

Westborough Early Childhood Center (WECC)

Translations: [Arabic](#) [Chinese](#) [Portuguese](#) [Russian](#) [Spanish](#)



Student – Parent Handbook 2024-2025

The Westborough Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or any other class protected by law.

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SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHOOL PHONE NUMBERS</u></p> <table><tr><td>Early Childhood Center</td><td>508-836-7754</td></tr><tr><td>Armstrong Elementary</td><td>508- 836-7760</td></tr><tr><td>Fales Elementary</td><td>508- 836-7770</td></tr><tr><td>Hastings Elementary</td><td>508-836-7750</td></tr><tr><td>Mill Pond School</td><td>508-836-7780</td></tr><tr><td>Gibbons Middle School</td><td>508-836-7740</td></tr><tr><td>Westborough High School</td><td>508- 836-7720</td></tr><tr><td>District Office</td><td>508-836-7700</td></tr></table> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>WECC SCHOOL TIMES</u> AM - 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. PM - 12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Full Day 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Students should arrive NO EARLIER THAN 8:50 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. ****8:50 a.m. drop off will begin September 16th</p>	Early Childhood Center	508-836-7754	Armstrong Elementary	508- 836-7760	Fales Elementary	508- 836-7770	Hastings Elementary	508-836-7750	Mill Pond School	508-836-7780	Gibbons Middle School	508-836-7740	Westborough High School	508- 836-7720	District Office	508-836-7700	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>HOLIDAY - NO SCHOOL</u></p> <table><tr><td>Labor Day</td><td>Mon., Sept. 2, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Rosh Hashanah</td><td>Thur. Oct. 3, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Indigenous Peoples' Day</td><td>Mon., Oct. 14, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Diwali</td><td>Fri., Nov. 1, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Professional Day</td><td>Tues. Nov. 5, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Veteran's Day</td><td>Mon., Nov. 11, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Thanksgiving</td><td>Nov. 28 & 29, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Winter Break</td><td>Dec. 23 - Jan 1, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>New Year's Day</td><td>Wed., Jan 1, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Martin Luther King Day</td><td>Mon., Jan. 20, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>February Break</td><td>Feb. 17-21, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Professional Day</td><td>Tues., Mar. 11, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Eid al-Fitr</td><td>Mon., Mar. 31, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>April Break</td><td>Apr. 21 - 25, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Memorial Day</td><td>Mon., May 26, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Juneteenth</td><td>Thur., June 19, 2025</td></tr></table>	Labor Day	Mon., Sept. 2, 2024	Rosh Hashanah	Thur. Oct. 3, 2024	Indigenous Peoples' Day	Mon., Oct. 14, 2024	Diwali	Fri., Nov. 1, 2024	Professional Day	Tues. Nov. 5, 2024	Veteran's Day	Mon., Nov. 11, 2024	Thanksgiving	Nov. 28 & 29, 2024	Winter Break	Dec. 23 - Jan 1, 2025	New Year's Day	Wed., Jan 1, 2025	Martin Luther King Day	Mon., Jan. 20, 2025	February Break	Feb. 17-21, 2025	Professional Day	Tues., Mar. 11, 2025	Eid al-Fitr	Mon., Mar. 31, 2025	April Break	Apr. 21 - 25, 2025	Memorial Day	Mon., May 26, 2025	Juneteenth	Thur., June 19, 2025
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<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WECC PARENT CONFERENCES</u></p> <p>Fall Conferences Fri., October 25, 2024 Thurs., Nov. 7, 2024 Evening Conferences 5-7pm Fri., November 8, 2024</p> <p>Spring Conferences Fri., March 21, 2025 Thurs., March 27, 2025 Evening Conferences 5-7pm Fri., March 28, 2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>ONLINE REPORT CARDS:</u> Report cards are issued via Powerschool</p> <p>PK Report Card I - Report Cards Issued 1-24-25</p> <p>PK Report Card II - Report Cards Issued last day of school for PK</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEAL PRICES</u> Lunch is free for all students for 2024-2025 (Full day WECC students are the only students accessing lunch)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DISTRICT HALF DAYS - NO SCHOOL at WECC</u></p> <p>Friday, September 20, 2024 Friday October 25, 2024 Friday, November 8, 2024 Wednesday, November 27, 2024 Friday, December 6, 2024 Friday, December 20, 2024 Friday, January 17, 2025 Wednesday, January 29, 2025 Friday, March 21, 2025 Friday, March 28, 2025 Friday, April 18, 2025 Friday, May 16, 2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p>Connect5 call to all enrolled students WPS website www.westboroughk12.org Channel 12 (Local cable) Channels 4 & 5</p>																																																

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS **[LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:](#)**

SCHOOL ROUTINES

Student Biographical Information:

Student Biographical Information must be kept up to date in the online [PowerSchool Parent/Guardian Portal](#). Please be sure that both Parents/Guardians work/cell numbers are listed. Also list two people who would be able to pick up your child in the event of illness or injury if you are not available. Listing their name gives us permission to dismiss your child to their care. In the event of illness or injury, a child can be released only to a Parents/Guardians or responsible adult documented in PowerSchool. **If you change jobs or home/cell phone number during the school year, remember to update your new number(s) in the online PowerSchool Parent/Guardian Portal.** [Click here for information on using PowerSchool.](#)

Visitor Sign-in:

We welcome family participation at school.

Please be advised that all school buildings are locked during school hours. This is important in order to maintain security in the building. Staff members have been asked to stop any adult they see without a name-tag on school property and direct them to the front desk.

Video and Audio Recording of Students

All students and school visitors are on notice that they are subject to being video recorded while in the school building through the school's closed circuit video monitoring system. Such recording shall not be generally accessible to the public, however, and shall not be deemed to be part of an individual student's Westborough Public Schools' student record. Students and parents should also be aware that, on occasion, a student or a group of students may be video recorded and/or audio recorded by school staff as part of a class or school-wide event or activity.

SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL

This section details our policies and routines. By adhering to them, you help the school run more efficiently, and provide a sense of security for your child. If our system for handling the day-to-day details works well, we have more time to spend teaching your child.

School Hours:

School hours are 9:00 – 2:30. AM sessions run from 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. PM sessions run from 12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Full Day sessions run from 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Arrival

The school day begins at **9:00 a.m. for AM and Full Day students.** The school day begins at **12:00 p.m. for PM students.**

Parent Student Drop Off will run from 8:50-9:00 a.m. or 12:00-12:05 p.m. PLEASE NOTE: 8:50 AM drop off will not begin until September 16th

Walk-In (ALL classrooms): Parents/Guardians will **park in a legal open parking spot** and walk their child into the classroom.

Curbside Drop Off (Full day and AM classrooms only): Parents/Guardians will drive their vehicles to their assigned drop off location (either front or back of the WECC building). Staff will escort children from the vehicle to the classroom.

Tardy Students:

Students arriving after 9:10 or 12:10 are considered tardy and MUST be signed in by Parents/Guardians before going to class. This procedure ensures that the student is removed from the absence list.

Dismissal at the End of The Day:

Parent Student Pick-Up is at 11:30 for AM sessions and 2:30 for PM and Full Day sessions.

Walk-In (ALL classrooms): Parents/Guardians will **park in a legal open parking spot** and pick up their child in the classroom.

Curbside Pick Up (Full day and PM classrooms only): Parents/Guardians will drive their vehicles to their assigned drop off location (either front or back of the WECC building). Staff will escort children to the vehicle from the classroom. Parents/Guardians MUST put the vehicle in park and buckle children into the car seat.

LATE PICK-UP FEE:

Please be on time to pick up your child as late pick-ups impact staff lunch breaks and/or meeting and planning times. While we understand that our parking lot can be challenging to navigate and that there are times when you may be unavoidably late to pick up your child, we reserve the right to charge for late pick ups. The charge will be \$1.00 for every minute late.

Emergency Change in Dismissal Plans:

A note is needed if there is any change in dismissal, including form of dismissal or of the person picking up your child. Please notify teachers/office personnel of dismissal changes in writing. Calling to change dismissal plans is strongly discouraged. If a change in dismissal is needed due to an emergency or change in the weather, **please call the school before 2:00 that day.**

If there is a change in who will pick up your child or form of dismissal on a regular basis, please indicate so on one note and we will keep that on file in the office.

You may not pick up other people's children without previous permission in writing.

Dismissal During the Day:

If you are picking up your child early for a doctor or dental appointment, etc., **YOU MUST EMAIL THE TEACHER AND FRONT DESK.** Early dismissal for social or recreational activities on a regular basis is discouraged.

WECC SPECIAL DAYS

Open House:

WECC will hold Open House on August 29th and 30th. Your child's placement email will indicate the specific time and date of your Open House. You will also be invited to other opening activities including virtual or in-person home visits and/or community visits.

Birthdays:

Please know children will not be able to distribute birthday invitations in the classroom. The school cannot provide addresses for such. Please refer to your School Directory once published.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance and on-time arrival at school are important for your child's education. One of the most important things Parents/Guardians can do is **get their children to school every day, and make sure they arrive on time in-person.**

Attendance:

Students are required to have regular attendance except for personal illness, excusable emergencies, or other reasonable excuses. Massachusetts General Law chapter 76, Section 2 states: "A Parent/Guardian can be fined if a student fails to attend school for seven days (or fourteen half-days) within any six month period." Students with a pattern of excessive absences will be referred to the principal and/or attendance officer for appropriate action.

As you plan family vacations we urge you to schedule those trips during times when school is not in session. Extended absences from school are discouraged because they are disruptive to your child's education. According to school policy, we do not provide homework in advance for students who miss school due to family trips or vacations. As you plan future family vacations please keep in mind that all family vacations and family trips that occur when school is in session will be recorded in your child's attendance record as an "unexcused absence." If an extended time away from school is unavoidable, please send in a note to the teacher and the building principal. Please contact your school if you have any questions concerning family vacations.

Tardiness:

A student who is not in the classroom at 9:10 or 12:10 is tardy. It is important for students to get in the habit of coming to school on time. as this promotes the good habit of punctuality. We appreciate your cooperation in having your child be ready for school on time.

Attendance Call-In System:

A call-in system for absent students has been established. If your child is going to be absent from school, you **must** call and leave a message on the attendance answering machine. (If you know in advance that your child will be absent or late, you may send in a note the day before.) The number for the call-in system is:

Westborough Early Childhood Center (508) 836-7754

You may call the school between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 AM. You should leave your name, your child's name, the teacher's name, and a brief reason for the absence. If you opt to email your child's teacher directly, please cc' Corinne Hord (hordc@westboroughk12.org) as well. You may also send in a note in advance if you know that your child will be absent or late. Parents/Guardians can still call school after 8:00 and report their child as absent. We hope to keep these calls to a minimum so as not to tie up phones or front office staff. In the morning, the administrative assistant will compare the names on the absentee list with the names on the answering machine. Calls will be made to parents/guardians of absent students who have not called in.

LUNCH/SNACKS

Lunch is free for students for the 2024-2025 School year (Full Day students only)

Hot lunches are provided for students through the school lunch program. The menu is sent home monthly. Lunch periods are 30 minutes long. If your child is not eating the school provided lunch, you are encouraged to pack simple, nutritious lunches your child can eat in this brief amount of time.

Snacks:

Children have snack each day. All students must bring their own snack from home. Healthy snacks such as fruit, crackers and cheese, and vegetables are encouraged. **(There may be restrictions on snacks if certain serious allergies are present in your child's classroom.)** Note: Snacks and other foods consumed at school are addressed in the "District Wellness Policy" found on the district's website at www.westboroughk12.org under School Committee/District Policies, or click on the link to view [District Wellness Policy](#)

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

School closing for inclement weather:

The Superintendent will make the decision about closing school for inclement weather by 6:00 AM. The policy is to have school unless a safety hazard exists for children. Parent/Guardians should use discretion in sending children to school on stormy days. Listen to the radio or TV for announcements.

Channels 4, 5, and 7

Channel 12 (local cable)

Connect5- This contact system works only if we have **accurate telephone numbers** for your family. WPS Website (www.westboroughk12.org)

If conditions warrant, there may be a one or two hour delay instead of closing schools.

AM preschool **will** meet if there is a one hour delay.

AM Preschool students **will not** have school in the event of a 2 hour delay.

PM and Full Day Preschool students **will** have school if there is a 1 or 2 hour delay.

Connect5 will also be used if there is an emergency school -wide dismissal prior to the end of the school day.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Overview:

School health services are a specialized department contributing to the process of education. The goal of these services is to identify health problems and to facilitate any intervention programs needed to maximize student health. In cases of chronic health problems, the nurse contacts the Parents/Guardians and/or student to assess the student's current health status, especially in regards to current medications, therapies or special school needs.

Injuries:

In the event of injury, the child will be kept at school if at all possible until the Parents/Guardians or other adult designated on the emergency contact list can pick him/her up. In the event of a 911 emergency, an ambulance will be called and the child will be transported to the hospital. (A school

representative will go along with the child.) If a student is recovering from an injury and unable to participate in recess or Phys. Ed. classes, a note from the student's healthcare provider excusing the student from these activities is required.

Illness:

Please do not send acutely ill children to school. If a child becomes ill while in school, the nurse or person acting on her behalf will notify the Parents/Guardians or person listed on the emergency contact list. Students who feel ill are not to directly contact their Parent/Guardian for dismissal without first seeing the nurse or her designee. Sometimes knowing when to keep your child at home is a difficult decision for Parents/Guardians. Little learning takes place for the child when sent to school sick. Illnesses can be spread quickly in a classroom. Keeping your ill child at home is an important way to limit the spread of germs at school. Here are some helpful guidelines when making the decision about sending your child to school:

- Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. (Fever is defined as 100 degree F or higher.)
- Children with a positive strep culture must be treated with prescribed antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Children awaiting results from a throat culture must remain at home until a negative result is known.
- Children that have been vomiting or have had diarrhea must remain home until the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- Children recovering from an illness who are still too ill to participate in typical school activities such as gym or recess must remain home until able to resume all school activities, including outdoor play.

Student Health Information Updates:

Student health information must be updated every year in the online [PowerSchool Parent/Guardian Portal](#). Please be sure that both Parents'/Guardians' work/cell numbers are listed. Also, list two people who would be able to pick up your child in the event of illness or injury if you are not available. Listing their name gives us permission to dismiss your child to their care. In the event of illness or injury, a child can be released only to Parents/Guardians or a responsible adult on the emergency contacts list. If you change jobs or home/cell phone number during the school year, remember to update your new number(s) in the online PowerSchool Parent/Guardian Portal.

Food Allergies:

Food allergy occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks a food protein. Ingestion of the offending food may trigger the sudden release of chemicals, including histamine, resulting in symptoms of an allergic reaction. The symptoms may be mild (rashes, hives, itching, swelling, etc.) or severe (trouble breathing, wheezing, loss of consciousness, etc). A food allergy can be potentially fatal. A major health issue such as this one needs to be taken very seriously. For the safety and well-being of our students, the following general precautions will be observed:

- Parents/Guardians will be notified if any student in their child's class has a serious allergy.
- Thorough and proper hand washing is essential. Parents/Guardians of food allergic students should instruct their child to always wash with soap and water prior to eating. Likewise, Parents/Guardians and teachers of all students should have their children wash hands and face after eating a food product containing the allergen, such as peanuts, tree nuts, milk, etc. as well as, change their clothing if they have spilled food.
- Strict avoidance of the offending food is the only way to prevent a reaction. No sharing or trading of food or eating utensils will be allowed.

** If your food allergic child will be purchasing a school lunch, please consult with the food services director in advance regarding the ingredients.*

- A peanut/tree nut restricted table will be provided in the cafeteria for students with these allergies. If you would like your child to sit at this table, please inform the principal, the school nurse and your child's teacher in writing.
- Common areas of the school that are used by all students, such as the library, the computer lab, the gymnasium and the fine arts room have been designated food and drink-free areas. No food or drinks are allowed in these areas.
- No food or drinks are allowed on the bus. Parent/Guardians are encouraged to notify their child's bus driver on the first day of school, in writing, as to their child's allergy.
- Edible birthday treats are not allowed.
- On occasion, classroom celebrations may include food. The teacher or room Parents/Guardians will contact the Parents/Guardians of food allergic student(s) within the classroom to determine safe choices for the classroom. All food must arrive with an affixed food ingredient label.
- Parents/Guardians of students with food allergies are encouraged to contact the school nurse and classroom teacher prior to the start of school. Further classroom accommodations will be determined on an individual basis according to the student's needs.

Click on the link for the full [WPS Food Allergy Protocol](#)

School Health Services Medication Policy Overview:

The Westborough School Committee approves the following policies governing administration of medications in the schools under its jurisdiction. These apply to all programs operated by Westborough Public Schools and all staff shall comply with these policies.

1. A **written licensed prescriber's order** for the medication, (this applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medicines) and a **signed Parents/Guardians request form** must be brought to the school.
2. The medication must be brought to the school by an adult, **not** the child, and must be picked up by an adult at the end of the school year.
3. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy labeled bottle. The label must include the child's name, the name, dosage and frequency of administration of the medicine, and the licensed prescriber's name. Over the counter medication must be in the purchased container

4. **Any changes to a medication order must come from the licensed prescriber.** This includes changes in dosage, timing, and route of administration or discontinuation of a medication.

If this policy is not followed, the nurse will be unable to administer the medication and the Parent/Guardians will have to come to the school and personally administer the medication.

District Wellness Policy:

You will find the District Wellness Policy and information [here](#).

CURRICULUM SUMMARY

The Westborough School System utilizes an ongoing curriculum review process. Review committees are continuously examining Westborough's curriculum to ensure updating in relation to national standards of excellence and the unique needs of the Westborough community. Our curriculum has been adapted to meet the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

In 2017-2018, the Westborough Early Childhood Center team reviewed a number of early childhood curricula in its effort to identify and select comprehensive, standards-based, and developmentally appropriate curricula in English Language Arts, Math, and Social-Emotional Learning. [Focus on Early Learning](#), developed by Boston Public Schools, [Building Blocks Mathematics](#), and [Second Step](#) were selected and staff training and implementation began in 2018-2019. As of 2024-2025, WECC teachers have completed significant refinements to these three curricula by way of developing modified materials, incorporating concepts of UDL and Anti-Bias revisions, and creating considerations for English Language Learners.

GROUPING/PLACEMENT

The Westborough School System is committed to three values in relation to grouping:

- Respect of diversity
- Importance of self-esteem
- Equal opportunity to learn

In order to promote these values while fostering high student achievement, heterogeneous grouping has been adopted for all subjects in pre- kindergarten through grade six. Staff development has focused on strategies designed to facilitate this commitment. Major emphasis has been placed on a balanced reading approach, individual learning styles, cooperative learning and thematic units.

LITERACY

Guiding the literacy work in the Westborough Public Schools is a deep commitment to the Principles and Standards of the Massachusetts English Language Arts and Literacy Curriculum Frameworks.

We use a comprehensive approach to teaching literacy that stems from current, best practice, and evidence-based research. Strong phonemic awareness and phonics instruction are crucial to supporting early reading development. Students in our K-3 classrooms participate in a systematic study of phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling through our *From Phonics to Reading* program. Additionally, our K-3 classrooms have a workshop structure, in which students are engaged in robust read-alouds, shared and guided reading, small skills-based groups, and explicit teaching of

vocabulary and comprehension skills. In writing, students in K-3 write across multiple genres using shared, interactive, and independent writing. Students have the opportunity to celebrate and share their writing with others throughout the school year.

At the heart of our work is a profound responsibility to build a strong language and literacy foundation leading to passionate, engaged, lifelong readers and writers.

MATH

Westborough is committed to helping all learners know and understand their grade level mathematics skills and concepts as outlined by the Common Core. Our goal is to ensure that students have procedural fluency, conceptual understanding, and can apply their mathematics skills in new and unfamiliar situations. In other words, we are preparing our students to become proficient mathematicians who use higher level thinking skills to problem solve.

Our overarching goal is to provide all students with experiences in the classroom that will help them truly understand the mathematics they are doing as well as enjoy math!

SCIENCE

Science in Westborough aims to build on students' natural curiosity about the world around them. At every grade level, students have opportunities to explore topics in Earth, physical, and life science by engaging in the *practices of science*. These practices include asking questions, designing and conducting investigations, analyzing data, and developing models, explanations, and arguments. This type of instruction is aligned with the new MA Frameworks for Science, Technology, and Engineering, and has been shown to help students develop deeper content knowledge and more accurate understandings of the work of scientists. At WECC, science concepts are integrated within each of the Focus on Early Learning curriculum units. Throughout all that we do, we strive to provide meaningful and enjoyable opportunities for students to be scientists!

To learn more about science education in Westborough, please visit www.westboroughscience.weebly.com

WECC "HOMEWORK" GUIDELINES

The Westborough Public Schools support the belief that meaningful and appropriate homework can be an integral part of a student's educational program. Homework builds independence, responsibility, and develops lifelong organizational and learning skills. Homework should complement, supplement, and reinforce classroom academic and non-academic goals. It should also provide an opportunity for integrating home and school experiences.

At the preschool level, families play a key role in helping students succeed in school. Families are key partners in helping children engage in deeper thinking about the world around them. Instead of traditional "homework" assignments, *Focus on Early Learning* includes Home Links. Home Links are tools to connect families to the curriculum and school activities that children are participating in. Home Links have been designed to replace traditional homework sheets with meaningful, interactive activities.

Parents/Guardians are also encouraged to use everyday occurrences in their lives as homework. Noticing the length of daylight and how it affects playtime outside; taking a trip and discussing

direction, routes, maps; listening to music, etc. are all natural ways to encourage children's learning and development.

Parents/Guardians are urged to use the Home Links resources provided by your child's teacher. Developing good work habits at an early age will pay dividends as children progress through the grades. Building responsibility is a joint effort among Parents/Guardians, teachers, and students. Parents/Guardians are asked to check their child's backpack on a daily basis and to help their child organize it the night before. Helping students develop responsibility and organizational skills will help them immensely in later years.

Vacation Schoolwork:

Extended absences from school for family trips, vacations, etc. are discouraged as this can be very disruptive to your child's education.

According to school policy, we do not provide schoolwork for students who miss school due to family trips or vacations. Instead, we suggest that students keep a daily journal of their experiences and continue reading daily. If there are concerns regarding missed work, please schedule a meeting with your child's teacher upon your return.

HOMework AND HOLIDAYS CALENDAR

In January 2018 the Westborough School Committee accepted the final recommendations of the School Calendar Committee. These recommendations provide a process to allow students from all religious faiths to receive time off from school assignments so that they may celebrate important religious and cultural holidays with their families. This is important because the assignment of homework during religious and cultural holidays prevents students from fully engaging in their families' religious and cultural practices.

The process for making this system work is described here. The list of specific holidays and dates are listed below.

Category 1:

What this means: Absences by staff and students impact the ability to conduct classes on this date or during this time. Designated as "days of low attendance", a day when teacher or student attendance would be so low that it is better to close school.

Instructions: No homework will be assigned in any class for all students on the last day of school before a category 1 holiday. Homework assignments, projects, presentations, or other assignments cannot be due until at least the second class meeting after the holiday, even in the case of a longer school vacation. The same policy applies for the administration of tests.

Category 2:

What this means: School remains in session because these holidays are not considered to be a "day of low attendance". However, they are still celebrated by a significant portion of our school population.

Instructions: No homework will be assigned in any class for all students on the last day of school before the category 2 holiday. Homework assignments, projects, presentations, or other assignments cannot be due until at least the second class meeting after the holiday,

even in the case of a longer school vacation. The same policy applies for the administration of tests.

Category 3:

What this means: School remains in session because these holidays impact a smaller number of our students than in the prior two categories.

Instructions: Students who are unable to complete a homework assignment due to this type of holiday should inform their teacher, who will arrange with the student an alternative time for completion of work, without loss of credit. Parents are also encouraged to contact teachers if a category 3 holiday impacts a student’s ability to complete an assignment.

Athletics and Fine Arts:

Our athletic and fine arts programs are also sensitive to these issues. Regardless of the category, coaches and fine arts instructors are advised of and sensitive to the religious and cultural needs of their students and families. There will be no athletic or fine arts consequence for missing games/performances and/or practices due to religious observances.

<p>Category 1:</p> <p>Rosh Hashanah (Day 1) Yom Kippur Diwali Thanksgiving Christmas Good Friday Easter</p>	<p>10/3/24 10/11/24 11/1/24 11/28/24, 11/29/24 12/25/24 4/18/25 - Early Release Students & Staff 4/20/25</p>
<p>Category 2:</p> <p>Eid al-Adha Eid al-Fitr Lunar New Year</p>	<p>6/6/25 3/31/25 1/29/25 - Early Release for Students</p>
<p>*Category 3:</p> <p>Rosh Hashanah (Day 2) Passover Kwanzaa Good Friday (Eastern Orthodox) Easter (Eastern Orthodox)</p>	<p>10/4/24 4/12/25 - 4/20/25 12/26/24 - 1/1/25 4/18/25 4/21/25</p>

*This is not inclusive of all possible category 3 dates. Students who are unable to complete a homework assignment due to this type of holiday should inform their teacher.

#Some of these dates are not fixed to a calendar but based on the actual sighting of the moon and therefore there may be some variance by a day.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent Conferences are held during the school year for the purpose of sharing information.

Parents/Guardians may request conference appointments at any time if they have a specific concern about their child's progress.

In the event a Parents/Guardians contacts a staff member by phone, note or email, the district standard states the staff member should respond to the Parents/Guardians within 48 hours of receiving the message.

Student Report Cards:

Report cards are released online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal OR sent home as a hard copy to all students on a regular basis to keep Parents/Guardians informed about their child's progress in school. Students receive grades which reflect their progress relative to grade level benchmarks. They also receive grades indicating how well their behavior and effort meet expectations. Preschool students receive a conference in October and March and their first report card in January. A final report card will be sent on the last day of school.

*Note: Special Education Progress Reports coincide with trimester report cards.

WHEN YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD

Over the course of your child's school career, you will probably have times when you are concerned about how things are going in the classroom. You may be worried about your child's academic progress or behavior, how he/she is getting along with the teacher or other students, or how a particular problem is being handled. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage your input and inquiries in order to resolve any issues.

The first step is always to talk directly to your child's teacher. They know your child best, and usually have first-hand knowledge about any problems or incidents that have taken place. Most issues can be resolved at this level through the sharing of accurate information and observations.

Since teachers spend most of their day teaching your child, the best way to reach them is to send a brief email or a short hand-written note with your child in the morning. If you call the school, you may leave a voicemail. Please leave the phone numbers and hours when you can be reached. Please arrange for a meeting with the staff member in advance, rather than just dropping in, as they will not be available to talk with you at that time. The staff member will contact you within 48 hours once they have received your message.

If you still have concerns after meeting with the teacher, ask for suggestions on where to go next. This may include a meeting with the principal and/or guidance staff, a child study meeting with school personnel, or other appropriate suggestions.

Please don't hesitate to call us. Although you often look to friends and neighbors for guidance, we urge you to contact us directly when you have questions about your child's education. The professionals are here to help you and your child have a successful school year.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS VISITOR/VOLUNTEER POLICY

CORI Checks:

M.G.L. c. 71 38R requires all schools in Massachusetts to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The CORI law requires a school or district to notify all persons for whom a CORI is requested that such information is being or may be obtained. Prospective employees and volunteers are required to complete and sign a CORI Request Form which is available through the school secretary at each of the schools, as well as the administration office at Forbes building. The Request Form is used to document that we have provided you with notice that a CORI is being conducted and to verify your identity through a government issued form of photographic identification (usually a driver's license).

All Parents/Guardians, visitors and volunteers must come in the front door and come to the office. They must sign in and get a volunteer or visitor's badge before going to other parts of the building. This policy is for the safety of all our students and staff.

If you wish to speak to a teacher, please send in a note, email or call the office to leave a voice message. We ask that Parents/Guardians not show up at a teacher's door unannounced to talk to him/her. If you must speak with a teacher on an emergency basis, please contact the office and we will be happy to assist you. Classroom instruction may not be interrupted.

MANDATED REPORTING

All Westborough school personnel are mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 119, Section 51a-51f, to report child abuse/neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 is suffering from neglect and/or serious physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, the incident of abuse/neglect will be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services within 24 hours of the incident. A written report will be submitted to the Department of Children and Family Services within 48 hours of the incident. School personnel will also consult with the principal regarding the School District's specific policies on abuse/neglect and mandatory reporting procedures. In most cases, the school will notify Parents/Guardians that a report has been filed unless there are extenuating circumstances.

RESTRAINING ORDERS/CUSTODY ISSUES

District policy states in the event that a restraining order is obtained against a particular family member or individual, we ask that you notify school and provide us with a copy of the order immediately. This gives us legal backing in order to protect your child. Without such paperwork we cannot be held accountable. These documents will be kept confidential.

LOST AND FOUND

Teachers spend a great deal of time trying to locate owners of lost clothing and other items each year. We realize that you spend a great deal of money and effort to provide clothes for your children that are warm and clean. We wish to assist in your effort to keep them.

DO...

Mark clothes and other school items with your child's name, especially lunch boxes, sweatshirts, and jackets.

Check with teachers if the item doesn't show up after your child has looked for it.

Encourage your child to check the Lost and Found box located in the cafeteria. Any items left in the Lost and Found will be donated to charity at the close of the school year.

DON'T...

Send children in with items that can't be replaced.

Allow things to stay in school.

Give up looking for things after one try.

Students are discouraged from bringing in toys, hand-held electronic devices, including cell phones, collector's cards and other items that may detract from the learning environment. This rule is to keep the children's minds on their schoolwork and to prevent the loss of valuable items. If such an item is brought in, it is the responsibility of the student in case of loss or damage. School personnel will not investigate the loss.

Of course, there are many times during the year when students are encouraged to bring in items from home for special projects, study units or show-and-tell.

GIFTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

A public employee may not accept any gift worth \$50 or more that is given by an individual because of the position he or she holds. The state Ethics Commission recently created an exemption to permit class gifts to teachers. A teacher may accept a gift or several gifts during the school year, from public school students and/or their Parent/Guardian and guardians, with an aggregated value of up to \$150, if the gift is identified only as being from the class and the identity of the givers and the individual amounts given are not identified to the recipient.

Gifts may be given to a public school, or a particular classroom, and the \$50 limit does not apply. Example: A Parent-Teacher Organization wants to give \$75 gift cards to teachers to buy classroom supplies. The teachers may accept the gift cards but must use them to buy classroom supplies, and should keep receipts to show that they did so. Supplies bought with the gift cards are the property of the school, not the teachers.

Any questions, please feel free to contact the superintendent's office or your building administrator.

[Link to Parent Group / Fundraising Policy](#)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Youth Family and Community Partnership (YFCP), part of the YMCA

Free YFCP programs are listed in the YFCP Newsletter and families register online at www.theyfcp.org or can call YFCP at 508-865-5920. To receive YFCP emails about these programs, there is a tab "Join YFCP" where you may share your email, address and children's name & ages to receive emails about registration, parent workshops and more. There is another tab on the website, "Community Calendar" where all of YFCP library programs are listed with registration information since families register through the libraries. A YMCA membership is not required.

Westborough Recreation Department:

The WRD Offers several activities year-round for a nominal fee. Contact them at the Town Hall at (508) 366-3066.

Westborough Library:

Provides year-round programs for children. Visit the Children's Room on the lower level of the library, or call (508) 366-3053.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

WPS believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct. Conduct that is prohibited and the district's suspension and expulsion procedures are set forth in our [Student Discipline Procedures](#) document.

Civil Rights, Title IX, and Harassment

The Westborough Public Schools has a protocol for addressing hate speech with all families to ensure that every child, parent and faculty member feel seen, valued, and importantly comfortable and safe in all of our schools. The acronym for our approach is ARISE:

- Awareness
- Reporting
- Investigating
- Selecting Pathway(s) (discipline/restorative repair/closure)
- Educating (collaborative problem-solving)

It is important to note that the Westborough Public Schools does not discriminate against any student, parent or employee on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. All reports of harassment or discrimination will be taken seriously and investigated in a timely fashion. Reports will be held in the utmost confidence. Any individual who believes he/she has been the subject of harassment or discrimination or a hostile environment should immediately report the incident, either verbally or in writing to a building administrator, adjustment counselor, guidance counselor, or teacher. The principal must be notified in all cases of harassment or discrimination.

In cases of alleged discrimination or harassment the district is committed to conducting a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation. An administrator from the appropriate level will complete an investigation promptly and make a decision regarding the allegations. The investigation will include interviewing the individual filing the complaint, as well as any witnesses and individuals with relevant information. To the extent practicable under the circumstances, the investigation will be kept confidential. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Westborough Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where appropriate, impose disciplinary action, restorative repair, and/or education.

If the conduct violates the law the incident will be reported to the appropriate authorities by the school administration. Retaliation or threats of retaliation are unlawful and will not be tolerated. In all cases of harassment or discrimination, the investigating administrator will make a final disposition and issue a written report, which will be maintained in the school's files. If the complainant cannot utilize the procedure detailed above because the alleged harasser is involved in the procedure, the complainant should contact the Superintendent of Schools. Complaints about the Superintendent of Schools should be made to the Chairperson of the School Committee.

The Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Daniel Mayer, is the District's Coordinator for Civil Rights, Title IX, and 504. He can be reached at (508) 836-7700.

WPS DISTRICT POLICIES

SECTION A: FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS

- Nondiscrimination
- Wellness Policy
- District Goals and Objectives
- C.O.R.I Information

SECTION B: BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

- School Councils
- School Improvement Plans

SECTION C: GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

- Policy Implementation
- Administrative Councils
- Handbooks

SECTION D: FISCAL MANAGEMENT

- Annual Budget and Fiscal Management Goals

SECTION E: SUPPORT SERVICES

- Safety and Emergency Plans
- Meal Charge Policy
- Transportation

SECTION F: FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

SECTION G: PERSONNEL

SECTION H: NEGOTIATIONS

SECTION I: INSTRUCTION

- Curriculum
- Student Conduct
- Special Education Programs
- English Language Learners
- Home Schooling
- Student Technology Responsible Use Policy
- Field Trip Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Promotion and Retention of Students

SECTION J: STUDENTS

- Enrollment and Admissions
- Student Discipline
- Student Conduct
- Student Absences
- Anti-Bullying Policy and [Bullying Prevention Plan](#)
- Bullying Investigation
- Searches and interrogations
- Student Grievances
- Fundraising Guidelines
- Physical Restraint of Students
- Student Health Services and Requirements
- Student Fees, Fines and Charges
- Student Records
- Care of School Property by Students
- Student Rights and Responsibilities

SECTION K: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- School Community Relations
- Community Use of Facilities

SECTION L: EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS