

# Waterloo Middle School Student Handbook 2024-2025

65 Center Street  
Waterloo, NY 13165  
315-539-1540  
[www.waterloocsd.org](http://www.waterloocsd.org)



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*All Students. All Staff. One Family.*

Welcome to Waterloo Middle School! If your child currently attends WMS, we're glad you are part of our school community. If you are considering enrolling your child with us, we hope you do. We are proud to have a dedicated and caring staff who support the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students through a time in their lives that is full of change. Middle school is a transition period between elementary school and high school, and at WMS we provide the support and encouragement students need to successfully navigate these years of growth and learning.

At WMS, we provide quality instruction in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, and we offer a choice of Spanish or French. Our students take courses in Health, Music, Technology, Art, and Family and Consumer Science. Students also receive Physical Education every other day and can elect to take Band, Chorus, and Art Enrichment. Students at WMS are involved in extracurricular activities such as sports, music ensembles, and clubs including Yearbook, Newsletter, Drama Club, Respect Team, Art Club and Chess Club.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide families and community members with basic information about our school. If you have a question about anything in this Handbook or about a topic not covered in this Handbook, please feel free to contact us at (315) 539-1540.

### **Protection From Discrimination and Harassment**

The Waterloo Central School District affirms that no person shall be subjected to discrimination, denied benefits, or excluded from participation in employment or in any educational program or activity on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, ethnicity, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, disability, or on any other basis in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX, Title IV, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other federal or state laws.

The Waterloo Central School District encourages students, parents, staff, and community members to report any harassing, bullying, abusive, or unsafe behavior as soon as possible to a school district official, or when appropriate, to law enforcement.

Our Superintendent serves as the Compliance Officer/Coordinator and is authorized to coordinate and carry out the responsibilities of the district under this policy and to coordinate compliance with the regulations and to process any complaint and/or grievance that may be filed in accordance with the grievance procedure heretofore adopted by the District's Board of Education. Our Superintendent can be reached at 315-539-1501 or via mail at the District Office: 109 Washington Street, Waterloo, NY 13165.

The Waterloo Central School District also prohibits all harassing conduct based on gender, race, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by state or federal law. The Waterloo Central School District considers harassing conduct to be an abuse contrary to the high moral ethical standards of an educational institution.

Harassing conduct generally consists of subjecting an individual, on the basis of his/her membership in a protected class, to conduct and/or communications that are sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent as to have the purpose or effect of: creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or a student's educational performance, opportunities, benefits, or well-being; or otherwise adversely affecting an individual's employment or educational opportunities.

Harassing conduct can include unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct which offends, denigrates, or belittles an individual because of his/her membership in a protected class. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, derogatory remarks, jokes, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, name-calling, graffiti, innuendo, gestures, physical contact, stalking, threatening, bullying, extorting, or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures.

The Waterloo Central School District will not tolerate the use of a position of authority to obtain sexual favors in supervisor/employee or faculty/student relationships. Neither will it condone expressions or actions by any person affiliated with the School District that in any manner constitute sexually harassing conduct, including student-to-student harassment. Attempts to suppress the report of such actions or to retaliate for the presentation of a report will be considered in the same light as the offending behavior.

Inquiries concerning the application of this policy may also be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10005, Telephone: 646-428-3900.

For further information on non-discrimination, visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/nondisc.html> or call 1-800-421-3481.

For additional district policies please visit our website at [www.waterloocsd.org](http://www.waterloocsd.org).

### ***Daily Schedule***

Students may enter the school building starting at 7:10 AM and are encouraged to arrive between 7:10 and 7:25. Students should not arrive before 7:10 AM, unless it is absolutely necessary as **there is no regular supervision before 7:10 AM**. Please contact the school if you have any questions.

7:30 AM – First period begins. Students should arrive no later than 7:25 to ensure that they get to their first period class on time.

2:17 PM – Daily dismissal time. (Friday dismissal is at 1:17 PM.)

2:17 PM – 2:55 PM – Teachers are available for students to get extra help. (Monday-Thursday)

### ***Drop-off/Pick-up***

Parent drop-off before school in the morning and pick-up after dismissal is in the loop in front of the High School main entrance. If your child is late to school (after 7:30 AM), please drop them off at the Middle School main entrance. Also, if you are picking your child up early for an appointment, park at the Middle School and come to the office window at the Middle School main entrance to sign your child out.

### ***Pick Up During the School Day (Appointment, etc.)***

If it is necessary for a student to leave school during the normal school day for health-related appointments, he/she must have written, or at least verbal, permission of parent/guardian. Written excuses for release from school should be given to the main office secretary first thing in the morning. Before a student leaves school property, he/she must be signed out at the main office by the parent/guardian.

To ensure the safety of each of our students, the school maintains a list of individuals authorized to pick up that student from school. *No student may be released to anyone who is not their parent or guardian unless that person's name is on the authorized list.* At the beginning of each school year, a contact update form will be mailed home to allow parents or guardians to update the list of individuals authorized to pick their child up from school. A parent or guardian may amend the list at any time in writing. Certified copies of any court orders or divorce decrees provided by the custodial parent, which restricts a parent's ability to seek the release of his/her child, shall be maintained in the guidance office. If anyone seeks release of a student, he/she must report to the school office and present satisfactory identification if requested. If the person seeking the release of a child exhibits to the school official an out-of-state custody order, the Superintendent must be contacted.

## ***Attendance***

Regular and consistent attendance in school is essential for our students to learn and be successful in school and beyond. Please refer to the detailed attendance policy at the end of this handbook.

## ***Walkers***

Students who walk/bike home from school must remain at school until the buses leave. This is for safety reasons and to allow the buses to depart in a timely manner.

## ***Typical Classes by Grade Level***

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Music (10 weeks) / Health (10 weeks) / Technology (20 weeks), Physical Education (every other day), Band and/or Chorus (optional)

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Spanish or French, Physical Education (every other day), Music 7/8 (20 weeks in either 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade), Band and/or Chorus (optional)

7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Art (20 weeks) / Health (20 weeks)

8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Technology (20 weeks) / Family and Consumer Science (20 weeks)

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Electives:

Studio Art (HS class – 1 credit toward graduation) - teacher recommendation required

Design/Drawing for Production (HS class – 1 credit toward graduation) - teacher recommendation required

Art Enrichment (every other day – no credit toward graduation)

## ***Honor Roll***

Waterloo Middle School recognizes students for excellence in academic performance through the Honor Roll system. Four times each year, after report cards are issued, an Honor Roll and High Honor Roll list will be released, based upon grades received during the quarter. High Honor Roll students are those with an average of 89.5 or above. Honor Roll students are those with an average of 84.5 to 89.4.

### *Activities and Clubs*

Students are encouraged to start their own clubs at school around a topic of interest that is appropriate for school. A student must obtain an administrator's approval to start their own club. Forms for this purpose are available in the main office. Established clubs and activities include the following:

- Student Council
- Yearbook
- Educational Enrichment Club
- Jazz Band
- Drama Club
- Chess Club
- School Newsletter

### *Cell Phones*

For students who have a cell phone, it is expected that they keep their phone "off and away throughout the day". It is recommended that they keep their phone in their locker or in their backpack so there is no disruption to the classroom learning environment. We understand that occasionally there might be an urgent need for a student to contact a parent for some legitimate reason. In this case, the student will just need to get permission from their teacher or another supervising adult.

Please note that if a student is not feeling well, they are expected to go to the Health Office to be assessed by the school nurse, who will contact home if needed. Students are not to text their parent to come pick them up.

Finally, to help maintain an orderly learning environment, please do not text your child during the school day. If you need to get a message to your child, please call the main office at (315) 539-1540. If needed, we can have your child call you back. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Students are not allowed to record (audio or video) on school property without consent.

### ***Consent for use of Photographs/Videos***

Throughout the school year, photographs or videotapes may be taken of students for use in school and district publications, web pages, social media and local newspapers. If you do **NOT** wish for your child's image to be used, please indicate this in writing to your child's principal.

### ***Homework***

Homework is often necessary to enhance learning. Homework generally consists of one or more of the following: review, reinforcement, writing, reading, study and/or preparation. Homework will count for no more than 10% of a student's overall average and does not include long-term assignments such as research papers, spirals, or project-based assignments.

Parents can assist their children with outside assignments in the following ways:

1. Provide a study area free of distractions and with good lighting.
2. Ask your child about what they are learning.
3. Help when needed, but let your child do his or her own work.
4. Avoid undue pressure.
5. Establish routines, including a consistent time for homework.

Students who do not have their assignments done the day they are due may be required to stay after with their teacher to complete the assignment. Our goal is to help students become organized and succeed.

### ***Make-Up Opportunities***

Students who are absent will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up any assignments they might have missed during their absence. Classroom teachers will determine which assignments need to be made up. It is the student's responsibility to request the assignments from their teachers during or following an absence from class. The student should request assignments early enough to allow enough time for completion before the end of the marking period.

### ***Passing Time***

Students are expected to use the time between each period to get to their next class on time. If they are with their previous teacher for extra time after the end of class, they should get a pass from that teacher to present to the teacher in their next class.

### ***Beverages at school outside of the scheduled lunch***

Except for lunchtime in the cafeteria, students may only drink water during the school day. We ask that students use only non-glass water bottles.

### ***Visitors to the School***

The middle school's main entrance consists of two sets of doors which are always locked. In between the exterior doors and interior doors is a foyer area with a window to the main office. Visitors must first use an outside intercom, which is equipped with a video camera. Main office staff will greet each visitor through intercom and will ask them what the purpose of their visit is. Once they are let into the foyer area, all visitors must present a driver's license or other state issued ID which will be used to create a visitor's pass via the Raptor System. Parents may visit teachers and other support personnel by appointment to discuss any problems or concerns the parent may have regarding their child.

### ***Safety Drills***

Safety drills are held periodically throughout the year, in accordance with New York State regulations. During these drills students should always follow teacher directions and demonstrate our four pride traits of being respectful, responsible, engaged, and safe. Completing these drills regularly prepares staff and students for the unlikely event of an emergency situation. Safety drills include fire evacuation drills and lockdown drills. New York State requires all public schools to conduct eight fire evacuation drills and four lockdown drills per school year.

### ***Assemblies***



Student assemblies are seen as part of the overall educational process. Assemblies will be appropriate to the educational experience and reflect our school's educational mission. Students are reminded of proper conduct at assemblies to ensure responsible audience participation.

- Take an assigned seat quietly.
- Pay attention to the speaker/performer.
- Sit up straight with both feet on the floor.
- Applaud only when appropriate.
- Do not speak unless requested to by a presenter or school official.

### ***Library and Media Center***

The Library and Media Center offers a welcoming environment supporting inquiry, research, learning, and literary appreciation. Students with passes or visiting with a class, may use the library for research, focused browsing, or quiet reading. Use of the library is a privilege, not a right. Only users who are making use of the Center in these ways will be admitted. The Library Media Specialist, working in conjunction with the classroom teachers, may schedule activities, research topics, and times for students to use the library.

### ***School Health Services***

School health personnel (RN/LPNS) are available to monitor the health of students, who present to the health office, during school hours. Should a student become ill or injured, first-aid will be given and a determination will be made as to whether the student may remain in school. If a student needs to be released, health personnel will notify the parent. The student is not allowed to call their parent without going through the Health office or Main office first. If the school is unable to notify the parent/guardian, then the individual(s) listed by the parent as an "emergency contact" will be called/contacted. In an actual emergency, an ambulance will be summoned and the parent will also be notified.

School insurance papers will be completed for any school-related injury which requires medical treatment and sent to the parent. All medical injuries should go through the family's primary insurance first. The school's insurance is to be used as a secondary insurance.

Following an illness or injury, written clearance from the student's physician may be required for the student to safely return to school, Physical Education class, or sports.

If your child will be absent from school for any reason, please notify the school that day by calling 539-1540.

Physicals are required by state law for all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, students new to Waterloo Middle School, as well as students participating in sports or requesting working papers. The student's primary doctor will complete these mandated physicals. If a student is not able to get a physical from a primary doctor, the school doctor will do the exam during school hours. If any health concerns are discovered during the physical exam, a written referral would be sent to the parent/guardian.

Female students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade will have a scoliosis screening completed by school health personnel unless already documented during a physical exam completed by the student's private physician.

Students new to Waterloo Central School District and students in grade 7 will receive screenings of vision and hearing. Any concerns that are discovered will be sent to the parent by a written referral.

Any medications that need to be administered to a student during school hours (7:30 am – 2:00 pm), including over-the-counter medications, cough drops, etc., will require the following:

- A written request from the physician prescribing the medication.
- Written authorization form from the parent/guardian for the school nurse to administer the medication.
- Medication delivered to the health office by the parent in the original container.

Medication administration forms are available from the health office or may be found on the school district's website ([www.waterloocsd.org](http://www.waterloocsd.org))

Questions regarding school health services may be directed to the school nurse by calling 539-1545.

### ***Guidance Department***

The school counselor's role is to help students achieve their fullest growth academically, emotionally, and socially. School counselors meet with students individually and in group settings. They also facilitate parent-teacher conferences. Working papers may be obtained from the guidance secretary.

## ***Cafeteria***

Students are expected to behave appropriately in the cafeteria. All school rules apply, in addition to the following breakfast and lunch period rules:

- Form straight lines in either line of the cafeteria.
- Get food, utensils, etc., in one trip.
- Do not throw food, utensils, or anything else.
- Throw away trash in the cans provided.
- No “roughhousing”, yelling, or other inappropriate behavior.
- Do not take food or drink from the cafeteria.
- Leave your table and surrounding area clean after your lunch.
- Notify a lunch monitor if needed for help with a spill or mess.
- Follow all directions of any teacher/monitor.
- Students are not allowed leave the designated area without permission from a staff member.

## ***Lost and Found***

Articles found in the school building or on other school property should be turned in at the main office. *The school is not responsible for personal property. Any personal article or clothing brought to school should be labeled with the owner’s name.*

## ***Academic Eligibility***

Waterloo Middle School and Waterloo High School students are considered ineligible for athletics and extracurricular activities if they are failing TWO or more classes at the interim period or at the end of the marking period.

**When a student is ineligible, they may:**

- ✓ Practice, but not participate in interscholastic athletic contests.
- ✓ Practice, but not participate in any performing art performances unless a grade is attached.
- ✓ Attend school dances and extracurricular activities (athletic contests/concerts/play/musical/art show) as a spectator.

**Other considerations for students deemed ineligible:**

- ✓ Grades considered failures are below 65%.
- ✓ Incompletes may result in ineligibility unless otherwise determined by administration.
- ✓ Students may not participate in after school clubs/activities until passing.
- ✓ Students that are ineligible should create an after-school schedule with their respective school counselor at WMS to obtain extra help with classes they are failing.
- ✓ Appeals not granted.

**If failing two or more classes at the interim report (issued after the 5th, 15th, 25th, 35th week mark), the student will be ineligible:**

- ✓ Students can request that their eligibility be restored once they show that their average is not lower than a 65% in more than one class. They must submit an updated grade sheet to include with their *Eligibility Academic Progress* sheet.

**If failing two or more classes at the end of the marking period (issued after 10th, 20th, and 30<sup>th</sup> week mark), the student will be ineligible:**

- ✓ They are ineligible for a **minimum of ten school days**. After ten school days, the student can request that their eligibility be restored once they show that their average is not lower than a 65% in more than one class. They must submit an updated grade sheet to include with their *Eligibility Academic Progress* sheet.

Once a student is ineligible, they must have an *Eligibility Academic Progress* sheet signed by all of their teachers if they wish to have eligibility restored. *Eligibility Academic Progress* sheets will be available in the

Waterloo Middle School Main Office/Counseling Office, Waterloo High School Main Office/Counseling Office, and the Athletic Office. In order to regain eligibility, a student's average must not be lower than a 65% in more than one class. The *Eligibility Academic Progress* sheet must be signed by a school administrator who will then reinstate eligibility and notify the necessary faculty/staff/coach/advisor(s).

### ***Inter-Scholastic Sports***

#### **Fall**

- Modified Girls Soccer 7-8...Modified A Boys Soccer 7-9
- Modified Girls Cross Country Girls 7-8...Modified Boys Cross Country Boys 7-8
- Modified Volleyball 7-8
- Modified Football 7-8
- Modified Girls Tennis

#### **Winter**

- Modified Boys Basketball 7-8...Modified Girls Basketball 7-8
- Modified Boys Indoor Track & Field 7-8...Modified Girls Indoor Track & Field 7-8
- Modified Wrestling 7-8

#### **Spring**

- Modified Softball 7-8
- Modified Baseball 7-8
- Modified Girls Lacrosse 7-8...Modified A Boys Lacrosse 7-9
- Modified Girls Track & Field 7-8...Modified Boys Track & Field 7-8

### ***Physical Education***

Students are expected to have shorts, t-shirts, socks and sneakers for physical education classes. Sometimes sweatshirts and sweatpants are needed for outdoor activities in cold weather. These clothes should be separate from the clothes that a student wears to school on the days of physical education classes. It is a good idea to label all clothing, etc. with the owner's name. The physical education teacher will assign every student a locker and a lock. All students are expected to attend and participate in physical education classes unless medically excused. Students who are ill or injured are to bring a note signed by a physician excusing them from physical education classes. This excuse is kept on file in the health office. A one-day excuse from a parent will be accepted for emergency situations. Students who miss a physical education class due to injury or illness are required to make up the missed class at the convenience of the teacher. If you a student misses PE, they may only practice or participate in a contest if they were legally excused.

### ***Hallway and Physical Education Locks and Lockers***

School personnel assign students hallway and physical education locks and lockers. The lockers must be kept locked at all times in order to safeguard school books and personal property. The only people who have access to the locker combination are the administrators, school personnel, and the student to whom the lock is issued. It is the student's responsibility to keep the combinations confidential. Do not give locker combinations to friends and neighbors. Students are expected to keep their lockers clean. Any locker or lock malfunction should be reported to the administration or custodial staff. Students are cautioned not to keep large amounts of money or other valuables in lockers. Replacement cost for lost gym locks is \$5.00.

The expectation is that students treat lockers and locks with respect as they are both school property. There is not to be anything written inside or outside on the lockers or attached to the outside of the locker, except the following: temporary holiday/birthday/or school function related well wishes/celebrations. These should not remain on the lockers for more than one week.

### ***Computer/Internet Use***

Students are expected to abide by these rules or may not be able to use computers at Waterloo Central School District. Violation of the policy may cause a student to lose access to computers and/or face disciplinary or legal action at Waterloo Central School District.

### ***Rules for Acceptable Computer Use***

1. All files and programs on the computer belong to someone. You may not erase, rename, copy or make unusable anyone else's files or programs.
2. You may not authorize anyone else to use your name or files for any reason. You are responsible for all uses of your accounts.
3. You may not use computers or accounts for unlawful purposes, such as the illegal copying or installation of software, or for any reasons other than legitimate learning purposes.
4. You may not attempt to discover another user's password, either locally or at a remote location. You must protect your own password.
5. You may not copy, change, or transfer any software on Waterloo Central School District computers. The use of illegally copied software is considered a criminal offense and is subject to criminal prosecution.
6. You may not intentionally write, produce, generate copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called a virus, bug, worm, Trojan Horse, or some similar name.
7. You may not deliberately use the computer to annoy others, nor may you send or make accessible any obscene, abusive, or threatening messages.
8. You may not intentionally damage the system, intentionally damage information not belonging to you, intentionally misuse system resources, or allow others to misuse system resources.
9. You may not vandalize terminals, microcomputers, printers or other associated equipment.
10. Waterloo Central School District has the right to review and edit any materials in your files.
11. Waterloo Central School District cannot be held liable for any lost, damaged, or unavailable information due to technical or other difficulties.

### ***Responsibility of Internet Users***

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may be able to discover controversial information. This is not endorsed by Waterloo Central School District.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users (our students and adults) that must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources. If a Waterloo Central School District user violates any of these provisions, his or her account will be terminated, and future access could possibly be denied.

**Our goal in providing this service to teachers and adults is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.**

### **Internet Terms and Conditions**

**Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges and/or result in disciplinary or legal action. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. The system administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of Waterloo Central School District may request the system administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

**Damages:** Waterloo Central School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it provides. Waterloo Central School District will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, miss-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. Waterloo Central School District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

### **Acceptable Use:**

1. Use of accounts must support educational objectives of the Waterloo Central School District.



2. Use of another organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules of that network.
3. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret.
4. Use for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.
5. Note that all computer use (including electronic mail (e-mail) and LAN accounts) is not guaranteed to be private. Anything relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
6. All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property and subject to copyright.

**Network Etiquette:**

1. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear; use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
3. Do not reveal your personal address, phone number, password, or parents' addresses, work places, or phone numbers.
4. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.

**Vandalism:** Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and possibly disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, or the Internet. This includes but is not limited to the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

**Security:** If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to others. Do not use another individual's account. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

## ***Student Transportation Rules***

Bus transportation is a privilege. All students must behave appropriately as passengers on a school bus. Clearly understood and well-enforced rules are necessary for the successful management of students who ride school buses.

- Follow directions of the driver the first time that they are given.
- Always remain seated, keeping feet and objects out of the aisle, and hands away from others.
- Abusive or obscene language or loud noises are not permitted.
- No eating, drinking or littering while on the bus.
- No pets or other animals are permitted on the bus.

**Severe misbehavior** such as fighting, smoking, vandalism, or the use of alcohol/drugs jeopardizes the safety of passengers or driver. Action taken in such cases will be as follows.

- Driver will call dispatcher for removal of student(s) if necessary.
- Driver will submit written referral to appropriate administrator for disciplinary action.

## ***Section 504***

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving Federal money. This statute obligates public schools to provide equal access and opportunity to qualify individuals with disabilities. For a student to be eligible for a 504 plan, the student must meet all three of the listed criteria. It must be because of a disability that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from school programs; a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If you believe that your child may be eligible for Section 504 support, please contact the guidance counselor in your child's school building.

## ***Bullying/Cyberbullying***

Waterloo Middle School is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment, free of discrimination and harassment in accordance with **The Dignity for All Students Act**. The Dignity for All

Students Act protect students from all forms of harassment, particularly based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. Please direct questions and concerns involving the above to the Dignity Act Coordinator. The Dignity Act Coordinator at Waterloo Middle School is Ms. Sage Burkhart in the Guidance Office.

Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited on school property, in school buildings, on school buses, and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus. Bullying among children is defined, in general, as: "a variety of negative acts carried out repeatedly over time. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, with a more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful." Bullying can take three forms:

1. Physical (including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, taking personal belongings);
2. Verbal (including, but not limited to, taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, making threats); and
3. Psychological (including, but not limited to, spreading rumors; manipulating social relationships; or engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation).

**Cyberbullying** is an attempt to display power and control over someone perceived as weaker. Cyberbullying involving District students may occur both on campus and off school grounds and may involve student use of the District Internet system or student use of personal digital devices while at school, such as cell phones, digital cameras, and personal computers to engage in bullying.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs and Facebook etc.).

*Any student who believes that he/she is being subjected to bullying/cyberbullying behavior, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of bullying/cyberbullying, shall report the behavior to any staff member, SRO, Principal or Assistant Principal. The Principal and SRO shall investigate the complaint and take appropriate disciplinary action. Allegations of bullying/cyberbullying shall*

*be promptly investigated and will be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints.*

### ***Sexual Harassment of Students***

The district is committed to safeguarding the right of all students within the school district to learn in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Conduct is deemed to be sexual harassment when the student perceives such behavior as unwelcome, such as inappropriate touching, verbal comments, sexual name calling, spreading sexual rumors, gestures, jokes, pictures, blocking a student's movement, rape or attempted rape.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. A student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, whether by a teacher, other student, or any individual on school grounds or at school activities, should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Principal or the School Counselor. The student can pursue his/her complaint informally or file a formal complaint.

In the absence of a victim's complaint, the school, upon learning of or having reason to suspect the occurrence of any sexual harassment, will promptly begin an investigation.

### ***Racial Harassment of Students***

Racial harassment of students consists of different treatment based on race (also color and national origin) in a manner so severe, pervasive or persistent that it interferes with or limits the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the district's programs, services or privileges. Examples of the type of incidents that might constitute racial harassment include

- unwanted verbal comments, racial name calling, racial or ethnic slurs, slogans, and graffiti.
- treating students of one race more severely than students of another race.
- intimidating actions such as cross burning or painting swastikas.
- repeatedly treating minority students in a racially derogatory manner.

The Board of Education prohibits discrimination based on race, color and national origin. Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to racial harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Principal or School Counselor.

In the absence of a victim's complaint, the school, upon learning of or having reason to suspect the occurrence of racial harassment, will promptly begin an investigation and take action as deemed appropriate upon learning the results of the investigation.

### **Regulations for Maintenance of Order on School Property**

Students will not

- endanger the health and safety of another person.
- obstruct or disrupt teaching, administration, or other activities held on school property.
- Possess, consume, or distribute energy drinks, etc.
- use, possess, or distribute alcohol, and/or other drugs.
- possess firearms, fireworks, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or any other weapons.
- use lockers for storage of any dangerous or illegal materials.
- refuse to identify themselves when requested to do so by school staff.
- fail to comply with direction of school personnel acting in the performance of their duties.
- damage school property.
- enter or use school facilities without authorization.
- smoke or possess tobacco products or other nicotine delivery systems (vapes, JUULs, etc.) (including the liquid) on school property.
- use electronic devices (e.g., iPods, MP3 players, cell phones, etc.) within school buildings.
- obstruct the free flow of traffic, either pedestrian or vehicular.

All confiscated weapons, alcohol, illegal substances, and paraphernalia will be given to law enforcement for disposal.

### **Waterloo Middle School 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 are responsible for acceptable student dress and appearance. They have the right to determine how the student dresses, provided that his or her attire is not destructive to Waterloo Central School District property, complies with requirements for health and safety, does not interfere with or distract from the educational process, or infringe upon the rights of others. Teachers and all other Waterloo Central School District staff should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and by example help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

#### **A student's dress, grooming and appearance will:**

- 1) Be safe and appropriate so not to disrupt or interfere with the educational program.
- 2) Recognize that extremely brief garments or garments that are excessively revealing are not appropriate.
- 3) Ensure that undergarments are completely covered with outer clothing and are not visible through clothing.
- 4) Include appropriate footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard is not permitted.
- 5) Not include the wearing of headwear that is a disruption to the educational process or risks the safety of self or others.
- 6) Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of actual or perceived race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other legally protected category.
- 7) Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities. Not display any signs of gang affiliation that may increase the level of conflict or violent behavior in schools, or under circumstances in which school administration may reasonably forecast that violence or substantial disruption of school activities will occur.

Each building principal or designee is responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year as well as any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

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

At any point in the disciplinary procedure, the teacher, parent/guardian, or administrator may refer the student to in-school counseling. Restitution may be used as part of a range of actions at any time, if deemed appropriate.

### **PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT**

All students will conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner in accordance with the Waterloo Central School District Code of Conduct. This includes proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, personnel, other members of the school community, and facilities and equipment.

Discipline should be self-imposed; students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. Waterloo Central School District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to emphasize the student's ability to develop self-discipline.

Students who do not accept responsibility for their own behavior or who violate these rules may be disciplined up to and including suspension from school or removal from a program, when they engage in conduct that is disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, violent, endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others, engage in misconduct on the school bus, or engage in academic misconduct including work/internship sites. Students may be disciplined when they:

#### Engage in Conduct That is Disorderly

Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Engaging in any act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community, running in hallways, making unreasonable noise, and using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive, intimidating, or that incite others.
- 2) Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- 3) Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any area of the school buildings, other than the areas they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.

- 4) Misusing computer/electronic communications devices, including any unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; evading the Waterloo Central School District's content filter; using an outside wireless network; or any other violation of the Waterloo Central School District Acceptable Use Policy.
- 5) Unauthorized or inappropriate use of personal electronic devices/equipment (i.e., cell phones, MP3 devices, cameras, and other personal electronic devices considered inappropriate by the administration).
- 6) Unauthorized use of personal computer, laptop, tablet or e-reader, or other computerized information resources through the Waterloo Central School District computer system is prohibited.

#### Engage in Conduct That is Insubordinate

Examples of insubordinate conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other Waterloo Central School District employees, or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- 2) Missing or leaving school or class without permission.

#### Engage in Conduct That is Disruptive

Examples of disruptive conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, Waterloo Central School District administrators or other Waterloo Central School District employees, or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- 2) Endangering the health and safety of other students or staff or interfering with classes or Waterloo Central School District activities by means of inappropriate appearance or behavior as per the Waterloo Central School District Code of Conduct.
- 3) Distributing - by any means - or wearing materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, inflammatory, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others or are disruptive to the school community.



## Engage in Conduct That is Violent

Examples of violent conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Committing, threatening or attempting an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, or scratching) upon another student; a teacher, administrator, or other Waterloo Central School District employee; or any other person lawfully on school property.
- 2) Engaging in harassing conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical well-being.
- 3) Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on Waterloo Central School District property or at a Waterloo Central School District function.
- 4) Displaying what appears to be a weapon, threatening to use any weapon(s), or using weapon(s).
- 5) Intentionally damaging or destroying Waterloo Central School District property, the personal property of a student, teacher, volunteer, contractor, vendor, administrator, other Waterloo Central School District employee or any person lawfully on Waterloo Central School District property or at a Waterloo Central School District function, including but not limited to graffiti or arson.
- 6) Communication by any means, including oral, written or electronic (such as through the internet, email, blog posts or texting) off school property, where the content of the communication:
  - a. Can reasonably be interpreted as a threat to commit an act of violence on school property; or,
  - b. Results in material or substantial disruption to the educational environment.

## Engage in Conduct That Endangers the Safety, Morals, Health or Welfare of Others

Examples of this conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Lying, deceiving, or giving false information to school personnel.
- 2) Stealing Waterloo Central School District property or the property of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or while attending a school function.
- 3) Making statements or representations that demean, denigrate or otherwise harm other individuals or groups. This can include posting or publishing video or audio recordings, or pictures or on the internet, social media, or any Waterloo Central School District-owned or personal electronic device.
- 4) Engaging in acts of harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, or discrimination.
- 5) Inappropriate communication of a sexual nature by means or any personal technology, electronic device, or other means of technology, including but not limited to the taking, sending or receiving of sexually explicit videos, pictures or audio.

- 6) Displaying signs of gang affiliation/recognized hate group or engaging in gang-related/recognized hate group-related behaviors that are believed or observed to increase the level of conflict or violent behavior on school property or at a school function, or under circumstances in which school authorities can reasonably expect violence or substantial disruption of school activities.
- 7) Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with, or maintaining membership in any Waterloo Central School District or school-sponsored function, activity, organization, club, or team.
- 8) Selling, using, possessing, or distributing obscene material.
- 9) Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, marijuana/cannabis, synthetic cannabinoids, or illegal or controlled substances, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for use of these drugs, or being under the influence of any of these substances on school property or at a school function. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
- 10) Inappropriately using, sharing, selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging prescription and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, supplements, herbs or other similar substances.
- 11) Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging "look-alike drugs"; or, possessing or consuming (without authorization), selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging other substances such as dietary supplements, weight loss pills, etc.
- 12) Gambling and gaming.
- 13) Inappropriate touching or indecent exposure.
- 14) Initiating or reporting warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misusing 911, or inappropriately discharging a fire extinguisher.
- 15) Violating gender privacy when using school restroom facilities. Also, unauthorized or inappropriate use of restroom facilities.

#### Engage in Misconduct While on a School Bus

Students must behave appropriately while riding on District buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers, and to avoid distracting the driver. Students must conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, fighting, harassment, and discrimination will not be tolerated.

#### Engage in Any Form of Academic Misconduct

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Plagiarism.
- 2) Cheating.

- 3) Copying.
- 4) Altering records.
- 5) Accessing other users' email accounts or network storage accounts, or attempting to read, delete, copy, modify, or interfere with transferring or receiving electronic communications.
- 6) Violation of the Waterloo Central School District Acceptable Use Policy.
- 7) Defacing or damaging school, class, library or others' materials, work or documents.
- 8) Taking exam, quiz, lab or any other instructional questions, answers, or forms to further one or more students' grade or progress.
- 9) Violation of copyright laws.
- 10) Assisting another student in any of the actions listed here.

## **Types of Disciplinary Action**

### **Restorative Practices**

When misconduct involves a negative interaction between two or more individuals, the relationship(s) between those individuals is often damaged in some way. (For example, a fight or a severe argument or conflict.) By employing restorative practices at Waterloo Middle School, we seek to preserve positive relationships between all members of our school community. Two examples of restorative practices are a supervised meeting and conversation involving the effected individuals, and some form of an apology.

### **Choices Planning Room**

This is used at the discretion of the teacher any time a student is seriously interfering with the learning environment. The student will be removed from their regular class and must spend the rest of the class period in the Choices Planning Room. When deemed appropriate, the monitor will have the student write out the incident that caused the behavior and write out an "action plan" for this behavior.

### **Teacher Detention**

This is to be used at the discretion of the teacher if the student requires discipline for class infractions. The teacher may consider detention after school in the teacher's classroom or lunch detention with the teacher in the teacher's classroom.

### **Lunch Detention**

The principal/assistant principal assigns this detention for disciplinary infractions. Student will bring their lunch to the Choices Planning Room and eat quietly. Another "Lunch Detention" can be assigned if the student is late or does not cooperate.

### **Extended Detention Until 4 PM**

The principal/assistant principal assigns this detention for disciplinary infractions that warrant more than a lunch detention but not a suspension. While in extended detention, students are encouraged to work on school assignments.

### **In-School Suspension**

In this program students who are suspended attend school, but they do not attend their regular class. Students attend ISS for their regularly scheduled day. They are given assignments by the ISS coordinator

and/or their teacher. All work labeled “current” by the assigning teacher must be done by the end of the day.

### Out-of-School Suspension

In this program students are suspended from school. The suspension is served at home. During their suspension, students are not allowed on any school grounds nor are they allowed to attend any school activities. Students who violate these terms and conditions will be considered trespassing and the local law enforcement authority will be notified.

## **COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Statement of Local Objectives**

Success at school starts with regular attendance and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the supervision of a highly qualified teacher is essential to this purpose. Absences have an adverse effect on a student’s ability to learn. Therefore, the School Superintendent, the Board of Education, administration, and faculty expect all parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation to make every effort for their child(ren) to attend school in accordance with New York State Education Law.

### **Strategies to Meet this Objective**

To ensure that all students are attending school consistently, the District will maintain an adequate record of verifying the attendance of all children during instruction. The record of attendance will account to the parents/persons in parental relation of all children enrolled in the District the whereabouts of such children throughout the day. In addition, pupil attendance recordkeeping will track actual student attendance at all scheduled periods of instruction or other supervised study activities to permit such pupils to succeed at meeting the New York State Learning Standards. Attendance strategies, including incentives and sanctions, are outlined in Section 6 of the Attendance Policy.

### **Absences**

As previously stated, student attendance is essential for the absorption and retention of instructed material. This is so essential that the Compulsory Education Law requires the regular attendance of all children from 6 years old until the last day of session in the school year in which the student becomes 16 years of age. Education Law also allows our District to extend this age to 17 if this student is not employed.

New York State has divided all student absences into two categories: "Excused" and "Unexcused."

Examples of excused absences for not attending school are:

- a) Personal illness or health-related doctor appointments;
- b) Death in the family;
- c) School sponsored field trip;
- d) Quarantine;
- e) Religious observance (Part 109.2 of the Commissioner's Regulations);
- f) Visits to colleges with prior approval from guidance counselor and the building administrator;
- g) Job shadowing with prior approval from the building administrator and verification from job site;  
and
- h) Required court appointments, and other excuses accepted by the Commissioner of Education.

Unexcused absences occur when the parent is aware of the student's whereabouts and the absence is not one of those approved by the State. Examples of unexcused absences are:

- a) Vacations;
- b) Trips;
- c) Job interviews;
- d) Hunting;
- e) Personal errands;
- f) Missed the bus;
- g) Overslept;
- h) Needed at home;

i) Baby-sitting;

In addition, being truant is an unexcused absence. Truancy is defined as an absence from class or school without the knowledge of the student's parents/persons in parental relation. Parental permission does not override unexcused absences.

### **Conditions of Tardiness**

In grades Pre-K through 8, the student's presence is required in the classroom at the start time for each specific building. Students arriving after that time will be considered tardy. Additionally, at the middle school, the student's presence is required in the classroom at the start time for each instructional period. Students arriving after that time will be considered tardy.

In grades Pre-K through 5, attendance will be taken at the start time for the building, and in grades 6-8 attendance is taken at the start time for the building and each class.

The classroom teacher is responsible for taking attendance and reporting any absences, conditions of tardiness, or early departure to the Main Office.

All student absences, conditions of tardiness, and early departures must be accounted for. Therefore, it is the parent's/person's in parental relation responsibility to notify the school nurse within at least 24 hours of the absence, tardiness, and/or early departure. In addition, it is the responsibility of the parent/person in parental relation to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school.

### **Incentives and Sanctions to be Used**

Each school in the District has developed various incentives for consistent student attendance as well as sanctions to be implemented for absences.

Incentives that encourage attendance may include: a) End of the year recognition at the awards assembly; b) Participation in extracurricular activities; c) Receiving donated gifts; d) Lunch with the teacher/principal; e) Recognition by the Superintendent; f) A letter to parents; g) Issuance of a student's work permit as defined under Section 3215-a of Education Law; and h) Issuance of a certificate of satisfactory academic standing for sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) year-olds to work past 10:00 p.m.

Sanctions that may be implemented to discourage unexcused absences, conditions of tardiness, and early departure may include:

- a) A warning from the classroom teacher;
- b) Lunch Detention;
- c) After School Detention;
- d) Referral to the school Building Principal;
- e) Administrative intervention with parent involvement;
- f) Denying participation in extracurricular activities or sports;
- g) Failure to receive course credit;
- h) Restriction of driving privileges;
- i) Revocation of a student's work permit as defined under Section 3215-a of Education Law;
- j) Withdrawal of a certificate of satisfactory academic standing for sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) year-olds to work past 10:00 p.m.;
- k) Filing of a Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) petition or services (Family Court Act Section 712A, Section 732); and
- l) Referral to Child Protective Services for educational neglect (Social Services Law Section 413).

### **Notification to Parents/Persons in Parental Relation**

The District will notify a student's parent/person in parental relation of absenteeism, conditions of tardiness, or early departures without proper excuse. If corrective action does not improve attendance, the situation will be referred to the building administrator. The building administrator may request a conference with the parent/person in parental relation and/or communicate in writing the District's concerns for the student's lack of attendance.

### **Development Process for Intervention Strategies**

In each building in the District there will be a team of teachers and staff that meets regularly to discuss teacher and staff concerns about their students.

A student who has been identified as having a pattern of unexcused absences, conditions of tardiness, or early departures will be discussed with this team. The members of the team will develop a plan of action for the purpose of improving the student's attendance.

Intervention strategies to improve school attendance may include: a) Following the absence pattern closely; b) Assessing parental involvement; c) Ruling out school problems; d) Working with the Principal for administrative action; e) Involving the student's pediatrician with the consent of the parent/person in parental relation to the child; f) Involving the school physician; g) Contacting the child's psychiatrist for mental health issues; h) Educating parents; i) Coaching parents of young children how to separate from them; j) Providing social support groups for the anxious child; k) Collaboratively working with the District Mental Health staff; and l) Referring parents to other local service agencies.

**Identification of the Person to Review Attendance Records and to Initiate Action**

The administration in each building will be responsible for reviewing student attendance records and initiating appropriate action to address any unexcused absenteeism, conditions of tardiness, or early departures.

A student is tardy for school in the morning if he/she is not in the 1st period by the time the tardy bell rings. A tardy student must report directly to the main office for a tardy pass. A note explaining the reason for tardiness should be presented to the office secretary at the time of check-in.



# Waterloo Middle School Map

