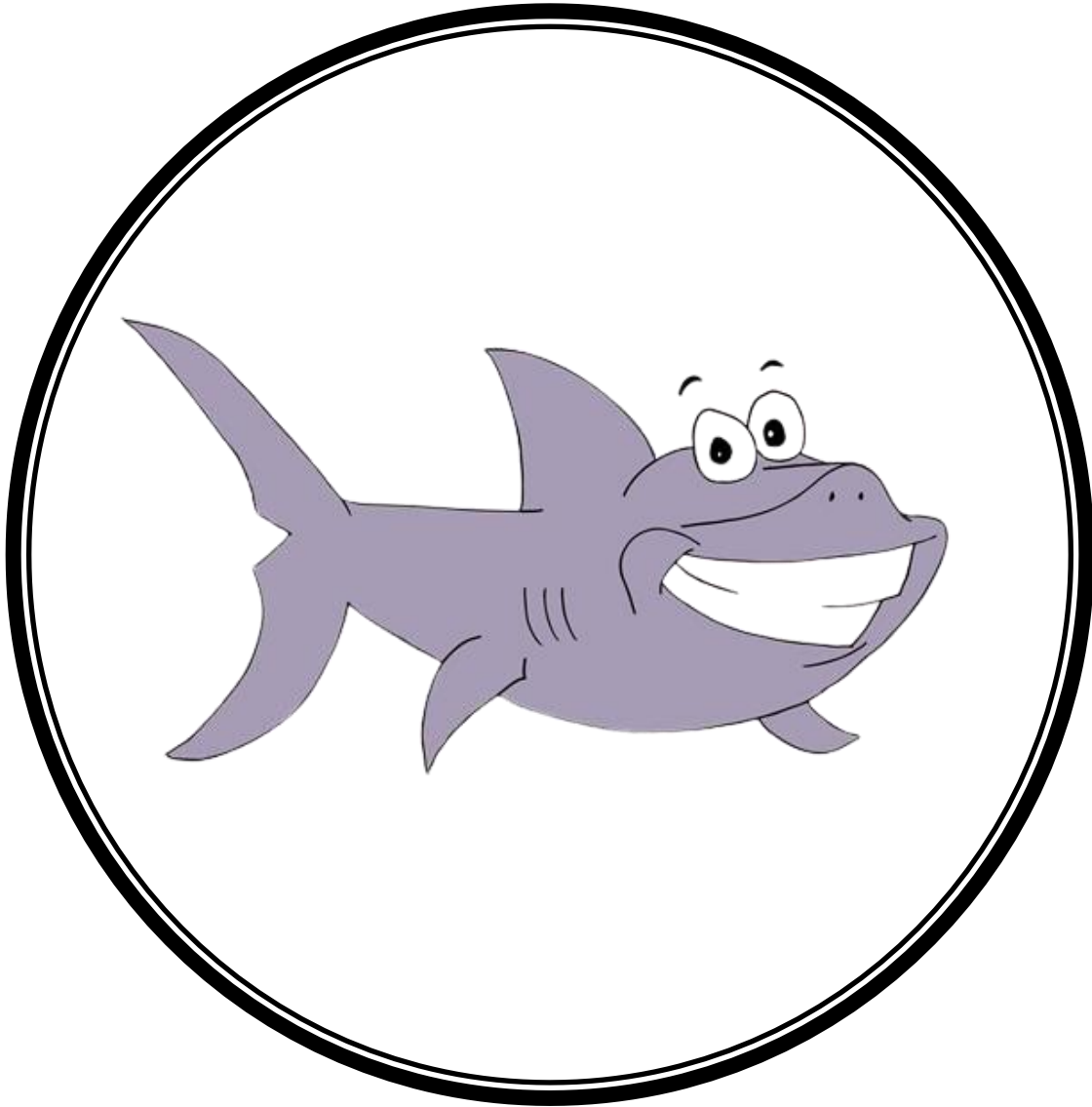


Sherman Elementary School

Where Students are Respectful, Responsible, and Safe



**Student/Parent Handbook
&
Code of Conduct
2023—2024**

SHERMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
836 Sherman Street
Watertown, NY 13601 (315) 785-3760



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to another exciting year at Sherman School!

To help you and your child, the following handbook has been compiled with information you should know about our school. This guide consists of policies and procedures practiced at Sherman. If you have any questions concerning the information you find inside, please feel free to call the school office at 315-785-3760.

Sherman School is fortunate to have a very dedicated, caring faculty and staff. Their main concern is the education of your child. Parent support and communication are extremely important to the success of our students, and we encourage you to be an active participant in your child's education.

We hope your child has an exciting and successful educational experience here at Sherman School. We look forward to a wonderful school year with you and your students.

Sincerely,

Terry Gonseth
Principal

Sherman Elementary Pledge

We, the Sherman Sharks Pledge to be:

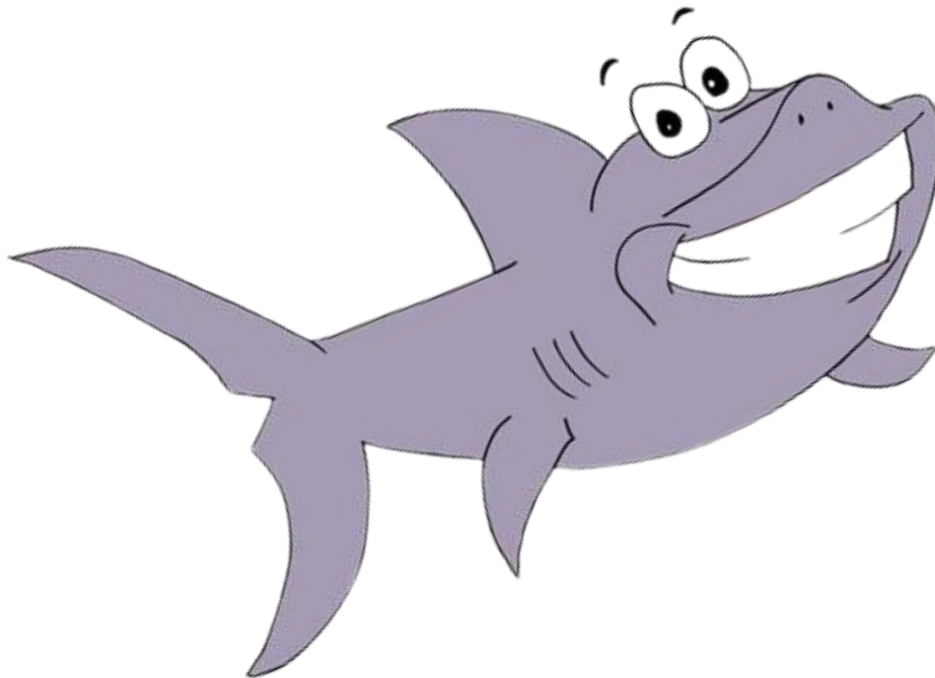
S-Safe

H-Helpful

A- A friend to everyone

R-Responsible, and

K-Kind



Terry Gonseth, Principal

tgonseth@watertowncsd.org

SCHOOL HOURS:

8:05 Students may enter the building.
8:05 – 8:25 Breakfast (KG/4 have breakfast in the classrooms)
8:25 Attendance is taken.
2:50 Kindergarten Walker/ Car Rider dismissal
2:55 1st-4th Walker/Car Rider and SACC dismissal
3:00- 3:15 Bus dismissal

IMPORTANT POLICY CHANGE

- Students are not allowed to enter the building prior to 8:05 AM (except for students enrolled in morning SACC). There will not be any supervision provided for students, inside or outside, prior to that time.
- The door will open at 8:05 AM and students will enter the building.
- Students in Kindergarten- fourth grade will go directly to their classrooms at 8:05 for breakfast.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS:

The school nurse must have on file a written request from the family physician and parent for prescription and over-the-counter medications. The note must state the dosage and frequency of the prescribed medication. It must be in the original labeled container with the child's name on it and be delivered to the school by the parent or parent's adult designee. **A verbal or telephone request from the parent or physician is not acceptable.** The nurse's direct telephone number is **315-785-3763**.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure shall be registered (in writing or electronically) in a register of attendance during each school day. Any absence shall be registered as verified or unverified. **Parents must notify the school at 315-785-3760 by 9:00 a.m. each day the child will not be in attendance.** Voice mail is available for your convenience.

ATTENDANCE - TARDINESS:

We encourage students to arrive on time each day. Students entering the classroom late start the day having to "catch up". Any student not in his/her assigned classroom at 8:25 a.m. is considered tardy. The student must report to the office upon arrival at school. We ask that parents not walk to the classroom with their child as the teachers and students have already begun the school day. School lunches need to be ordered daily. If a student is going to be tardy and needs a school lunch, please call the office by 9:00 am, and let us know.

BICYCLES/SCOOTERS:

Students are welcome to ride bicycles, skateboards, and scooters to and from school. For your convenience, bicycle racks are placed in the front of the school. For security, students should place their bicycles in the rack and be sure to lock them. The school cannot be responsible if your child's bike is lost or stolen. Students are to walk their bicycles and scooters on the sidewalk while on school grounds. All scooters are to be folded and carried into the building for proper security. All students must wear helmets to ensure their safety and abide by N.Y.S. Law.

BIRTHDAYS:

Happy Birthday wishes to your children will be said on their special day in the morning announcements and each teacher has ways to make the day special for your child. We at Sherman School follow the Watertown City School District Policy regarding what is acceptable regarding food in the classroom celebrations. The Watertown City School District Policy regarding food in the classroom can be found on the district website (District Information-Board of Education-Watertown City School District Policy Manual-Section 5000-5405 Student Wellness). If you wish to send something in to share with the class on your child's birthday, we ask that only non-food items be sent – bookmarks, pencils, stickers, etc. Please contact your child's teacher with any questions.

BREAKFAST: All students are eligible to receive a free breakfast. Students will enter the building at 8:05. All students will go directly to their classrooms. They will have breakfast in the classrooms.

BUS BEHAVIOR: Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to obey the rules posted on the bus and treat the driver and other riders with respect. If a student breaks the rules, he/she will be issued a bus infraction by the driver. This notice is brought to the principal and acted upon accordingly. Please be aware that it is the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to and from school if the child is suspended from riding the bus. Keeping a child at home will be considered as an illegal absence.

BUS EMERGENCY DRILLS: Three bus drills are held throughout the school year. They include practice and instruction in the location of emergency doors, fire extinguishers, first aid equipment, and procedures for evacuating the bus in case of an emergency. Bus riding behavior, as well as safety tips during inclement weather, is taught to all students.

BUS TRANSPORTATION: If your child is transported by bus, he/she will go home by bus unless you send a **WRITTEN** note to the contrary. Permission for a child to ride a different bus home or get off the bus at a different stop **CANNOT** be given.

Bus Rules

- Always follow the driver's directions
- Stay seated!
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself!
- Always use appropriate language

Bus Infractions

1. Intervention/Verbal warning
2. 2-day bus suspension
3. 5-day bus suspension
4. 20-day bus suspension and a meeting with the Principal, Transportation Director and Parent to determine reinstatement

PLEASE NOTE: PASSING A STOPPED SCHOOL BUS WITH ITS LIGHTS FLASHING IS AGAINST NEW YORK STATE LAW. THIS INCLUDES BUSES IN SCHOOL DRIVEWAYS AS WELL AS ROADWAYS.

DISCIPLINE: Classroom discipline procedures are set up by each classroom teacher. Your child's teacher will provide you with a copy of his/her discipline plan. Students recite the Sherman Elementary Pledge every day. This provides the students, faculty and staff with a belief system by which respect, responsibility and behaviors are strengthened.

EARLY DISMISSAL: There may be times when it will be necessary for you to pick up your child before the end of the school day. If you know this information before your child leaves for school, please send a written note to the teacher that contains: the child's name, time you will pick your child up, the reason for the early dismissal and the signature of the parent or legal guardian. All parents must report to the main office to sign out their children. **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED FROM THE CLASSROOM TO GO WITH THEIR PARENTS.** The teacher will be called from the main office to send the child to the office. Only parents and guardians are allowed to sign a child out of school. Anyone else picking up the child will need a note from the parent with signed authorization. They will be asked to present identification at the time of pick up. **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED WITHOUT WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING: During our long winter months, we often have various weather changes. In the event of a school closing, delayed opening, or early dismissal, information will be given over the following radio and television stations and Websites:

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| WTNY – 790AM | WTOJ- 103.7 FM | WWNY TV7 | www.newzjunky.com |
| WOTT – 100.7 FM | WCIZ- 93.5 FM | WWTI TV50 | www.watertowncsd.org |
| WATN – 1240 AM | WBDR-106.7 FM | | www.watertowndailytimes.com. |
| WFRY- 97.5 FM | | | |

Please pay close attention to determine whether it is the **WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS** that are delaying, closing or dismissing early. They will not mention Sherman School by name in these announcements.

EXCUSES: Each time your child is absent from school, the law requires that a written excuse be on file with the school for that absence. If no excuse is written, it is documented in the child's attendance record as an unverified absence. Please send the excuse in with your child the day he/she returns to school. Even though you may have called to tell us your child is absent from school, a written excuse signed by a parent or legal guardian is needed for your child's record.

FIRE DRILLS: Students are instructed and trained to leave the building in a calm and orderly manner should there be an emergency. Eight fire drills must be held during the school year. Fire prevention instructions are also given to all pupils.

HOME-SCHOOL COORDINATOR'S ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: This program is designed to monitor student attendance and to offer assistance to those students and their families who have a high rate of absenteeism. The

coordinator talks to the students and makes home visits to parents. If you have any questions or need help in dealing with a child's specific attendance problem, please contact Mrs. Ebonii Combs at school.

IMMUNIZATIONS: Children entering school must be properly immunized, as mandated by New York State Law. Each entering student must show proof of having had at least 3 Polio, 3 DTP, 3 Hepatitis B, 1 Rubella, 1 Mumps, 2 Measles and 1 Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccination.

LOCK DOWN DRILLS: We perform Lock Down drills periodically throughout the school year. Teachers and students have pre-established plans in place in the event that an intruder or unsafe situation should arise in our school.

LUNCHES: All students who are enrolled at Watertown City School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch **MEAL** at school at **NO CHARGE** to your household each day of the 2023-2024 school year.

If your student chooses to purchase extra items (a la carte items) such as a second entrée or milk, this will be an additional charge to the student. Pricing will be available on our website: www.watertowncsd.org under the Food Service link as well as on the monthly menus. Students must have a positive meal account balance to purchase these items. Parents can deposit money into student accounts via www.myschoolbucks.com. Payment is also accepted in the form of cash or check made out to Watertown City School District. These funds are deposited into your student's account so they can make purchases.

There is also a peanut butter and jelly lunch available to students each day. Please note that our lunches need to be ordered from the food service department by 9:00 each morning. You will need to call the school prior to 9:00 if your child will be late and would like a PBJ lunch. We are not able to heat items sent from home or prepare other food if your child does not like the menu entrée being offered.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES: Two parent-teacher conferences are held each year. One conference is held at the end of the first quarter (December 7 & 8, 2023) to discuss your child's progress. The second conference will be held at the end of the third quarter (March 8, 2024). If you wish to set up a conference with your child's teacher at another time, we encourage you to contact the teacher or the office. Students will receive a report card four times a year. The report card envelope must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school for the first three report periods. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

PARENT TRANSPORTATION – In order to avoid accidents, parents who transport their children to and from school are asked to follow these instructions:

1. **THERE WILL BE NO PARKING** in the circular loop prior to 8:25 AM and from 2:50 to 3:15 PM. This area is designated for loading and unloading only. **You may not leave your car running or leave the driver's portion of your car when dropping your child off in the morning.** If you need to enter the building, please park in the designated parking areas. Parents choosing to drop off directly in front of the school are asked to use the following procedure. A designated staff person will be waiting at the sidewalk in front of the building at 8:05 AM. Parents will wait for their turn in line and students will exit the car with the help of the designated person. Parents will stay in the car and drive away **as soon as the student is clear of the vehicle**. The next car will then pull forward to allow that child to exit the vehicle.
2. Visitors may park in the circular loop at other times during the day.
3. In the afternoon, Kindergarten walkers/car riders will be released by 2:50 p.m. and 1st - 4th at 2:55. The parking lot behind and to the side of the school will be blocked off from 2:50 to 3:05 p.m. Walkers, bikers, and students meeting rides home will be escorted out the north end doors (by the gymnasium). Bike riders must walk their bikes off school property. Please adhere to the parking regulations on Pratt and Sherman Streets. **Parents may wait in their cars for students on the school side of Sherman Street. Cars are not allowed to stop on the opposite side of Sherman St. Bussed students will be dismissed at approximately 3:10 PM through the south exit to the buses waiting in the circular loop.**

PERSONAL ITEMS: Because we cannot always place personal items in a safe location, we suggest that personal items of value, and money not be brought to or left at school. Please discourage your child from bringing in personal items (toys) unless they are related to a class lesson or project.

PHYSICAL EXAMS: At Kindergarten Registration, a physician's report form is given to each parent to be completed by the family physician at the time of enrollment. The school district physician will do a routine health appraisal for children in second and fourth grades and any new entrants without a physical on file that has been done within the last year. Notification will be sent home prior to this. Parents may also choose to take their child to their private physician for a physical.

PRESS/MEDIA COVERAGE PERMISSION: Should a field trip or activity in school or on school grounds receive press/media coverage, parents are asked to give/deny consent for their child to be taped or have his/her picture taken and possibly shown on public television programming, printed in the newspaper or displayed on the Watertown City School District web page. A permission form is sent home at the beginning of the year. Parent/guardians are asked to complete the form and return it to school.

PROLONGED ABSENCES: The telephone number for the school is 315-785-3760. The office should be notified if a child will be absent for a long period of time. If in doubt, check with your physician. The school likes to be aware of communicable diseases to protect other students. Should you suspect one of these diseases, contact your physician. School nurses do not diagnose conditions and sending an ill child to school exposes other children.

RECESS: Recess is held on a daily basis. The students often play outside. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the outside weather conditions. Students will not be allowed to play on the playground unless they are wearing sneakers. For safety reasons, students will not be allowed on the playground equipment during the winter months.

SACC: The YMCA provides before and after school care at Sherman for any child enrolled in school. All inquiries about the program must be directed to the SACC staff, **315-755-2005**. Please send in a note to notify your child's teacher if your child will be going to SACC at dismissal time.

SNACKS: We like to promote healthy snacks for children. The Watertown City School District Policy regarding food in the classroom can be found on the district website (District Information-Board of Education-Watertown City School District Policy Manual-Section 5000-5405 Student Wellness).

SIX-DAY ROTATION: For all grades K through 4, our physical education, music, and art classes are on a 6-day rotation cycle. This means that your child will have 1 art, 2 music, and 3 PE classes every 6 days. Your child's teacher will notify you of the class schedule. This schedule is also located on the reverse side of the monthly calendar sent home from the office. Snow days and vacations are not counted. **Sneakers are required for gym. An old shirt or smock is recommended for art class.**

VISITORS: All entrances to the building are locked during the day. Visitors need to go to the main entrance (behind the flagpole) and use the buzzer to gain access to the building. For the safety of our students, every parent or other visitor who enters Sherman School ***must*** go directly to the office to sign in. You will need to have valid government issued identification with you. You will be given a visitor pass that needs to be returned to the office when you sign out of the building. Anyone in the building without a visitor pass will be escorted to the office.

The Watertown City School District hereby advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that it offers employment and educational opportunities without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, creed or religion, marital status, age, gender preference, or disability. Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to: Coordinator Title IX, Section 504 @ 1351 Washington St.; P.O. Box 586; Watertown, NY 13601-0586; 315-785-3714



What if parents could give their children a magic pill in the morning to make them healthy, smart and well-behaved? While no such pill exists, there is something just as powerful:

BREAKFAST!

Consumption of this morning meal, whether eaten at home or at school, is one of the most important things a child does all day. Over 30 years of credible research has proven that a healthy breakfast positively impacts brain function and energy level, which is extremely important for school-aged children.

There are 5 benefits to eating a healthy breakfast:

1. Breakfast equals better behavior. Children who skip breakfast are more tired, irritable, or restless by late morning. Children who regularly eat breakfast have more energy, and are less likely to exhibit aggressive behavior, and have a better attitude toward school.
2. Breakfast leads to higher test scores. Research has shown that children who consistently eat breakfast test higher in most academic areas.
3. Breakfast leads to better class attendance. Children who eat breakfast are absent from school fewer days. They also spend less time in the nurse's office.
4. Breakfast eaters generally happen to meet more vitamin and mineral requirements for prevention of deficiencies. They consume more fiber, vitamin C, calcium, and folic acid. Unfortunately, children who miss breakfast do not make up for lost nutrients later in the day.
5. Breakfast helps to establish a normal eating pattern. Eating regular meals is a key to maintaining a healthy weight throughout life. Increasing childhood obesity is in part attributed to the disappearance of normal eating patterns.

As you can see breakfast is an important start to your children's day.

**Watertown City School District offers a free breakfast
to all students in all buildings each day.**

**Remember BREAKFAST, whether eaten at home or at SCHOOL, is the most important thing
your child does all day!**

Watertown City School District's

*SUMMARIZED VERSION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive, and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The district has a set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

* A complete copy of the CODE OF CONDUCT may be obtained from the school or from the district website - www.watertowncsd.org. It is listed under Home ~ Board of Education ~ Watertown City School District Policy Manual ~ Section 1102.

CODE OF CONDUCT

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All district students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
6. Control their anger.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.
11. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
12. Act and speak respectfully about issues/concerns.
13. Use non-sexist, non-racist and other non-biased language.
14. Respect and treat others with tolerance and dignity regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.
15. Use communication that is non-confrontational and is not obscene or defamatory.
16. Report acts of bullying, discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate actions that hurt others.

PARENTS

All parents are expected to:

1. Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure absences are excused.
5. Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.

7. Know school rules and help their children understand the consequences of their actions.
8. Convey to their child(ren) a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
9. Build good relationships with teachers, other parents, and their child(ren)'s friends.
10. Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
11. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
12. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
13. Maintain a climate of mutual respect when dealing with school personnel.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up, and nails, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, bare midriffs, plunging necklines (front and/or back), short shorts, mini dresses/skirts (above mid-thigh length) and see-through garments are not appropriate.
3. Ensure that undergarments, including boxer shorts, are completely covered with outer clothing. Pants falling below the waist or hip are not acceptable.
4. **Students must always wear shoes.** Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed. **Flip-flops** are considered a safety hazard; it is strongly suggested they not be worn to school.
5. No hats may be worn during the school day except for medical or religious purposes. Bandanas, or other head coverings depicting or signifying gang affiliation, do-rags, coats, masks, chains (other than cosmetic) and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building except for medical or religious purposes. Any apparel or accessories that may represent or reflect gang membership or affiliation is unacceptable on school property.
6. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, innuendo, or disability.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Each building Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item, and if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include:

1. Running in hallways.
2. Making unreasonable noise.
3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive.
4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
5. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
7. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or other violation of the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
2. Lateness for missing or leaving school without permission, failing to follow sign-in/sign-out procedures.
3. Skipping detention.

C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of disruptive conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.

D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include:

1. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, or scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
2. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, or scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
3. Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
4. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
5. Threatening to use any weapon.
6. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
7. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.

E. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:

1. Lying to school personnel.
2. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
3. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.

4. Discrimination, which includes the use of a person's actual or perceived race, color, creed, national origin, weight, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, gender, sexual orientation, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
5. Harassment or bullying, as defined in Section II of the Code of Conduct, labeled "Definitions."
6. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
7. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
8. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing, or swearing.
9. Using, possessing or distributing tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, pipes or chewing or smokeless tobacco.
10. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing, or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic marijuana or cannabinoids, including but not limited to items labeled as incense, herbal mixtures or potpourri, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
11. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
12. Gambling.
13. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
14. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

F. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district school buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, and fighting will not be tolerated.

G. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include:

1. Plagiarism
2. Cheating
3. Copying
4. Altering records
5. Assisting another student in any of the above actions.

H. In addition to the preceding standards of conduct, the district prohibits discrimination and harassment against any student by employees or students that creates a hostile environment by conduct (with or without physical conduct) or verbal statements, intimidation, or abuse. We consider a hostile environment to be created when actions or statements directed at a student either (1) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or with the student's mental, emotional, or physical well-being including conduct that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause emotional harm, or (2) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury to a student or to cause a student to fear for their physical safety.

This prohibition applies to all acts of harassment or bullying that occur on school property or at a school function, as well as to acts occurring off school property when (i) those acts create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, and (ii) it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation, or abuse might reach school property.

The prohibition of discrimination includes, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation, or abuse based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

AGE-APPROPRIATE RESTATEMENT OF POLICY

You should never feel that it is not safe for you to come to school and participate in all school activities. You should never be prevented from concentrating on your schoolwork because another student or a school staff member is teasing you, making fun of you, pushing you around, or threatening you in some way, because of your race, color, weight, national

origin (where your family comes from), ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, or any other reason.

You may not act toward another student in a way that reasonably might make them feel threatened or unsafe, or that might reasonably make them unable to concentrate on their school work, because of what you think about their race, color, weight, national origin (where their family comes from), ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, or any other reason. It is against school rules for you to do this by your physical actions or by your verbal statements, including electronic messages.

PENALTIES:

Students who are found to have violated the district's code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination. The school personnel identified after each penalty are authorized to impose that penalty, consistent with the student's right to due process.

1. Oral warning – any member of the district staff
2. Written warning – bus drivers, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, Principal, Superintendent
3. Written notification to parent – bus driver, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, Principal, Superintendent
4. Detention – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
5. Restitution for damage to property – Principal, Superintendent
6. Work detail – Principal, Superintendent
7. Suspension from transportation – Director of Transportation, Principal, Superintendent
8. Suspension from athletic participation – coaches, Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent
9. Suspension from social or extracurricular activities – activity director, Principal, Superintendent
10. Suspension of other privileges – Principal, Superintendent
11. In-school suspension – Principal, Superintendent
12. Removal from classroom by teacher – teachers, Principal
13. Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school – Principal, Superintendent, Board
14. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school – Principal, Superintendent, Board
15. Permanent suspension from school – Superintendent, Board.

SUSPENSION FROM TRANSPORTATION:

If a student does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver is expected to bring, in writing, such misconduct to the principal's attention. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended by the Principal or the Superintendent or their designees.

In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the Principal or the Principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS:

The Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit the district's schools and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student at the school will be considered a visitor.

2. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the principal upon arrival at the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge to the principal's office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, during non-school hours, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s), so that class disruption is kept to a minimum.
5. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY:

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers, and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all people on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT:

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Use tobacco products on school property or at a school function.
11. Possess or use weapons on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
12. Loiter on or about school property.
13. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
14. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
15. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.

16. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance, or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

The principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

It is the belief of the Watertown City School District that opportunities for students to achieve their fullest potential are maximized by regular school attendance that allows a student to take advantage of full interaction with his or her teachers and peers. The Watertown City School District also believes that class attendance is a major component of academic success, and that improved student achievement will reduce the dropout rate. Therefore, it is the goal of the Watertown City School District to provide for the early identification of attendance problems and to establish effective methods to address such problems. Successful implementation of this policy will require cooperation among all members of the school community, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Commencing July 1, 2003, each student's presence or absence shall be recorded (in writing or electronically) in a register of attendance during each period of scheduled instruction. In non-departmentalized K-8 grades, the school district must record each pupil's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure once per school day. Scheduled instruction shall include actual instruction or supervised study activities. Any absence from the school day or portion of the day shall be recorded in the register as excused or unexcused. In addition, any student's arrival late or departure early from scheduled instruction will be recorded as excused or unexcused.

The register of attendance should include the following for each student:

1. Name
2. Date of birth
3. Full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relations (guardian)
4. Address of student's residence
5. Phone number(s) where parent(s) or guardian(s) may be contacted.
6. Date of student's enrollment
7. A record of the student's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction
8. A record of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day because of extraordinary circumstances (weather, facilities problem, etc.), and
9. A record of the date when a pupil withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in accordance with Ed. Law §3202(1-1).

A teacher or any other district designated employee shall be responsible for all entries in the register of attendance. If a district designated employee makes the entries in the registry, a teacher or other district employee shall supervise maintenance of the register of attendance. Each register entry must be verified by the oath or affirmation of the person making the entries.

The following list includes reasons which are considered excused absences. (Next to the reason is the letter code that shall be recorded in the reason section of the attendance register):

1. illness (I)
2. illness in the family (IF)
3. death in the family (DF)
4. unsafe travel conditions (UTC)
5. doctor appointments (DA)
6. quarantine (Q)
7. required court appearances (RCA)
8. approved college visits (ACV)
9. approved cooperative work programs (ACWP)
10. religious observance (RO)
11. attendance at health clinic (AHC)
12. military obligation (MO)
13. disciplinary detention of an incarcerated youth (DDIY)
14. religious education/instruction (REI)
15. school suspension (with alternative instruction requirements met) (SS)

16. driver's test (DT)
17. school approved events (SAE)

Any other reason shall be considered an unexcused absence. The following nonexclusive list includes possible examples of unexcused absences:

1. senior skip day
2. family vacations
3. traveling
4. shopping/hair appointments
5. baby sitting
6. missing the bus
7. working
8. hunting/fishing
9. private lessons/activities
10. cold weather
11. needed at home

The register of attendance shall be reviewed by the principal in charge of each school building and by the building designee. The designee shall be responsible for addressing students' unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures from scheduled instruction. The designee will attempt to notify parents or guardians of any unexcused absences, tardiness or unexcused early departure and remind them of the attendance policy. Parents must notify the school by 9 a.m. on the day the child will not be in attendance.

Students who have an unexcused absence, late arrival, or early departure from scheduled instruction will be subject to a series of incremental interventions including counseling, loss of privileges, warnings, suspension, and any other disciplinary penalties available under the Code of Conduct.

Periodic "hall sweeps" will be conducted to identify students who are absent from scheduled instruction without an excuse. Where consistent with other school practices, teachers and staff shall detain students who are absent from a class period without excuse and take the student to the building principal's office or report the student to an appropriate administrator.

Students (of compulsory school age) with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up work to gain course credit. If the absence is excused, the student is to arrange with his or her teacher for an assignment to make up for the missed work. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the teacher.

The district shall annually review this Attendance Policy and make any revisions to improve student attendance. This review shall include an examination of current intervention strategies, as well as the development of new and effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance, thereby improving students' performance.

The district will provide each teacher, student, and his/her parent or guardian with a copy of the attendance policy at the beginning of each school year and shall make copies available to any other member of the community upon request in the school office.

Cross ref: Attendance Accounting - 5170
 Attendance Accounting Regulation - 5170R

Adopted: August 4, 2023