want to consult your doctor for possible treatment. If your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, they may return to school after being on antibiotics for 24 hours, to assure that their infection will not be contagious to others.

#### **Red Eye**

Red, irritated, itchy eyes with drainage could be caused by a bacterial infection, allergies, or a virus. If the white part of the eye appears red and produces a yellow or green crusty discharge with matted lashes, your

child may have conjunctivitis. Conjunctivitis, or “pink eye,” as it is commonly referred, is a contagious infection, which needs to be treated by a doctor. Your child may return to school after 24 hours of prescribed treatment.

### **Lice**

Pediculosis (lice) is a common problem in school-aged children. Head lice pose no real health risk to the population and is viewed as no more than a nuisance by healthcare professionals. However, since the condition can be transmitted to others, proper and successful treatment is essential. Our goal is to educate the students and parents on proper identification and elimination of head lice and nits as quickly as possible to minimize interruption of classroom time. WHRSD will follow the guidelines in accordance with Massachusetts DPH recommendations on policy and procedures for managing lice in the school setting.

1. Any student identified as having a case of Pediculosis (nits or live lice) will be assessed/inspected and returned to class and/or dismissed from school at the nurse’s discretion.
2. The nurse will assess siblings and any close contacts who attend the Whitman- Hanson Regional Schools.
3. Notification will be sent home to the parents/guardians of the children in the classroom at the nurse’s discretion.
4. Parents/guardians will be given information regarding treatment of head lice.
5. The student must be reevaluated by the school nurse for re-entry to school. Whenever possible, the student should be accompanied by a parent/guardian until this exam is completed.
6. If nits are found after treatment, the student may attend school at the nurse’s discretion.

### **First Aid**

The school nurse will provide immediate and temporary first aid care when necessary. The school is **not** responsible for injuries which have occurred outside of school hours. If the nurse assesses the need for a 911 emergency call, then a parent/guardian will be contacted. If a parent/guardian is not available then the emergency contact will be called. In the event that transport to the hospital is needed and a parent or emergency contact person is not available, a staff member may accompany the student in the ambulance as determined by the school administrator.

### **Use of Assistive Devices in School**

Any student requiring use of assistive devices during school hours (i.e. crutches, wheelchair, walking boot, etc.) must submit written documentation required for re-entry to school from the physician stating:

- Extent of Injury/Surgery
- Physician’s instructions for use of the assistive device
- Specific limitations regarding activity
- Time frame for use of the assistive device

Use of assistive devices must be provided by the student’s family. Parents/guardians should check with their school nurse prior to the student’s re-entry. The school nurse needs to be made aware that a student has returned to school and is using an assistive device or is in a cast.

### **Medications**

A parent, guardian, or parent/guardian designated responsible adult shall deliver all prescription medications to be administered by school personnel or be taken by self-medicating students, if required by the self-administration agreement (105 CMR 2100.006(B), to the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the school nurse.

- (1) The prescription medication must be in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container.

- (2) The school nurse or other responsible person receiving the prescription shall document the quantity of prescription medication received.

### **Prescriptive Medications**

It is preferred that medications be scheduled outside of the school day whenever possible. All prescription medications (including psychotropic medications and inhalers) that are to be administered during the school day must be accompanied by the following:

- Pharmacy Labeled Bottle (properly labeled with student's name, physician's name, name medication, the dosage of the medication and frequency of which the medication is to be administered)
- Doctor's Medication Order Form
- Parental Authorization Form

In addition, a parent or designee must deliver ALL medication to the school. Students are NOT allowed to transport medication to school. Such medications are to be left in charge of and are to be administered by the School Nurse ONLY. ALL prescriptive medications must meet these standards, otherwise, the medication will NOT be administered, and the parent will be advised of the correct procedure.

### **Non-Prescriptive (OTC) Medications**

All non-prescriptive medications must be accompanied by a parental permission slip stating the name of the medication, dosage to be administered and the time when the medication is to be given and the reason the student is taking it. Medications must be in the original container. Medications will not be administered unless these standards are followed. **School Physician**

### **Medication Orders**

The school nurse may administer medications as needed per the school physician's standing orders which are renewed annually. Such medications may include: Motrin, Tylenol, Tums, Benadryl, and emergency epinephrine (Epi Pen).

### **Dispensing of Aspirin / Non-Aspirin**

Aspirin will be dispensed only with a written physician's order and supplied by parent.

### **Medication on Field Trips**

If your child takes medication during the school day, a registered nurse or adult who has been designated by the nurse for the delegation of medication must be available during the trip for the administration of all medication. If you choose not to have your child take his/her medication on the field trip, then written documentation must be sent in to the nurse stating such.

### **Narcotic Analgesics in School**

If a student requires a narcotic analgesic for pain management during the school day, he/she will be required to bring a doctor's written order to the school nurse stating the student may attend school while taking the narcotic analgesic.

### **Use of Local Anesthetics for Dental Procedures**

Any student requiring local anesthesia (i.e. Novocain) for a dental procedure during school hours must present a dentist/oral surgeon authorization to the school nurse for the student to return to school.

## **Managing the Care of Students with Athletic Concussions**

Research has estimated that 5-10% of high school or college contact sports athletes sustain a concussion each year. These estimates likely underestimate the true incidence of concussion. In one investigation over 50% of high school football athletes did not report their injury to a parent, coach, or medical professional. A concussion is an alteration of mental status resulting from the brain being jolted inside of the skull due to a blow to the head or body. Among the many symptoms associated with concussion, headache, dizziness, confusion, amnesia, nausea, and disorientation are commonly reported. Loss of consciousness, however, only occurs in less than 10% of all injuries and is not an indicator of concussion severity. Also, following the injury the athlete may experience other difficulties such as sensitivity to light and sound, forgetfulness, fatigue, and emotional changes such as anxiety or depression.

Most athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as the brain had time to heal before sustaining another hit; but 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 of injury, the severity of 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. Research has shown that young concussed athletes that return to play too soon, 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 Commonwealth of Massachusetts has enacted legislation requiring schools to be more proactive and consistent when it comes to treating head and brain injuries. Whitman-Hanson Regional School District will abide by all facets of the new law. (<http://www.miaa.net/concussions-proposed-final-regulation.pdf>)

## **Medical Policy Guidelines**

### **Children and Adolescents with HIV Infection/AIDS in School Settings**

Students with AIDS/HIV infection have the same right to attend classes or participate in school programs and activities as any other student.

### **Facts about the Transmission of HIV**

HIV can be transmitted through unprotected sexual intercourse, through blood-to-blood contact (such as the sharing of injection drug needles and syringes), and from an infected woman to her baby at or before birth. A large body of research has demonstrated that HIV is not transmitted through casual contact, such as in a school setting. Therefore, except in very rare cases (Appendix A), there is no legitimate public health reason to exclude students with AIDS or HIV infection from attending school.

A student who is diagnosed with AIDS or presents evidence of being immuno-compromised is at a greater risk of contracting infections. This means there may be good reasons to inform the school nurse or school physician of a student's AIDS diagnosis or HIV infection status. This student's parent(s) or guardian(s) would benefit from information from the school nurse or school physician about the occurrence of threatening contagious diseases (such as chicken pox or influenza) when making a decision regarding school attendance. The school nurse or school physician may also need to attend to the particular needs of HIV-infected students regarding immunization schedules and medications.

In consultation with the student's primary care physician, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may decide to inform certain school personnel about the student's AIDS/HIV status, particularly the school nurse or school physician. If they so choose, the following guidelines are recommended:

The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may inform the school nurse or school physician directly. Alternatively, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may request that their primary care physician make the disclosure. In this case, specific, informed, written consent of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) is required.

Further disclosure of a student's HIV status by the school nurse or school physician to other school personnel requires the specific, informed, written consent of the student's parents(s) or guardian(s).

#### **Statutes Governing Disclosure**

As a general rule, a student's health records related to AIDS/HIV should be regarded as confidential. The Massachusetts General Laws, c.111, s.70F, prohibit health care providers, physicians and health care facilities (including school-based clinics) from disclosing HIV test results, or even the fact that a test has been performed, without the specific, informed, written consent of the person who has been tested. This statute prohibits testing persons for HIV antibodies without their permission, and protects against the nonconsensual release of medical records (including school health records) which contain such information.

These statutory requirements apply specifically to health care providers. However, case law in Massachusetts and other states leads to the conclusion that other school staff members besides health care providers may be liable for civil damages in the event of nonconsensual disclosure of information related to HIV status or AIDS diagnosis. In short, information about an individual's AIDS/HIV status should be treated as highly confidential and released only with the specific, informed, written consent of the individual's parent(s) or guardian(s).<sup>\*</sup> Under state public health statute M.G.L. c.112 s.12F, minors may consent to their own dental care and medical testing, diagnosis and treatment in certain circumstances (including HIV infection). This law mandates confidentiality of medical information and records except when an attending physician or dentist reasonably believes that the condition of the minor is so serious that the minor's life or limb is endangered. Accordingly, if an adolescent student has sought HIV antibody testing independent of parental consent, that student has the right to keep this information confidential, and any disclosure of this information would require the student's specific, informed, written consent.

#### **Medical Guidelines Regarding Students Who Bleed in an Uncontrollable Fashion in a School Setting**

A number of serious infectious diseases are spread by contact with human blood. Among these blood-borne infections are the Hepatitis B virus and HIV (the virus that causes AIDS). Consequently, students who bleed uncontrollably should not have routine contact with other individuals in school settings.

As a public health measure, students who exhibit the following conditions should be advised not to attend school until such time as these conditions are resolved:

1. if a student has weeping or bloody skin or mouth sores that cannot be successfully covered or controlled with medications
2. if the student exhibits biting of an unusual frequency or severity that would be accompanied by actual transfer of blood from the biter, as might happen only from a student with chronically bloody gums or mouth
3. if the student exhibits bloody diarrhea.

These conditions are grounds for the exclusion of any student from a school setting, regardless of whether she/he is known or suspected to harbor a blood-borne infection. Adapted from Medical Update to Policy Guidelines: Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers with HIV Infection/AIDS in Early Childhood Settings (Department of Public Health, 6/89)

### **Universal Precautions for School Settings**

Universal precautions refer to the usual and ordinary steps all school staff need to take in order to reduce their risk of infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, as well as all other blood-borne organisms (such as the Hepatitis B virus).

They are universal because they refer to steps that need to be taken in all cases, not only when a staff member or student is known to be HIV-infected.

They are precautions because they require foresight and planning, and should be integrated into existing safety guidelines.

1. Appropriate equipment (mops, buckets, bleach, hot water, hand soap, disposable towels, and latex gloves) must be readily available to staff members who are responsible for the cleanup of body fluid spills.
  - a. Treat human blood spills with caution
  - b. Clean up blood spills promptly
  - c. Inspect the intactness of skin on all exposed body parts, especially the hands. Cover any and all open cuts or broken skin, or ask another staff member to do the clean-up. Latex gloves contribute an added measure of protection, but are not essential if skin is intact
  - d. Clean up blood spills with a solution of one part household bleach to ten parts water, pouring the solution around the periphery of the spill. Disinfect mops, buckets and other cleaning equipment with fresh bleach solution
  - e. Always wash hands after any contact with body fluids. This should be done immediately in order to avoid contaminating other surfaces or parts of the body (be especially careful not to touch your eyes before washing up). Soap and water will kill HIV
2. Clean up other body fluid spills (urine, vomit, feces), unless grossly blood contaminated, in the usual manner. They do not pose a significant risk of HIV infection.

Adapted from Universal Precautions for School Settings, Massachusetts Department of Education and Medical Update to Massachusetts Policy Guidelines: Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers with HIV Infection/AIDS in Early Childhood Settings (June 1989).

## SECTION IV: Code of Conduct

## **Elementary Schools Discipline Code**

The discipline code is a set of rules and regulations to guide Whitman-Hanson Regional School District students as they work and play in various school environments. It is assumed that the entire school personnel will display a friendly and sincere interest in the well-being of each child, yet at the same time maintain a degree of control that will ensure a good learning environment -- one that elicits mutual trust for each other.

One of the most important lessons education should teach is discipline. While it does not appear as a subject, it underlies the whole educational structure. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people.

With an understanding of the purposes of discipline in a school, a student may form a correct attitude toward it, and not only do their part in making our school an effective place of learning but develop the habit of self-control, which will make the student a better person.

### **Rules and Regulations**

General:

1. All pupils will respect and adhere to the standards established by each classroom and to the standards established for the total school setting.
2. Parents will be held financially responsible for the books and other school equipment/property assigned to his/her child during the school year.
3. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school any items which constitute a safety hazard for themselves or other children (For example - knives, toy guns, fireworks, and matches).
4. Discriminating practices or criticism among students for any reason whatsoever will not be tolerated.

## **Due Process for Suspensions**

### **NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION**

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at the hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing.

Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- A. the disciplinary offense;
- B. the basis for the charge;
- C. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;



- D. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- E. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- F. the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

### **SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION**

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

**Principal Hearing.** The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating

circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of his/her determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

### **LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION**

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension, such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. 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;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. 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; and. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- iv. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provided more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to

the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

### **APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue his/her written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL**

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing 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 temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The principal shall also provide

the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension.

### **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10**

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year. An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension.

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a

meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

### **SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H**

and37H1/2The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff. A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.
- Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent

has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

- Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency. The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

## **SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN FOR STUDENTS ON SHORT- OR LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**

- (1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.
- (2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.
- (3) Each school has a process for developing school-wide education service plans for education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. Each plan is individualized to the needs of each student and is

developed in collaboration with the guidance department, special education department, and classroom teachers, as applicable. Students and their parents will be notified of the process for developing and arranging such services at the time of suspension/expulsion. 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 M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

- (a) The principal 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.
- (b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten 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.

#### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (IEP/504)**

Procedures for suspensions of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the district.

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.
2. When a suspension constitutes a change of placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP – "a manifestation determination."



3. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer: a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is “substantially likely” to injure him/herself or others. Characteristics. In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.
5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student’s current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

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

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
  - a. The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
  - b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or
  - c. District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Please see **WHRSD Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines** for [Massachusetts General Law Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾](#).

**SECTION V: WHRSD Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines**

## WHRSD Policies

All policies may be found on the District’s website at [www.whrsd.org](http://www.whrsd.org) where they are updated regularly. Policies are organized into twelve sections A – L and have a reference code. For your convenience, some policies, reference codes, and descriptions are listed. To review a complete list of policies, descriptions, and accurate policy information, please refer to the website.

Section	Policy Classification
A	Foundations and Basic Commitments
B	Board Governance and Operations
C	General School Administration
D	Fiscal Management
E	Support Services
F	Facilities Development
G	Personnel
H	Negotiations
I	Instruction
J	Students
K	Community Relations
L	Education Agency Relations

Policy Title	CODE
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students Prohibited	JICH
Bullying Prevention	JICFB
Compensatory Education	IHBD
Drug Free Workplace Policy	GBEC
Emergencies	EBC and EBCD
Family and Medical Leave	GCCC
Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff	GBEBC
Head Injury and Concussion	JJIF
Meal Charge Policy	EFD
Network Access Policy	IJNBD
Nondiscrimination	AC
Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex	ACA
Physical Restraint	JKAA
Policy on Free and Appropriate Public Education under Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act	ACE
Programs for Students with Disabilities	IHBA
Prohibition of Hazing	JICFA
Promotion and Retention of Students	IKE
Public Complaints	KE, KEB, KEC
Public's Right to Know	KDB
Safety Program	EB
Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act Complaint Procedures	ACE
Searches and Interrogations	JIH
Sexual Harassment Policy	ACAB
Staff Complaints and Grievances	GBK
Staff Conduct	GBEB
Staff Ethics/Conflict of Interest	GBEA
Student Conduct	JIC
Student Discipline	JKA and JKA
Student Dress Code	JICA
Student Health Services and Requirements	JLC
Student Records	JRA and JRA-R
Student Rights and Responsibilities	JI
Student Transportation	EEA, EEAA, EEAC, EEAE, EEAEC, EEAAE-R, EEAG
Student Welfare (51a)	JL
Student-to-Student Harassment -	JBA

Vandalism	ECAC
Visitors to Schools	KI
Website Guidelines and Procedures for Approval	IJNDC-R

## **Regulations and Guidelines**

### **Building Use or Rental Policy**

Whitman-Hanson Regional School District schools are available for community use. Applications (Building Use Forms) are available in the Principal's office. Requests must be filed at least three weeks in advance of the anticipated use.

### **Promotion and Retention of Students - IKE**

PK thru Grade 5:

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District recognizes each pupil as an individual and also recognizes the wide variance in individual, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual growth patterns. Retention is a very serious educational action which is only recommended in rare situations. Factors that play a prominent role in arriving at a decision regarding promotion and retention are recommendations from teachers, recommendations from counselors and specialists, recommendations from school administrators, the student's test scores on the School Department's various testing instruments, periodic report cards, and the child's potential to achieve. The Promotion and Attendance Policy/Grades K thru Grade 5 attempts to provide a balance between individual rates of growth and basic standards.

Kindergarten: Promotion from this grade to the next grade level depends upon effective progress by pupils in academic readiness and social and emotional areas of pupil development.

Grades 1 - 5: Promotion from each of these grades to the next level depends upon effective progress by students in the areas of reading, English language arts, and mathematics including input from state-wide and other assessments.

Attendance Requirements: According the Chapter 76, Section 2 of the Massachusetts General Laws, "Every person in control of a child described in section one shall cause him to attend school as therein required, and if he fails to do so for 7 day sessions or 14 half day sessions within any period of 6 month" be subject to further action . In addition;

Students may be considered for retention if:

- More than 30 days in a school year are missed.
- More than 15 days in a marking period are missed.

This Attendance Policy may be waived in instances of extended student medical problems, or in other extenuating circumstances including the Department of Education's Policy on the discipline of Special Needs students.

Parent/Guardian Notification of Possible Retention: Parents will be notified in writing if their child is in danger of being retained for the following school year, midway through the current school year.

Decisions Regarding Promotion and Attendance: Those students who are in danger of being retained will immediately be referred to the school principal, adjustment counselor, teachers, and other staff members who are involved in an individual child's education.

The Building Pre-referral Team will be notified to assess the overall educational status of the students being referred in an effort to find modifications for those students to experience a higher degree of success before any retention recommendations are made.

In the event that a student is not successful in meeting the Whitman-Hanson School District's standards for promotion, the principal will notify parents/guardians of an intention to retain their child at a particular grade level before the last week of school or earlier if possible.

### **Regulations Governing School Bus Transportation** **Bus Loading and Discharging Procedures**

In accordance with Chapter 118 of the Acts of 1974, all pupils will enter or leave the bus when the lights/lamps are flashing. Further, our loading and discharging procedure requires that pupils pass at least ten (10) paces in front of the bus on the side of the flashing lamps. Pupils will be informed by the Building Administrators and homeroom teachers that they shall not wait on snow banks or attempt to climb snow banks after being discharged from a bus. Bus routes are established at the beginning of the school year based on the school's total enrollment and ridership on individual bus routes. Therefore, requests for students to ride on buses and get off at stops other than those they were assigned to in September cannot be honored.

### **Suspension of Bus Privileges**

Bus Transportation is a privilege and may be denied for just cause by the Building Administrator. Extreme cases of misbehavior on the bus or at the bus stop shall be reported by the Building Administrator to the School Safety Officer. The following procedures shall be processed in relation to possible suspension of bus riding privileges:

### **Penalties**

1. First Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of two (2) days.
2. Second Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of five (5) days.
3. Third Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of ten (10) days.
4. Fourth Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of thirty (30) days.
5. Fifth Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of sixty (60) days.
6. Sixth Bus Report: Student may be removed from the bus for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days.
7. Late bus: First discipline referral may result in student being removed for 30 days; second report, for the remainder of the school year.

Parents may be required to meet with the building administrator for a permission slip to re-board the bus. Bus Operators will not allow the pupils to re-board the bus until he/she receives the permission slip signed by the Building administrator.

Penalties may be carried into a subsequent school year at the discretion of the building administrator.

Bus Reports may be issued for but are not limited to the following:

- Putting arm, head or anything out of the window.
- Throwing anything out of the window.
- Pushing, hitting another pupil or grabbing property of another pupil. • Standing when a seat is available.
- Lighting matches or lighters.
- Fighting.
- Vulgar or profane Language.
- Vandalism such as defacing seats or cutting seats.
- Opening emergency door or any action which could cause harm to another pupil. • Refusal to obey reasonable rules of bus and operator's authority.
- Smoking or drinking.
- Possession of displaying weapons or like instruments.
- Harassment of other pupils or driver.
- Physical violence or threat of physical violence toward a bus operator.
- Possession of a controlled substance.

Note: Students are subject to video and audio surveillance while riding on District buses.

### **Student Information**

#### **An Act Providing for the Distribution of Information to Certain Parents of Children Enrolled in Elementary and Secondary Schools**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 34G the following section:

#### **Section 34H**

- a. Each public elementary and secondary school shall provide the following information in a timely and appropriate manner to the parent of a child enrolled in the school if the parent is eligible for information pursuant to this section and requests the information in the manner set forth in this section: report cards and progress reports; the results of intelligence and achievement tests; notification of a referral for a special needs assessment; notification of enrollment in a transitional bilingual program; notification of absences; notification of illnesses; notification of any detentions; suspensions or expulsion; and notification of permanent withdrawal from school. Each school shall also make reasonable efforts to ensure that other written information that is provided to the custodial parent but not specified in the preceding sentence be provided to the requesting parent if that parent is eligible for information pursuant to this section and requests the information in the manner set forth herein. All address and telephone number information shall be removed from information provided



pursuant to this section. Receipt of this information shall not mandate participation in any proceeding to which notification pertains nor shall it authorize participation in proceedings and decisions regarding the child's welfare which are not granted through the award of custody. For purposes of this section, any parent who does not have physical custody of a child shall be eligible for the receipt of information pursuant to the procedures of this section unless said parent has been denied legal custody of the child based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial parent, or who has been denied visitation, or who has been ordered to supervised visitation, or whose access to their child or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order unless said protective order, or any subsequent order which modifies said protective order, specifically allows access to the information described in this section.

- b. parent eligible for information pursuant to this section who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request to the school principal annually. The initial request shall include: a certified copy of the probate court's order or judgment relative to the custody of the child indicating that the requesting parent has not sought and been denied shared legal custody as defined in section 31 of chapter 208 based on a threat to the safety of the child or the custodial parent and is entitled to unsupervised visitation with his child, or a certified copy of an order by a probate and family court judge specifically ordering that this information be made available to the requesting parent which certifies on its face that it is being made after a review of the records, if any, of the judgment of custody and the criminal history of the petitioner, that provision of the requested information has not been determined to pose a safety risk for the custodial parent or to any child in the custodial parent's custody and that it is in the best interest of the child that such information be provided to the petitioner; and an affidavit from the requesting parent certifying that the judgment or order remains in effect and that no temporary or permanent protective order restricting access to the custodial parent or to any child in the custodial parent's custody is in effect.
- c. Upon receipt of a request for information pursuant to this section the school shall immediately notify the custodial parent of the receipt of the request. Notification must be made by registered mail and by first class mail in both the primary language of the custodial parent and in English. The school may seek reimbursement for the cost of postage from the requesting parent. The notification shall also inform the custodial parent that information requested pursuant to this section shall be provided to the requesting parent after 21 days unless the custodial parent provides to the principal of the school documentation of any court order which prohibits contact with the child, or prohibits the distribution of the information referred to in this section or which is a temporary or permanent order issued to provide protection to the custodial parent or any child in the custodial parent's custody from abuse by the requesting parent unless said protective order or any subsequent order which modifies said protective order, specifically allows access to the information described in this section.
- d. In each subsequent year, the parent eligible for information pursuant to this section shall indicate in the annual request that he continues to be entitled to unsupervised visitation with his child and to be eligible for the receipt of the information pursuant to this section. Upon receipt of a request for information pursuant to this section the school shall immediately notify the custodial parent of the receipt of the request. Notification shall be made by registered mail and by first-class mail in both the primary language of the custodial parent and in English. The school may seek reimbursement for the cost of postage from the requesting parent. The notification shall also inform the custodial parent that information requested pursuant to this section shall be provided to the requesting parent after 21 days unless the custodial parent provides to the principal of the school documentation of any court order which prohibits contact with the child, or prohibits the distribution of the information referred to in this section or which is a temporary or permanent order issued to provide protection to the custodial parent or any child in the custodial parent's custody from abuse by the requesting parent.
- e. At any time the principal of a school is presented with an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to this section the school shall immediately cease to provide said information and shall notify the requesting parent that the distribution of

information shall cease.

- f. The principal of each public elementary and secondary school shall designate a staff member whose duties shall include the proper implementation of this section.
- g. Requests for information made pursuant to this section which are made while a permanent protective order restricting access to the custodial parent or to any child in the custodial parent's custody is in effect shall constitute a violation of said protective order and be subject to the applicable penalties.
- h. The Department of Education shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this section. Said regulations shall include provisions which assure that the information referred to in this section is properly marked to indicate that said information may not be used to support admission of the child to another school.

### **Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 10 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has a contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist), or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by

the *School District* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

### **Notification of Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PRPA)**

PPRA affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas OR email, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.

- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

*Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with*

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

### **Asbestos Management Plans**

The School District’s Asbestos Management Plans are available for review in the Central Office located at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. Any questions regarding these plans can be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

### **Bullying Prevention Policy**

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District 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 as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- ii. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.”

"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 Whitman-Hanson Regional 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 Whitman-Hanson Regional 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.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying (781-618-7086). 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. The principal shall notify local law enforcement personnel, the Director of Safety and Security and the Superintendent if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator. The local law enforcement agency will determine if criminal charges are warranted.

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. A copy of each incident report shall be provided to the Director of Safety and Security who will inform the Superintendent. In the case where a student identified with special needs is involved, the Administrator of Special Education will be notified.

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.

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

### **Target Assistance**

The Whitman-Hanson Regional 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 Whitman-Hanson Regional School District website.

## **Harassment, Prejudice, and Non-Discrimination (Policy AC)**

### **General Information**

The School Committee's policy of nondiscrimination extends 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, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District is a community of learners that rejects harassment or prejudice in all forms and believes that children learn best when not influenced by stereotypical or preconceived ideas or opinions which disregard facts. Harassment or prejudice is demonstrated by intolerance, hatred, or bias toward others with the intent to do physical or emotional injury or harm to the victim. Harassment and prejudicial acts are damaging because they deny the individuality and dignity of the person(s). While no one is free of prejudice, our District believes that no one should be allowed to openly harass or demonstrate prejudice toward others. Acting in a harassing or prejudicial manner will be dealt with accordingly. This harassment may include behavior, such as wearing of clothes or symbols, which denigrates others or which is offensive to others because of its negative racial, religious, or ethnic connotations. Some examples of harassing or prejudicial acts are:

- Drawing (or wearing) of swastikas or other negative symbols on a wall, book, etc.
- Making negative statements directed at a person or group of people based on religion.
- Making negative comments directed at a person or group of people based on job or economic status.
- Making prejudicial comments to a person or group of people based on a person's intellectual capacity.
- Fighting, kicking, hitting, tripping, pinching, scratching and/or other violent conduct.
- Other physical conduct, not violent in nature, such as touching, staring, blocking a doorway, following a person, and/or laughing/sneering at a person.
- Destruction of a person's property.
- Calling a person at home, sending postal or electronic mail to the person's residence and/or following the person, and/or being at the person's home in an attempt to harass/intimidate.

All acts of harassment or prejudice, when reported to school officials, shall be investigated thoroughly using the same process that is available for racial or sexual harassment investigations.

### **Racial Harassment**

Pursuant to Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts racial harassment of a student, present or prospective employee, or visitor shall not be tolerated. Violation, if proven, will result in disciplinary action. Any person who believes that he/she has been the victim of racial harassment may seek redress through Whitman-Hanson's Racial Harassment Grievance Procedure by contacting your building principal as listed at the end of this section, or by contacting the Superintendent's Office at 781-618-7000.

### **Racial harassment is defined as:**

Verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment, when such conduct is undertaken because of the race and/or color of the person against whom the conduct is directed.

Examples of racially harassing conduct include but are not limited to:

- Racial epithets;
- Use of racial stereotypes;
- Graffiti, notes, letters, cards, pictures using racial epithets, racial slurs, racial stereotypes and/or demeaning references to a member of a race;
- Fighting, kicking, hitting, tripping, pinching, scratching and/or other violent conduct when done because of the victim's race;
- Other physical conduct, not violent in nature, such as touching, staring, blocking a doorway,
- following a person, and/or laughing/sneering at a person when such conduct is undertaken because of the person's race;
- Destruction of a person's property because of the person's race; and
- Calling a person at home, sending mail to the person's residence and/or following the person, and/or being at the person's home in an attempt to harass/intimidate because of the person's race/color.

Racial harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student. Racial harassment includes, but is not limited to the following considerations:

- A. 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-supervisor employee (co-worker), or, in some circumstances, even a non-employee (student, parent).
- B. The harasser and the victim can both be students.
- C. The harasser could be either a student or a staff member, and the victim could be either a student or staff member.
- D. The victim does not have to be the person at whom the 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 the racial harassment of one person may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment for another or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

All personnel and students will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and enforcing the above policy. All personnel and students are to strictly adhere to this policy.

### **Title IX**

Contacts: Mr. Jeffrey Szymaniak 781-618-7412

Mr. George Ferro 781-618-7466

### **Racial Harassment Grievance Procedure**

#### **Preface**

A formal grievance may be filed at any time by a student, employee, administrator, and/or applicant who believes that his/her rights as outlined above have been violated. Each student, faculty member, administrator, or staff member has an obligation to make every effort to resolve problems informally as they arise. All members of the community are urged to resolve problems fairly and informally so that they do not become sources of grievances to be pursued formally through the grievance procedure. If a suitable solution



cannot be reached informally through independent means, a formal grievance may be initiated.

**Definitions:** A “grievance” shall be a complaint by an individual that there has been a violation of the racial harassment policy.

- A. The grievant should file a written statement of the grievance within thirty (30) days of the alleged harassment. The grievance should be filed with his/her supervisor, or in the event that the supervisor is the alleged harasser, with the building principal or assistant superintendent. If the grievant is a student, the grievance should be filed with the student’s adviser, counselor, and principal or other staff member.
- B. In the event that the grievant does not feel comfortable making the grievance as outlined above, he/she is free to file the grievance with any administrator above him/her in the organizational chart. The grievance should be in writing because of due process concerns for the alleged harasser. However, if the grievant is unable to put the grievance in writing, the grievance shall be written by the administrator and must be signed by the grievant before proceeding.
- C. Once the grievance is received, an appropriate investigation of the grievance shall be undertaken. In the case of a student grievance, the investigation shall be done by the principal or his designee.
- D. Such investigation may consist of, but may not be limited to, the following actions:
  - Interview(s) with the grievant.
  - Interview(s) with the individual alleged to be the harasser.
  - Interviews with other employees, other students, or other witnesses. • Interviews with other individuals.
  - Review of pertinent records.
- E. Within a reasonable time after receipt of the grievance, a decision on the grievance shall be rendered, and the alleged harasser and the grievant shall be informed of the decision and whether or not the allegations were found to be credible.
  - a. If the allegations are not deemed credible, the matter shall be closed. The documents, notes, and other materials from the investigation shall be kept as a record for an appropriate period of time. The purpose for retaining this record is to enable Whitman Hanson to prove that it conducted an appropriate investigation.
  - b. If the allegations, or any part of the allegations, are deemed credible, appropriate action against the harasser shall be taken.
  - c. Remedial actions will depend on the severity of the incident(s). An admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of a verbal warning, a promise not to commit such offense again, and other action taken to provide appropriate relief for the grievant may be sufficient resolution. At this stage, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive and not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to or if the allegations involve conduct for which informal resolutions are not appropriate, the administrator may deem it necessary to take appropriate action that can include discipline up to and including termination (if an employee) or exclusion (if a student).
- F. If the grievant is not satisfied with the results of the grievance, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent.
- G. Grievants are not limited to a formal grievance procedure but may seek relief from other agencies, including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, or the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education.
- H. Any retaliatory action of any kind by an employee or student against any employee or student as a result of that person’s seeking redress under these procedures, cooperating in an investigation, or otherwise participating in any proceeding under those procedures, is prohibited and shall be regarded as a separate and distinct grievable matter under this procedure.

- I. All grievance proceedings will, to the greatest possible extent, be held in confidence by all persons directly or indirectly involved in them.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure for Students**

### **Introduction**

It is the policy of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District that all students should be able to attend school and participate in a learning environment which is free of any kind of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment thus violates the policies of the District and also violates the law, specifically Title IX and General Laws c. 151C.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

The legal definition of sexual harassment is: *Unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:*

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's success as a student;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of educational decisions affecting such individuals; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

### **Some Examples of Sexual Harassing Conduct:**

- touching (arm, breast, buttocks, etc.)
- verbal comments (about parts of the body, what type of sex the victim would be "good at," clothing, looks, etc.)
- name-calling (from "honey" to "bitch" and worse)
- spreading sexual rumors
- leers and stares
- sexual or "dirty" jokes
- cartoons, pictures, and pornography
- using the computer to leave sexual messages or graffiti or to play sexually offensive computer games
- gestures with the hands and body
- pressure for sexual activity
- cornering, blocking, standing too close, following
- conversations that are too personal
- "rating" an individual - for example, on a scale from 1 to 10
- obscene T-shirts, hats, pins
- showing R-rated movies during class (not curriculum-based)
- sexual assault and attempted sexual assault
- massaging the neck, massaging the shoulders
- touching oneself sexually in front of others
- Graffiti
- making kissing sounds or smacking sounds; licking the lips suggestively • howling, catcalls, whistles
- repeatedly asking someone out when he or she isn't interested
- "spiking" (pulling down someone's pants)
- facial expressions (winking, kissing, etc.)
- "slam books" (lists of students' names with derogatory sexual comments written about them by other

students)

- "making out" in the hallway

## **Complaint Procedure**

If you feel that someone has sexually harassed or is sexually harassing you, you should file a complaint as promptly as possible by following the steps below; in this way, the sexual harassing conduct will stop, and the person who is sexually harassing you will know that you do not like or accept such conduct.

### **Steps for Filing a Complaint**

1. Speak or send a note to any employee of the school system whom you trust, i.e., principal, assistant principal, teacher, nurse, counselor, custodian, crossing guard, aide, cafeteria worker, etc. You can also speak to your parents who can then notify the principal or assistant principal. Remember that the complaint procedure does not start until school personnel receive the complaint.
2. If you have not or do not want to put the complaint in writing, the employee will do so. This should be done no later than two (2) school days after you have talked, or given the note, to the employee. The complaint has to be put in writing to make sure that the employee's understanding of your complaint is correct.
3. The employee will refer the written complaint to the principal. The principal or his/her designee may speak with you to get more information. In any case, the principal or his/her designee will speak to the person who is alleged to have sexually harassed you (called "the respondent") to obtain information as well.
  - a. If the principal feels that the complaint can be resolved without a formal investigation, he/she may use the informal procedure. The informal procedure simply tries to resolve the situation and can be done in many ways. Even if the Principal thinks that the informal procedure is acceptable, you or the respondent can ask that the formal procedure be used, rather than, or after, the informal procedure.

Examples are:

- Principal or his/her designee may have a conversation between you and the respondent where you can tell the respondent that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
- The Principal or his/her designee may have you write a letter to the respondent saying that the behavior bothers you and must stop.
- The Principal or his/her designee may have separate conversations with you and the respondent.

Examples of possible resolutions are:

- Letters of apology
  - Assurances that the offensive behavior will end
  - Disciplinary action
4. The informal procedure will be completed within five (5) school days from the date the principal receives the complaint. The principal or his/her designee will notify you and the respondent of the results of the informal procedure. Resolution of the situation may or may not occur as a result of the informal procedure. If all the parties involved in this informal procedure feel that a resolution has been achieved, this discussion will remain confidential and no further action will be taken. If any of the parties feel that resolution has not been achieved, the following formal procedure will be used. Investigative deadlines may be extended under extenuating circumstances such as illness.

### **Formal Procedure:**

1. The formal procedure is used when any one of the following happens:
  - a. You or the respondent ask that the formal procedure be used,
  - b. The principal or his/her designee decides that the formal procedure should be used, or
  - c. You or the respondent feels that the informal procedure was not helpful or adequate and one of you requests within five (5) school days, that the formal procedure be used.
2. The formal procedure will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the complaint being filed with the principal, or if the informal procedure was used, within twenty (20) school days of the request to start the formal procedure.
3. The principal or his/her designee will investigate the complaint and complete a written report, which will include:
  - All facts and circumstances of the incident.
  - A summary of the investigation which will include interviews with anyone reasonably believed to have relevant information, namely, you, the respondent and, if either is under the age of 18, their parents (if appropriate), witnesses, and anyone else who may have experienced similar conduct.
  - A description of any actions already taken and/or proposed by the principal or his/her designee.

Copies of this written report, including the principal's decision, and the rationale and documentation of it will be forwarded to each of the parties involved within five (5) school days of completion of the investigation. All documentation of sexual harassment complaints will be kept on file with the Assistant Superintendent.

If the principal or his/her designee finds that sexually harassing conduct has occurred, then/he/she may discipline the respondent, require the respondent to apologize to you, require that the respondent go to counseling or training, take any combination of these actions or any other appropriate action.

You or the respondent may appeal the decision in writing to the Assistant Superintendent, within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the findings of the formal procedure. The decision will be reviewed to ensure adequacy of the investigation and conclusions. Parties will be given an opportunity to submit additional information. The Assistant Superintendent will make a decision and provide it in writing to you and the respondent within thirty (30) days.

### **Other Resources**

Individuals also have the right to seek a remedy from Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 727-3990, and the Regional Office of Civil Rights for the U.S. Department of Education, 222 John W. McCormack Bldg., Boston, MA 02109, (617) 223-9662.

### **Retaliation**

No one may retaliate against you for filing a complaint. Further, no one may retaliate against any student, employee person because they provided information or helped in the investigation. If any person feels that they have been subjected to retaliation, he/she should file a complaint with the principal.

### **Considerations to Remember**

- A male as well as a female may be the victims of sexual harassment, and a female, as well as a male, may be the harasser.

- The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- 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, in appropriate attempts of humor or the sexual harassment of one girl (or boy) may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for another girl (or boy) or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's educational performance.

### **Dissemination Process**

To insure that all our students are afforded an opportunity to understand this policy, it shall be annually distributed as follows:

- a. If asked at any level, the school principal, assistant principal, school adjustment counselor, guidance counselor, or school psychologist may assist a parent to help the child comprehend the meaning of the policy. It shall also be reviewed by the building principal at the start of the school year and with every new student enrolled by that student's guidance counselor.
- b. For students PK and K, parents will receive a copy of the policy in their enrollment packet. Parents will be asked to review this policy with their child(ren).
- c. For students' grades 1 through 8, each building health teacher will review this policy in class as part of the curriculum. It shall also be included in the student handbook. This curriculum activity will not be considered a human sexuality curriculum component and, therefore, not covered under Massachusetts General Law Section 32A (Parent Notification Act.)
- d. For students' grades 9 through 12, each shall receive a copy of this policy at the beginning of the school year either by hard copy or through the student handbook.
- e. For self-contained classes or other unique situations, the classroom teacher or specialist assigned shall be responsible for review of this policy with the student as directed by the administrator of Special Education.

### **Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act Complaint Procedures**

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability with regard to admission, access to services, treatment, or employment in its programs or activities. Any alleged discriminatory practices within the scope of Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act should be addressed through the grievance procedures which follow.

#### **Step 1-**

Any student or parent/guardian who believes he/she has a basis for complaint under Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act shall informally discuss the complaint with their building 504/ADA coordinator. The Building 504/ADA Coordinator will investigate and document the complaint (including dates of meetings, disposition and dates of disposition), and give written reply to the complainant within ten working days of meeting with the complainant.

#### **Step 2-**

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved through Step 1, it may be filed in writing by the complainant. To be considered, the written complaint must fully set out the circumstances giving rise to the allegations and

must be filed with the Building 504/ADA Coordinator within 10 working days of disposition at Step 1. The Building 504/ADA Coordinator shall notify the District ADA Coordinator of the written complaint.

The District 504/ADA Coordinator will appoint a hearing officer within 10 working days of receipt of the written complaint from the Building 504/ADA Coordinator.

The hearing officer will conduct a hearing regarding the complaint within 15 working days of appointment. The hearing officer shall give the parent or student full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues brought forth under the complaint. The parent or student may, at their own expense, be assisted or represented by individuals of their choice (excluding members of the School Committee), including legal counsel. The hearing officer will present his/her written decision to the District 504/ADA Coordinator and complainant within 10 working days of the hearing.

### **Step 3-**

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved through Step 2, the complainant may file a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. To be considered, the written complaint must fully state the circumstances giving rise to the alleged complaint and must be filed with the Superintendent's Office within 5 working days of disposition at Step 2. The Superintendent shall review all aspects of the complaint and issue a finding within 5 working days of receipt of the grievance. Should the Superintendent be unable to reach an agreement with the parties concerned, he/she shall forward the complaint to the School Committee immediately.

### **Step 4-**

The School Committee will address the complaint at its next regularly scheduled meeting provided the written complaint is received in the Superintendent's Office at least one week prior to the next scheduled meeting of the School Committee. Within 10 working days of addressing the complaint, the School Committee will issue a written disposition of the alleged grievance.

### **Step 5-**

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved following Step 4, further appeal may be made to the United States Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, DC 20201

- ❖ At a minimum, the following documents should be included by a hearing officer as part of the complete investigation:
- ❖ A statement of the facts as contended by each of the parties.
- ❖ A statement of the facts as found by the Hearing Officer and identification of all evidence to support each fact.
- ❖ A list of all witnesses' interviews and documents reviewed during the investigation.
- ❖ A narrative describing attempts to resolve the grievance.
- ❖ The hearing officer's conclusion as to whether the allegations in the grievance are meritorious or not.
- ❖ If the hearing officer believes the grievance is valid, he/she will recommend appropriate action to the District ADA/504 Coordinator.

The District 504/ADA Coordinator is: Mr. George Ferro, Assistant Superintendent, 781-618-7413.

**Massachusetts General Law Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾**

**Section 37H: Policies relative to conduct of teachers or students; student handbooks**

Section 37H. The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. The policies shall also prohibit bullying as defined in section 37O and shall include the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by said section 37O. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures assuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The student handbook shall include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by section 37O. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

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

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

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

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

**Section 37H1/2: Felony complaint or conviction of student; suspension; expulsion; right to appeal**

Section 37H1/2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

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



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

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

**Section 37H3/4: Suspension or expulsion on grounds other than those set forth in Secs. 37H or 37H1/2**

Section 37H3/4. (a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H.5.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

