

WESTPORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024 - 2025



WESTPORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

380 OLD COUNTY ROAD

WESTPORT, MA 02790

TEL. (508) 636-1075 FAX. (508) 636-1077

TRANSLATIONS

Contact the Superintendent of Schools at (508)-636-1137 for a translation of this or any other school notice.

Portuguese

Contate por favor o superintendente das escolas pelo telefone (508) 636-1137 para qualquer tradução relacionada com esta ou outras notícias da escola.

Spanish

Contacta por favor al superintendente de escuelas en (508) 636 1137 para una traducción de este o de cualquier otro ávido de la escuela.

French

Veuillez contacter le surveillant des écoles a (508) 636-1137 pour une traduction de ceci ou de n'importe quelle autre notification d'école.

German

Treten Sie bitte mit dem Betriebsleiter der Schulen bei (508) 636-1137 für eine Übersetzung von diesem oder von jedem möglichem anderen Schulen Begriff in Verbindung.

NONDISCRIMINATION AGREEMENTS

Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Westport Community Schools to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, violence or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status or military/veteran status.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Physical Challenge

The School Committee has designated the Student Services Supervisor as the responsible employee to coordinate school district compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its administrative regulations. The Student Services Supervisor, as the district's Section 504 compliance officer, shall be responsible for continuing compliance with Section 504 and its administrative regulations. Any student has a ready means of resolving any claim of discrimination on the basis of physical challenge in the educational programs or activities of the district. In the event a student believes that there has been a violation of Section 504, s/he shall deliver to the Student Services Supervisor a written statement setting out the alleged violations, describing the incident or activity involved, the individuals involved and the dates, times and locations involved. The Student Services Supervisor shall provide the individual filing the written statement an opportunity to discuss the matter personally, if requested. The Student Services Supervisor shall make such investigation as is necessary to determine the complete facts involved. The Superintendent shall then take action as appropriate to bring the district in compliance with all federal and state regulations or refer the matter to the School Committee for action as appropriate. If the student submitting the written statement of an alleged violation is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by the district, s/he may present the matter directly to the School Committee by contacting the Committee Chairperson.

PRECEDENT STATEMENT

In the event of conflict between the contents of this guidebook and those of the Education Policy Manual of the Westport Community Schools, the contents of the Education Policy Manual shall govern. The Policy Manual is available at the Principal's office during school hours.

Westport Community Schools

Thomas Aubin, Superintendent

School Committee Members

Evan Gendreau | Chair

Melissa Pacheco | Vice Chair

Gloria Cabral | Member

Jason Pacheco | Member

Christopher Thrasher | Member

Lori Melo | Executive Secretary to the Superintendent & School Committee

Central Office Administrative Team

Lisa Kaminski, Director of Curriculum

Kristin McDaniel, Human Resources Coordinator

Anthony Tomah, Director of Technology

Michelle Rapoza, Business Manager

Nancy Tavares, Special Education Coordinator PreK-5

Wendy Miranda, Special Education Coordinator 6-12

Melissa Sousa, Executive Business Services

A letter from the principal....



Westport Elementary School
380 Old County Road, Westport, MA 02790
(508) 636-1075 Fax (508) 636-1077

Kevin Aguiar, Principal

Dear Westport Elementary School Families,

I want to thank you for your support during my first year as the Principal of Westport Elementary. We had a great first year with many successful activities and academic opportunities for our students. I have to give credit to our amazing staff for their dedication, creativity and competence for all of our successes.

I would like to demonstrate continuous improvement at the WES this school year and for this I ask for your continued support. As we did this past year, we will be sending out a newsletter (at least monthly) in addition to updates at various times to keep all of our families informed about all things at WES. Please be sure to check our website and utilize the online community portal to stay updated on your child's progress throughout the year.

Please reach out to me with any questions at any time so that I can assist in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

Kevin Aguiar
Principal
KAguiar@westportschools.org

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Hours

Grades 1 through 4: 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Westport Elementary School Mission Statement

Westport Elementary School's mission is to educate all students to become 21st century learners, to seek and value knowledge, and to learn core values that will help them emerge as productive citizens in a global community.

Core Values

The Westport Elementary School lives by the following values:

- ❖ **Pride** - We will be passionate champions for the Westport Community Schools.
- ❖ **Integrity** - We will be sincere in our adherence to ethical principles and do what is in the best interest of all we serve.
- ❖ **Respect** - We will demonstrate an appreciation for the value of all. We will foster an environment that is safe and nurturing for students and staff.
- ❖ **Responsibility** - We will take ownership for following through with our mission. We will expect staff, parents, students and community members to be accountable for their contribution to the educational process.
- ❖ **Achievement** - We will continually improve.
- ❖ **Communication** - We will seek the input of all our stakeholders; sharing information openly and honestly and expect the same of all stakeholders.

Expectations for Student Learning

- All students will read and listen critically for understanding.
- All students will communicate effectively through speaking, writing, and other appropriate media to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- All students will analyze, interpret, evaluate, and think logically to reason and solve problems using multiple resources and strategies.
- All students will utilize technology to conduct research, to support critical thinking, and to present information.
- All students will work collaboratively with peers.

Expectations for Student Conduct

In addition to our learning expectations, we expect students to practice being respectful, responsible, and ready throughout the entire school day.

<i>Students are expected to be respectful by:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● choosing safe behaviors in all school areas, including school trips, buses, and after school events● choosing words and behavior that acknowledge and honor the rights of others● using school grounds, property, and materials in the way they were intended
<i>Students are expected to be responsible by:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● completing work in a timely manner● asking for help if needed● taking care of one's belongings, school property, and work areas● advocating for themselves and others
<i>Students are expected to be ready by:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● providing their best effort in all areas of school● persevering through difficult problems● coming to each remote or in-person class with all necessary supplies and completed assignments

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

School cancellations and delays due to emergencies will be posted on www.westportschools.org and aired on the following television stations: WCVB (Channel 5), WLNE (Channel 6), WHDH (Channel 7), WJAR (Channel 10), WPRI (Channel 12), WFXT (Channel 25), WNAC (Channel 64), NECN (New England Cable News) and the following radio stations: WSAR-AM 1480, WHJJ-AM 920, WPRO-AM 630, WBSM-AM 1420, WWBB-FM 101, WHJY-FM 101, WSNE-FM 93.3. **"SCHOOL BRAINS"** will also notify you by phone or email regarding delays or cancellations. If you would like to be contacted directly by **ONE CALL NOW** go to www.westportschools.org and click on the **ONE CALL NO**

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival Procedures

Students who ride the bus will be dropped off at the school at 8:25 a.m. After buses depart, parents should drop off children in the same lane that the buses use, staying close to the curb on the right. Cars will be allowed in the drop off lane **no earlier than 8:15 a.m.** For the safety of the students, parents are prohibited from using the employee parking area as a drop off point unless directed to do so by a Staff member on duty. Students who need to be dropped off earlier than 8:25 a.m. may participate in the Out of School Time program which provides care from 7:00 a.m. until the start of school. When dropping off your child, please **stay in a single-file lane** and follow the directions of the drop-off monitors. To protect the safety of the students and staff, refrain from passing other vehicles. Staff will be available to assist students so parents / guardians do not need to leave the vehicle.

Dismissal Procedures

Parent Pick-up Procedure: Students who do not ride the bus are dismissed directly to their vehicles in the parent pick-up lane starting at 2:45 p.m. **No Parent / Guardian is allowed to wait in the pick up line before 2:15 p.m.** Parents who regularly pick up students will receive a numbered tag to display from a rear view mirror or on a dash and will form a line on the right side of the school driveway. Do not block any intersections. For the safety of staff and students, do not attempt to pass other vehicles and follow the instructions of staff directing traffic.

In case of an emergency and you will not make it in time to pick-up your child at the assigned doors by 3:00 p.m., you will need to pick-up your child in the main office.

Bus Dismissal Procedure: Students who ride the bus are dismissed directly from their classroom. Buses are announced via the intercom, starting at approximately 2:55 p.m. Students exit from the front of the building to their respective buses. Buses leave WES and then go to the Macomber School to pick up Kindergarten students.

Please Note: Any changes to your child's dismissal plan must be made by noon in writing/email.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. However, students may be temporarily excused from school for the following reasons (in accordance with district policies JE and JHR):

- illness
- a death in the immediate family
- observance of family religious holidays
- appearance in court
- medical and dental appointments which cannot possibly be scheduled outside school hours.
- other exceptional reasons with approval of the principal or assistant principal

Absences **must** be explained **in writing** to the classroom teacher the day of the student's return to school. A doctor's note may be requested following absences of five (5) or more days. If a student is dismissed before 11:30 or arrives after 11:30, she/he is considered absent for the entire day. Parents are encouraged to use good judgment in keeping children home from school. Children who are ill will have a difficult time attending to schoolwork and will expose other children to illness. **Please call the school when your child is going to be absent. Phone messages may be left at any time on the school's voice mail system (508-636-1075).**

Please email all attendance correspondence to wesoffice@westportschools.org.

Daily Early Dismissals

All dismissals for Dr. Appt etc need to be submitted in writing to the main office before **9:00 a.m.**

Parent / Guardians will not be allowed to pick-up students for dismissal in the building after 2:15 p.m. All students must be dismissed to an authorized adult. Please be cooperative with staff and work together to ensure each child's safety.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Even if a parent sends a note after an absence, it still **may** be considered **unexcused**. Examples of unexcused absences include:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar

Student absences for family vacations scheduled at times other than the weeks or days identified in the school calendar are strongly discouraged. Due to the challenging content of the required curriculum, these absences create significant teaching and learning issues. Effective instruction in standards-based education requires discussion, group activities, and in-school practice. Many classroom activities are designed to address the readiness, interests, and learning styles of students through grouping and differentiation of instruction. These learning opportunities cannot be replicated for students who have been absent.

Excessive tardiness or absenteeism will be monitored and addressed by the school's administration. A student missing 7 or more days in a trimester or 10 percent of school days may result in the following:

- Reminder attendance phone calls
- Excessive absenteeism letter from administration
- Recovery plan to make up work (i.e. after-school sessions)
- Failure of a subject/required attendance in summer school
- Court proceedings

TARDINESS

Students arriving at school after 8:30 a.m. are considered tardy and must report to the office before proceeding to class. Please remember that late students will interrupt instruction as they enter the classroom and likely will have missed important directions or introduction of a concept or skill. Constant tardiness will have an adverse effect on your child's education. Excessive tardiness may result in consequences including, but not limited to, parent meetings and detention. **Students who arrive at school after 11:30 a.m. or dismissed before 11:30 a.m. will be marked as absent.**

Please note: Students must attend school for at least half of the school day in order to participate in any school-sponsored after-school activities.

For additional information regarding WCS attendance policy, including that of "Excessive Absences" reference WCS Student Policy Handbook

EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORMS

In order to keep your students information current we ask that all families access the community portal using this link: <https://wcs.schoolbrains.com/comm/>

A username and password were previously sent via email. If you do not have access to that information please email Felicia Pacheco at fpacheco@westportschools.org.

It is extremely important that this information be kept up-to-date and accurate. Please notify the school office in writing of any changes.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Good citizenship in school is based on personal responsibility, 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 follow the provisions of law that apply to their personal conduct. In general, students must engage in conduct that will ensure the maintenance of school discipline. Student conduct will guarantee smooth, continued school operation, and will be orderly, compliant, and upholding of school rules and common standards of behavior.

Students will face consequences for violations such as (but not limited to) the following:

- Refusal to comply with safety precautions
- Defiance of authority
- Refusal to identify oneself or giving false verbal or written information to a school employee.
- Stealing or forgery, or the attempt to do either
- Possession of any weapon, knife, gun, explosive device, instrument or article that might injure, threaten, or intimidate a person or destroy property (including realistic simulations)
- Violation of the District's drug and alcohol policy and/or use or possession of tobacco/vape products
- Physical assault or cause of injury, including hands on another.
- Verbally assault or threat through any media
- Verbal abuse, such as name-calling, ethnic or racial slurs, or derogatory statements through any media
- Psychological intimidation toward other students or school staff including conspiring with others to commit such violence through any media
- Violation of public criminal or civil statute, law, or School Committee regulation
- Cheating, including on tests, assignments, etc.
- Throwing objects, whether within school building, outside in the playground or during supervised school activities in a manner that can cause bodily injury or damage property
- Leaving school grounds when not permitted to do so
- Use of profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or sexual innuendo toward students or staff
- Stealing
- Vandalism or damage to school property, including (but not limited to) school building, school equipment, and school buses
- Misconduct on school buses or at bus stops (see detailed bus section below)
- Attempt to coerce, threaten, or blackmail, i.e., obtaining money or other object of value from an unwilling person, or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force
- Violation of the School District's Acceptable Use Policy while using on-line services
- Tampering with, changing, or altering school records or documents by any method including electronic means
- Participation or engagement in any activity which interferes with or disrupts the educational process
- Lying or the giving of false information, either verbally or in writing, to a school employee
- Gambling
- Hazing as defined by state law
- Bullying (see section below)

For more information, please see WCS Policy JIC-R from the WCS district policy manual.

DISCIPLINE

Students have a personal responsibility to act in a way that does not violate others' rights. A student whose actions violate the rights of others will be subject to consequences, which may include (but are not limited to):

- Loss of privileges
- Detention (teacher/office)
- In-school Suspension
- Short-term suspension - fewer than 10 days
- Long-term suspension - more than 10 days, including expulsion
- Restitution or community service activity
- Participation in a rehabilitation program
- Summary recommendation for permanent exclusion/Loss of Privileges

A student may lose the privilege to participate in incentive classroom activities, special programs/events, field trips, after school events/clubs or any other privilege as deemed appropriate by the administration as a consequence for behavior infractions.

Detention

There are various types of detention - lunch, recess, teacher and office detention. ***Teacher detention*** is served after school and is assigned by teachers for violations of classroom rules and/or minor violations of school rules. The principal, assistant principal, or their designee assigns ***office detention***. Office detention is served after school for:

1. Violations of school rules in common areas such as the cafeteria, corridors, or outside on the school grounds
2. Major violations of school rules
3. Chronic minor violations of school and/or classroom rules.
4. Skipping a Teacher, Recess, or Lunch detention

Detention takes precedence over all engagements, except suspensions ex: clubs, activities & sports. Failure to report for detention may result in additional consequences.

Teacher Detention

A teacher detention requires that students and parents be given a minimum of twenty-four (24) hour notice as it will require a student to miss the bus, unless this requirement is waived by a parent/guardian. A teacher detention may be served until 3:45 p.m. A student must follow the teacher's rules during a teacher detention. A student who fails to report for a teacher detention will be assigned an office detention.

Office Detention

Unless waived by a parent/guardian, an office detention requires that students and parents be given a minimum of twenty-four (24) hour notice. Office detention takes precedence over any teacher detention. Office detention is served on a date agreed upon with a parent and runs until 4:00 p.m.. Students should report to detention with their books and coats, as they will be dismissed from school directly from detention. Students who do not follow the rules during an office detention will be subject to additional discipline by the principal or designee. *Parents and guardians are responsible for their child's transportation after detention.*

DISCIPLINE/STUDENT CONDUCT

STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with school rules and regulations to the end that a positive learning atmosphere be established. Among other things, student conduct shall reflect care and respect for all other members of the Whittier school community.

Certain breaches of conduct are so serious that the Principal may long term suspend or expel a student under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and 37H ½. These include:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- Possession of a controlled substance while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- An assault on a School Administrator, teacher, teacher's aide, or other staff person.
- A felony charge or conviction

Violations of the code of conduct will subject a student to disciplinary action up to and including mediation, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Principal or designee has the authority to impose consequences when a student violates the student Code of Conduct.

Mediation

Mediation is an alternative remedy to punitive discipline which allows students and staff to resolve disputes. It is a way of looking at a problem, identifying the issues, and thinking through the alternatives and consequences.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is an alternative remedy to punitive discipline which allows students and staff to resolve conflict in a peaceful way.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is an alternative remedy to punitive discipline. Restorative justice seeks to repair harm by providing an opportunity for students who have been harmed and students who have taken responsibility for the harm to communicate, understand the harm, and address the students' needs.

Collaborative Problem Solving

Collaborative problem solving is an alternative remedy to punitive discipline. It is an approach to assist students in identifying alternative behavioral choices.

Teacher Detention

A teacher detention requires that students and parents be given a minimum of twenty-four (24) hour notice as it will require a student to miss the bus, unless this requirement is waived by a parent/guardian. A teacher detention may be served until 3:45 p.m. A student must follow the teacher's rules during a teacher detention. A student who fails to report for a teacher detention will be assigned an office detention.

Office Detention

Unless waived by a parent/guardian, an office detention requires that students and parents be given a minimum of twenty-four (24) hour notice. Office detention takes precedence over any teacher detention. Office detention is served on a date agreed upon with a parent and runs until 4:00 p.m.. Students should report to detention with their books and coats, as they will be dismissed from school directly from detention. Students who do not follow the rules

during an office detention will be subject to additional discipline by the principal or designee. Parents and guardians are responsible for their child's transportation after detention

Suspension

A suspension is a short term or long term removal from regular classroom activities.

If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Short term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive days or less.

Long term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

A suspended student is restricted from entering the school buildings, or coming onto school grounds; and a suspended student may not participate in any school sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period. It is also recommended that parents restrict the activities of a student during the suspension period to reinforce the importance of the disciplinary consequence and to demonstrate cooperation between the school and family.

The Principal or his/her designee has the sole responsibility for determining who is suspended. The suspended student may not be permitted to return to school until a parental conference has been held.

In school suspension

At the discretion of the Principal, in-school suspension may also be imposed where a student is determined to have committed a suspendable offense. In-school suspension means the student is removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than 10 consecutive school days. Students will be subject to limitations on their movements and activities as determined by the Principal. In-school suspension for less than 10 days shall not be considered a short-term suspension. An in-school suspension of more than 10 days shall be deemed a long-term suspension.

For an in-school suspension, the principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Removal from Extracurricular Activities and Attendance at school sponsored events

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4} or 603 CMR 53.00.

Opportunity for Academic Progress During Suspension/Expulsion

Any student receiving in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension shall have the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days shall have an opportunity to receive educational services that will enable the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school-wide educational services plan.

Student due process rights

In administering discipline, school officials will be careful to observe the right to due process under the law for each student. The nature of the violation determines the due process that school officials follow.

1. DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF A DANGEROUS WEAPON, POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE, ASSAULT ON SCHOOL STAFF AND/OR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF A FELONY (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2).

Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the Principal or designee determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.

Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parents/guardians will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, a written decision will be issued. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long term suspension or expulsion from school to the Superintendent. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76, §17, M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2.

2. DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS CHARGED WITH OTHER VIOLATIONS (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 3/4)

Notice and principal's meeting:

For any suspension under this section, the principal or a designee shall provide notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in English and the primary

language spoken in the student's home. The student shall receive written notice of the charges and the opportunity to meet with the principal or designee to discuss charges and reasons for the suspension and/or exclusion prior to suspension/exclusion taking effect.

The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The meeting may take place without the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) so long as if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

The purpose of the principal's hearing is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense.

a. Short-term Suspension

The principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what alternative remedy or consequence will be imposed.

When deciding the consequences for the student, the principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

b. Long Term Suspension

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall also have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

If present, the Parent shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what alternative remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension.

When deciding the consequences for the student, the principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

If the student is suspended for more than 10 days for a single infraction or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the Superintendent and the process for appealing in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. No student will be suspended for greater than 90 days, beginning on the first day the student is removed from the building.

Emergency Removal:

The principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and

substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal. In the event of an emergency removal, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal. The principal shall provide written notice to the student and parent as provided above, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal as provided above, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

The principal shall render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements as described above.

In the event of an emergency removal from school, the principal will not release the student until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Superintendent's hearing:

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion to submit a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to 7 calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to 7 calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Superintendent's hearing may proceed without the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

At the hearing, the superintendent shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 5 calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The Superintendent's decision is the final decision of the district.

Discipline and Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.
3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP team or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardians consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON BUSES

Safety is of prime importance for our students as we transport them to and from school and for school sponsored activities. Safety requires the cooperation of students, parents/guardians and school personnel.

Parents/guardians should review and discuss the school bus rules to help students understand and assume responsibility for good school bus conduct.

Students are charged with the responsibility of conduct, which will result in safe transportation, respect for school personnel, and respect for other students.

1. The school bus driver has complete responsibility and authority while transporting students on the bus. However, a School Administrator is authorized to suspend bus-riding privileges. **Students will be assigned a seat by the School Administration.**
2. All school rules (see Actions and Consequences from WCS Student Policy Handbook) apply to students beginning at the moment the school bus is in the sight of the student at the bus stop and until the bus is out of sight of the student at the bus stop. Toys and electronic devices are prohibited.
3. In addition to suspension of bus-riding privileges, a student may also be suspended from school for violation of school bus rules in keeping with the Actions and Consequences policy.
4. Administration may suspend bus-riding privileges for up to one school year, depending on the severity of the endangerment of the safety of the bus driver and/or students. Usually, a warning will be given to parents before the bus riding privilege is suspended. Due process protection will apply to school bus suspension of longer than 10 days.
5. The following suspensions are guidelines only and the principal reserves the right to waive warning, increase the suspension, or attach additional consequences depending on the severity of the offense or of the frequency of offenses:

First Violation: Verbal warning by driver

Second Violation: Written Warning & discussion w/ school administration

Third Violation: Five day suspension

Fourth Violation: Ten day suspension

Fifth Violation: Long term suspension up to one school year

Any of the above may be accompanied by an out of school suspension, assignment to a particular seat, restitution for damages, or other consequence pursuant to the specific action of the student.

6. Student behaviors which may lead to suspension for up to one school year:
 - Unsafe boarding/departing
 - Use of cell phone or electronic device
 - Possession of an unsafe, dangerous/illegal item
 - Failure to remain properly seated in assigned seat
 - Tampering with or damaging property
 - Throwing an object at or from the bus
 - Loud talk or yelling
 - Failure to obey the bus driver
 - Physical/verbal assault or intimidation of others including the driver
 - Failure to ride in assigned seat
 - Hands on others

- Consuming food/drink
- Other behavior that endangers the safety, well-being of others

Failure to abide by these school bus rules and comply with requests of school personnel may result in a student being issued a School Bus Incident Report and subsequent suspension or denial of bus transportation.

- 7.. The school district reserves the right to refuse to allow a student to board a school bus on short notice if there is an obvious safety issue and/or disrupting concern that would negatively impact school disciplinary standards.

CORRIDOR COURTESY

Students will remain responsible and respectful members of the school community while in the hallways

CAFETERIA

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced breakfast and lunch is offered free to all students for the 2023-2024 school year. Students are expected to comply with the following cafeteria rules:

1. Sanitize hands upon entering and exiting the cafeteria.
2. Ask a staff member for permission before leaving the cafeteria.
3. Leave the table and floor around your place in a clean condition for others.
4. Stay in your seat.
5. Only one student is allowed to use the restroom at a time.
6. Due to allergies and safety reasons, there is no sharing of food.
7. **NO FOOD OR BEVERAGES MAY BE TAKEN FROM THE CAFETERIA.**

DRESS CODE

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of the individual and his/her parents. However, should a student's dress violate health or safety standards, the school reserves the right to require the student to make all necessary changes. The administration believes that students should dress in such a manner as to indicate their respect for the importance of their activities in school. Any child deemed inappropriately dressed will be given appropriate clothing to borrow from the school or will need to call home for other clothing. The guidelines below provide some specific restrictions regarding dress:

Students should wear garments, shoes, jewelry, accessories that:

- reflect a positive image of the school
- contribute to a distraction-free learning environment, including (but not limited to)
 - For example, clothing should*
 - be free of lights, spikes, or any other element that may injure someone or damage property
 - be free of written profanity, sexually explicit language, images of weapons or illegal actions, as well as alcohol or weapons logos, etc.
- do not pose a threat or safety issue to themselves or others
 - For example:*
 - All shoes should have backs (i.e. no flip flops, clogs, etc.)
 - Earrings/necklaces/belts should be at a length that do not pose a distraction or safety issue.
 - Shoes should be wheel-free.
- do not cover face, head, or eyes while inside the school building
 - For example:*
 - Students should not wear sunglasses unless prescribed by a physician.
 - Students should not wear hats, bandanas, head coverings or hoods.
- cover all undergarments
- cover the chest, back, midriff, buttocks, etc (i.e. shirts must overlap waistband of pants)

Note: **The administration reserves the right to determine what is considered acceptable.** Students whose dress is questionable, as well as those not following the dress code, will be required to change into acceptable attire or will be sent home. Parent support is appreciated and necessary. When students comply with the dress code, staff and administration spend much less time dealing with inappropriate dress and can dedicate that time to student learning. It is our goal to promote an orderly learning environment.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT

Bullying is the repeated attempt of one or more students to cause physical or emotional harm to a specific target. Bullying is **not** defined as a singular incident of inappropriate behavior from one student to another or group. Bullying is a repeated behavior to a specific target, with the intention of creating a pervasive hostile environment for the target. Similar to bullying, harassment is the effort to demean, verbally abuse, or threaten a person based on (but not limited to) his or her race, color, gender, sexual identity, or religion. Bullying and harassment are both prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district;

Students who believe that they are a target of bullying or witness acts of bullying (as defined above) should report the incidents to any staff member. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action. Parents and guardians are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible. After receiving notice of a bullying incident, the principal, assistant principal, or designee will immediately investigate.

For more information on bullying policies, please see policy JICFB/JBA from the WCS School Committee

WEAPONS

Possession or use of a weapon / ammunition in a school building is prohibited. A student found to be in possession of a weapon on school premises before, during, or after school or at any school sponsored activity is subject to administrative and/or legal action. Weapons can be defined as:

- a) Articles commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm such as firearms, knuckles, switchblade/butterfly knives, chains, clubs, stars, etc.
- b) Articles designed for other purposes but which could easily be used to inflict bodily harm and/or intimidate such as belts, combs, pencils, files, compasses, scissors, etc.

A student acting in an aggressive or belligerent manner with any article will be administratively judged to be in possession of a weapon. *For more information, please see policy JICI from WCS School Committee Policy Manual.*

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The use of tobacco products in any form is not allowed by any individual in the school building or on school grounds. Tobacco products include but are not limited to cigarettes, chewing tobacco, vapes, and electronic cigarettes. NOTE: Cigarette lighters and/or matches are not to be brought to school for any reason. Students found using tobacco products or in possession of cigarette lighters and/or matches will be referred to the principal or assistant principal. *For more information, please see policy JICH from the WCS School Committee Policy Manual.*

USE OF INTERNET AND DIGITAL DEVICES

The primary purpose of providing digital technology within the district is to support the educational goals and objectives of Westport Elementary School. All digital technology users will respect the rights of others and will act in a way that reflects proper ethical and legal standards. Improper use of digital technology can distract users and others from our educational purposes or be a means for inappropriate behavior. In addition, improper use of digital technology may violate the privacy rights of students or staff members. WES students will:

- only use digital technology under the direction of a staff member
- only use devices provided by the school district (i.e. no personal devices allowed)
- follow the directions for the use of digital technology explicitly (i.e. use the technology at the appropriate time, or only using approved sites/apps)
- refrain from using personal devices during the school day, arrival/dismissal, bus rides, field trips, and school-sponsored events
- refrain from posting images from school or school-sponsored events
- Families will be required to pay restitution for any damages to school devices / property.

Personal devices are prohibited. Any personal devices found will be confiscated at the office until the end of the school day. A student who violates the internet acceptable use or electronic device policy will be subject to consequences. ***Please note: Westport Elementary School is not responsible for damage, loss or theft of personal devices brought into school in violation of this policy and will NOT replace the value of any device damaged, lost or stolen from school.***

HOMEWORK

Homework Guidelines for Grades 1-4:

We, in the Westport Community Schools, believe that homework is an integral part of the total instructional program. Homework extends learning opportunities beyond the confines of the school day. We recognize that meaningful homework contributes toward building responsibility and self-discipline in children, helping children to develop good study habits and lifelong learning habits, and provides parent(s)/guardian(s) a greater appreciation of and an opportunity for involvement in their child's/children's schooling. We further believe that time spent on homework directly influences the student's ability to meet the State and District's academic standards and to successfully complete classroom assessments. In a "standards-based" academic environment, it is expected that all children will meet all standards. We will strive to ensure that all children succeed. Toward that end, in partnership with parent(s)/guardian(s) we understand that homework may be assigned. Homework needs to be meaningful and grade and level appropriate to benefit the student. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be made aware of homework assignments, expectations, progress, etc. by their child's teacher(s) through agendas, notes, technology, etc. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are welcome to make an appointment with a teacher to discuss homework.

FOR GRADES 1-4:

- First grade may be assigned homework, requiring an average time of **ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes** each night.
- Second grade may be assigned homework, requiring an average time of **twenty (20) minutes** each night.
- Third grade may be assigned homework, requiring an average time of **thirty (30) minutes** each night.
- Fourth grade may be assigned homework, requiring an average time of **forty (40) minutes** each night.

Homework During Unexcused Absences

Parents/guardians who insist on taking students out of school for vacations at times other than those designated on school calendars should understand that **teachers cannot provide school work in advance per school committee policy**. Students returning to school after such an absence will be expected to participate fully in all class activities, including scheduled examinations. **Upon request, graded assignments and/or tests will be provided to students when they return to school.** Assignments and/or tests that are not completed within one calendar week of a student's return, or learning expectations that have not been mastered, will adversely affect academic progress and report card performance levels.

AGENDA BOOKS

Agenda books are provided by the school for school and parent use to students in all grades. These books are an excellent tool to keep track of homework assignments, upcoming quizzes, tests, and other significant information. It also provides a means of keeping parents informed about related school work, and it is a vehicle of communication between parents and teachers. Students are required to have their agenda books with them for all classes. **Agendas should be signed by a parent nightly.** Replacement of lost agenda books will cost a student \$5.00 for each replacement.

Food Free Celebrations

Birthday celebrations must be **"food free"** throughout the district.

Classroom snacks and food provided for non-birthday related celebrations feature healthy choices. Schools will not use food as rewards. Exceptions to this policy may only be made when behavior rewards or discipline are part of a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP).

From Westport School Committee Policy Manual - **ADF - SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM**

PROGRESS REPORTS & REPORT CARDS

Progress Reports are issued on the parent portal in the middle of each Trimester (only students that Teachers feel are not meeting standards). Grades are up to date for viewing on the portal for all students at a minimum in the middle and end of each trimester. Report Cards are issued at the end of each Trimester. They include progress in academic and specialist areas as well as student responsibilities. Comments, number of absences, times tardy, and times dismissed are also noted.

PROMOTION POLICY

Promotion

A student is considered to be promoted to the next grade level when she/he has demonstrated competency in grade level standards based upon teacher grades and other appropriate assessments, including portfolios, standardized tests, homework, daily classwork, class participation, and attendance.

RETENTION (POLICY IKE)

Research, common sense, and our own life experience show us that social promotion (assignment) and retention in grade are not effective solutions to the problem of underachieving or underperforming students. While social promotion does provide the advantage of socialization with peers of the same chronological age, social promotion sidesteps the achievement problem because students enter the next grade unprepared and the gap between expectations and performance widens each year. Only infrequently, where a child's social/emotional maturity or developmental readiness is an issue, will retention bring about expected results.

The problem of underachieving students should be viewed in context, and individual plans should be developed to match individual solutions to individual achievement problems. A student's failure in school must be reviewed in multiple contexts. The family, the health care provider, the school, the classroom, and the peer group impact on a student's ability to cope with the academic program. Finding the answer to underperformance means viewing the student in these many contexts.

Students must be prepared to meet the challenges of each grade level and are expected to demonstrate mastery of skills and content as reflected on standardized tests, MCAS scores, and teacher grades. The Superintendent will develop regulations in keeping with a standard of academic performance that provides for promotion when a student has achieved competency and that provides sufficient time for remediation.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Health Requirements:

In order to be registered for school, children must present documentation of the following immunizations: Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT); Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR); Polio, Varicella, and Hepatitis B. In addition, all students entering Kindergarten must have documentation of a Lead and TB screening.

State and local laws prevent us from making any exceptions to this policy. Parents must also submit a copy of a physical exam, done prior to and within one year of registration and in Grades 3.

Please fill out and return the Student Medical Update Form. Inform the nurse of any changes in the state of your child's health anytime during the school year.

Medication: All medications should be given at home when possible. PLEASE DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH A CHILD. A RESPONSIBLE ADULT NEEDS TO TRANSPORT ALL MEDICATIONS TO / FROM SCHOOL. Any medication that a student will take in school (whether an over-the-counter or prescription medication) requires an order from a physician in order for the student to receive the medication at school. Medication brought into school MUST be in the original packaging with pharmacy label. A parental consent form is also required. Both of these forms can be found at westportschools.org by choosing the "Health Office" link on the left hand side. The forms are attachments at the bottom of the Health office webpage. You may also obtain copies of these forms from the school nurse.

Illnesses: Please do not send your child to school when signs of an illness such as a temperature of 100.0 or greater, persistent cough, vomiting or unknown rashes are present. If your child has a fever or is dismissed from school with a fever then they should return to school only after remaining fever free without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol/Motrin for a FULL 24 hours. Students that are dismissed with a fever must stay home the following day to allow for the 24 hour requirement.

Notify the school nurse if your child contracts any infection or contagious condition such as: strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), scarlet fever, chickenpox, mononucleosis, or whooping cough.

Injuries: Notify the school nurse if your child has a significant injury that requires a consult with a health care provider/physician. If your child is under an orthopedic doctor's care, clearance will be needed to return to physical education activity. When you visit the orthopedic physician he/she can provide you with the necessary paperwork to forward to the school. If your student has a head injury or is diagnosed with a concussion, please call to discuss this with the school nurse. Remember that if a student is unable to participate in physical education then they will also need to stay inside during outdoor recess period and refrain from physical activity during the recess period.

Physical Examination Requirements: A physical examination is required for all students entering Preschool, entering Kindergarten or upon transferring into Westport Community Schools. We also require a physical exam in Grades 3, 6 and 9. If a physical is required for your child this school year, please send in a copy of their physical exam. Notices will be sent home if a copy of your child's physical exam has not been received. The school physician is available late winter/early spring and will perform the physical exam if you wish.

Screening:

Vision Screenings are done in Preschool, Kindergarten, Grades 1-5, Grade 7 and Grade 10. Hearing Screenings are done in Preschool, Kindergarten, Grades 1-3, Grade 7 and Grade 10. Postural Screenings are done in Grades 5-9. Parents will be notified of any concern with a screening that necessitates a medical follow-up with your own physician or optometrist. A response letter with testing results should be forwarded to the Health Office.

Height, Weights and BMI's are done in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 to monitor growth and development. Please notify the school nurse in writing by the end of September if you do NOT wish for your child to participate in the BMI screening. A request to not participate must be received each year that you opt out of the screening. If you would like a copy of your child's BMI results, please let the nurse know and a copy will be forwarded to you.

Miscellaneous:

Please do not send cough drops into school with your child. Cough drops may contain medication (which requires a doctor's order) or pose a choking hazard. Instead of cough drops, we recommend sending in a water bottle so your child can take frequent sips of water to soothe a sore throat or dry cough.

Proper foot wear is necessary to help prevent injuries during outdoor recess. Students that wear flip-flops or shoes without backs will NOT be permitted to use the playground equipment or athletic fields / courts. Students should also come to school dressed for the weather as students go out for recess or for physical education.

Communicable Diseases:

If your child has a communicable disease (i.e., Chicken Pox), please notify your child's teacher and nurse. Before returning to school, your child will need to be checked by the school nurse or have a certificate from your doctor (contact the school nurse to see which is applicable). Regulations are as follows:

- Chicken Pox: 5-7 days from appearance of first eruption, lesions crusted and fever free
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after medication has begun, no drainage
- Impetigo: 24 hours after medical treatment began
- Pneumonia: Doctor's certificate for re-entry
- Scabies: Note from doctor that child has been treated and may return to school
- Scarlet Fever: 24 hours after prescribed medication has started
- Strep Throat: 24 - 48 hours after first dose of medication

Head Lice (Pediculosis):

Head Lice are transmitted by personal contact and are common among school children. The school nurse, to help prevent children from contracting this condition, does Pediculosis screenings periodically. In the event of an outbreak, parents of the classroom having a student with this condition will be notified by letter and be given suggestions to help prevent the spread of Pediculosis.

- Students found to have head lice shall be medically dismissed from school pending treatment of such conditions. The principal will be notified of the reason for the child's dismissal.
- Students will be dismissed from school only with a parent, relative or designated responsible adult.
- At the time of a positive identification of head lice, all possible known contacts such as siblings, classmates, etc., will be checked by the nurse.
- Students excluded by the school or kept home by a parent because of this condition cannot re-enter school until he/she has been seen by the school nurse. A parent must accompany their child to the school nurse on his/her return.
- Once the treatment has been completed successfully and the nurse has approved re-entry, the child will be checked daily until they have been found lice free and/or nit free for two consecutive weeks.

Medications:

1. If a student's physician determines that it is necessary for the student to receive medication during school hours, the written physician's order and specific instructions must be provided to the school.
2. Each medication must be accompanied by a parent's consent for administration of medication form.
3. An Administration of Medication Care Plan for the student will be developed by the nurse and signed by the parent.
4. Medications must be provided by the parent in the original container with the prescription label or manufacturer's label intact. Upon request, pharmacists will provide identical containers and divide medications for school and home.
5. If a medication is to be given for more than 10 school days, it must be accompanied by a written physician's order (prescription label serves as physician's order for short-term medications).
6. Medications will be administered by the school nurses employed by Westport Community Schools with the following exceptions:
 - a. Self administration according to the following:
 - i. All medications to be self administered in schools must be approved by the school nurse.
 - ii. Self administration will be limited to inhalers and epipens if deemed appropriate by the nurse, parent, and physician.
7. Medications should be delivered to school by an adult. Upon delivery, medications will be dated and counted.
8. Medications will be stored in locked cabinets in the Health Offices, except for epipens.
9. All medications will be documented on the student's medication record.
10. If any emergency should occur involving response to medication, the prescribing physician will be notified, and medical treatment will be provided according to the physician's advice and the nurse's assessment.
11. If any error should occur involving administration of medication, the parent will be notified and a report will be filed with the Superintendent of Schools. The parent may consult the prescribing physician or the nurse as deemed appropriate.
12. The first dose of a newly prescribed medication must be given at home.
13. Administration of early a.m. or first daily dose of medications at school is discouraged, and given only after careful consideration on an individual basis.

Additional Health Services:

1. Annual Vision and Hearing Tests (parents are notified only if an abnormality is found).
2. Physical Exams (routine for entering Kindergarten and Grade 3, plus new students and interscholastic sports). For parents with insufficient or no health insurance, please contact the school nurse at 636-1075 for information.
3. General first aid for school related minor accidents. If a serious illness or an accident occurs, parents will be asked to take their child for further medical evaluation / treatments.
4. Maintaining medical records for your child. This includes medical history, results of screenings, exams, immunization status, etc.
5. Puberty / menstrual classes for students in age appropriate grade
6. Services to students with chronic medical needs, including medications and treatments

SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based. For more information, please see policy **ADF** in WCS School Committee Policy Manual.

WELLNESS POLICY (WCS Policy ADF)

The Westport Community Schools has a wellness policy that was approved by the school committee. This policy addresses issues such as:

1. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus
2. Nutritional and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing
3. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education
4. Monitoring and Policy Review
5. Sharing of Foods and Beverages: Students are strongly discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack time.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each student in grades 1 -4 participates in physical education. It is important that each child be dressed properly for class. Children should wear appropriate attire and sneakers. (Hiking boots, indoor soccer or football cleats, or dress shoes of any kind ARE NOT ALLOWED). Children should not wear long earrings or large hand or wrist jewelry. Necklaces should be removed or tucked inside clothing. Long hair should be pulled back. When your child needs to be excused from Physical Education class, please send a note in, so the school nurse and P.E. Teacher are aware of the medical problem.

SNACKS

Students may have a snack during the course of the day per the discretion of their teacher. Please be advised these should be healthy snacks, and please do not send any glass bottles or soda to school. Please note: Classes of students who have Life Threatening Allergies will receive notification from the school nurse requesting parents to avoid sending their children in with certain items.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

The School Resource Officer assigned to the Westport Elementary School has three functions:

1. As a police officer, he/she handles all civil and criminal acts regarding students and schools.
2. The resource officer visits the classrooms as a guest speaker and discusses topics for which he/she has been trained.
3. The officer is available to speak with the students regarding a variety of matters.
4. The officer follows up on multiple tardiness, absences and residency verification.

INTERROGATION SEARCHES: SEARCHES BY STAFF (POLICY JIH)

The right of inspection of students' belongings is inherent in the authority granted by the School Committees and Administrators. School officials will exercise that authority so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and coercion, and to act in the best interest of all students and the school.

Searches by school officials of the student him/herself, will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Administration has the right to search any child's backpack at any time if there is a suspicion of negative or illegal activity.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

ELL

Education is a basic right of all children in the United States. The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) added important new educational rights for English language learners and their parents. Federal laws, such as NCLB, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and Massachusetts state laws recognize that students who are new to the United States and who are English language learners need extra support. They need help to learn English and, at the same time, to master academic standards.

The Westport Community Schools is committed to ensuring that all educational programs meet the diverse needs of all students. Students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades K-12 are provided with a comprehensive ELL Program that is staffed by highly qualified ELL teachers. These teachers focus on meeting the needs of all students in the program in two areas: becoming proficient in the English language and adjusting to the school and community culture.

State and federal laws use the terms "students with limited English proficiency" (or, LEP students), "English language learners" (or, ELLs), and "English learners" to describe the same group of students.

The Westport Community School's English Language Learner (ELL) program assists students whose first language at home is not English. Students are supported in language development, particularly in listening and reading comprehension, and language production - speaking and writing.

Special Education

The Eligibility Guidelines for Special Education were developed by the MA Dept. of Ed. at the direction of the Legislature as a result of the January 1992 amendment to chapter 71B (the State Law for Special Education). These included the establishment of an effective pre-referral process; increasing the capacity of regular classroom teachers to make modifications to curricula and instructional strategies and to measure the effectiveness of those interventions. All assessments are an ongoing process of gathering information about the student and the learning environment. It is a problem solving process aimed at generating the kinds of information necessary for effective decision-making and learning.

Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, organization, or activity receiving federal financial assistance, such as a public school district. Section 504 does require school districts to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities so that they may receive the benefits of the school district's educational programs. Reasonable accommodations do not require major or substantial modification in the school district's program. A Section 504 Plan is a written plan that outlines accommodations that are necessary in order for a person with a handicap to be able to access general education services.

TITLE I

The Title I Program is one of the key components of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Act of 2015. Specifically, ESSA is working toward the goal that all students will reach high standards, at a minimum, attaining proficiency or better in reading and mathematics. One of the primary goals of the Title I Program is to help all children become proficient and confident readers in the early grades. This provides a foundation to become better learners throughout their school years and beyond. Your child may receive support provided by one of our interventionists or reading specialists. Schoolwide Title I services are offered at the WES. Services vary according to the needs of students. These services range from Tier I small group instruction to Tier II small group instruction to Tier III interventions.

School Adjustment Counselor (SAC)

Children experiencing emotional or social problems have access to the School Adjustment Counselor who works with both the families and students to bring about improvements. The counselor may provide students with direct assistance in the form of crisis intervention and/ or individual or group guidance. The Counselor also assists in the implementation of health-related and complete guidance programs in all classrooms. The department also offers programs to parents and children to help them deal with contemporary societal problems.

Student Support Teams (SST)

SST (formerly RTI) is a school-based, problem-solving group whose purpose is to assist with strategies for working with students who have difficulties in learning and/or behavior. Based upon the discussions of the meeting, students may be provided with a tiered system of support. The committee includes the Principal or designee, the student's teacher(s) and possibly one or more of the following: reading specialist, nurse, school adjustment counselor, school psychologist, behavior specialist, occupational therapist or speech pathologist. An intervention plan is developed and put into place for a specified period of time and monitored throughout that period. A follow up meeting is scheduled to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. If necessary, a second plan can be formulated.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center provides books and audio/visual materials to fill curriculum needs, as well as supplementary and recreational reading demands. Students are allowed to check out books for two weeks (with renewal). Students are responsible for loaned books and parents/guardians will be asked to pay for any that is lost.

PARENT/SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

PTO

WES/MAC PTO is composed of parents whose children attend either Westport Elementary School or the Macomber Primary School. All parents are automatically members. The general purposes of the group are to facilitate communication between school and home, to serve as an organizational framework for providing service to the school, and to enrich the children's school experience. WES/MAC invites you to participate in one of the following committee activities: Fundraiser, Membership, Newsletter, PR and playground. Meetings are held monthly and are open to all parents, teachers and administrators. Please join us with your ideas and energy!

WEF

The Westport Education Foundation's mission is to provide transforming and innovative enrichment programs to enhance the core curriculum in the Westport Community Schools and be the catalyst through which Westport public education strengthens the future of the town. The Board is composed of parents and town residents who want to support the education system in Westport. Please visit their website at www.westporteducationfoundation.com to view meeting dates, programs, current events and to sign up to receive updates via email. Volunteers are needed and greatly appreciated!

Volunteers

Volunteers must complete a CORI check form and read and sign-off on the Volunteer Guidebook available in the school office. Volunteers are encouraged to wait until October before volunteering.

Chaperones / Fingerprinting

All volunteers who will be attending any school related field trip outside of the school building must have a fingerprint on file with the Central Administration Office. Please call the school office for more information on fingerprinting.

School Council

The School Council is a representative, school-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community representatives. The School Council is the main instrument through which participatory site-based management is practiced. The Council has an advisory role in shaping the policies and programs of the school. Volunteers are recruited in the Fall.

Newsletters

In our efforts to help with home to school communication, W.E.S. provides at a minimum a monthly newsletter you can view on our school webpage; www.westportschools.org. Click on schools then Westport Elementary.

Open House

Open House is held for all parents at the beginning of the school year. At this time, each teacher gives an overview of his/her class, which includes curriculum description, expectations, and routines. Please note this is not a time to discuss individual situations.

Conferences

Parent teacher conferences help to provide an overall picture of a student's progress. Conferences are held at a predetermined date which will be posted on the school calendar. However, regular and open conversation between parent and teacher is the most important part of understanding a child's development. With this in mind, parents can request meetings with their student's teacher at an agreed upon time.

LOST & FOUND

Lost and found articles are collected and displayed in the cafeteria. Students should personally check this area. Unclaimed articles will eventually be given to charity. **Students should not bring valuable items to school** (including electronic equipment, i.e. Ipods, Ipads, tablets, cell phones, headphones and trading cards). **Please identify your child's clothing (hats, mittens, coats, etc.) in a manner you feel comfortable with. (i.e. last name, first initial and teacher's name).**

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

FERPA affords parents and students over the age of 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. Please refer to the main section of the Student Handbook.

Thank you for your cooperation with the matters listed in this handbook.

ACCESS & INCLUSION OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

Westport Community Schools provides an equal opportunity for all students to participate in the Out of School Time Program. All children who participate in the program will be able and willing to:

- Participate in independent and group activities;
- Understand and follow program expectations;
- Conduct themselves in appropriate ways that ensure their safety and the safety of others in accordance with the Program's Behavior Policy;
- Successfully transition from one activity to another.

Reasonable accommodations and modifications can be made, provided that said accommodations and modifications do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program. All requests for accommodations and modifications will be considered and evaluated case-by-case.

Thank you for your cooperation with the matters listed in this handbook.

Westport Community Schools

Family-School Compact



Westport Community Schools and the families of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), agree that this compact outlines how families, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement and the means by which the school and families will build and develop a partnership that will help students achieve the State's high standards.

This compact is in effect during the school year 2024-2025.

School Responsibilities

Westport Community Schools will provide:

1. High-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating students to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:
 - a. Employing highly-qualified staff
 - b. Using research-based high-quality curricula and instructional materials
 - c. Providing support and interventions to students based on data-analysis
 - d. Providing professional development in content and pedagogy to support this work
2. Opportunities for family/guardian-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual student's achievement. Specifically, those conferences will be held: after Term 1, mid-year, and by appointment.
3. Reports to families/guardians on their students' progress. Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:
 - a. Two progress reports and two report cards at the MAC
 - b. Three progress reports and three report cards at the WES
 - c. Four progress reports and four report cards at the WMHS
 - d. Staff will provide additional updates as required or needed
4. Accessible forms of communication with staff for families/guardians. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with families/guardians as follows:
 - a. At school Open Houses and Family-Teacher Conference sessions
 - b. Via email and telephone
 - c. At other school events that are curriculum related
 - d. At Family-School meetings as required or needed

5. At least one meeting of families/guardians of participating students annually at a convenient time and location, offering multiple meetings and opportunities for multiple languages, if necessary, at which the school will inform families/guardians of the school's participation in Title I and the requirements of Title I, including family engagement requirements.

- a. This meeting will take place during each school's OPEN HOUSE this year.
- b. A mid-year meeting will be held at each school.
- c. Additionally, a virtual meeting will be held.

6. Opportunities for families/guardians to volunteer and participate in their student's classes, and to observe classroom activities, as follows:

As agreed to by classroom teachers and family volunteers

7. Organized, ongoing, and timely systems for families/guardians to be actively involved in the planning, implementation, and review of programs including but not limited to family engagement policies and the development of any schoolwide program plans.

- a. School Council Meetings and PTO Meetings
- b. Other Task Forces that are created for specific purposes

8. Information to families/guardians of participating students in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats, upon the request of families/guardians with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language families/guardians can understand.

- a. We are using the "smore" application to inform families in a user-friendly style that is translatable.
- b. Staff will reach out to those families who need extra support in understanding notices.

9. Information to families/guardians of participating students about Title I, Part A programs that include a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

- a. This information will be delivered in a smore newsletter specifically focused on Title I, our curriculum and our academic assessment measure.

10. Opportunities for regular meetings for families/guardians to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their students. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as feasible.

We will provide timely notice to each family/guardian when their student has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who has not met state licensure requirements.

Family Responsibilities

We, as a family/guardian, will support our student's learning in the following ways:

- Ensuring attendance.
- Tracking and supporting the completion of assignments.
- Supporting my student's school and/or classroom.
- Participating in decisions related to my student's education.
- Staying informed about my student's education by promptly addressing all notices from the school or the school district and responding, as appropriate.

Student Responsibilities

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

- Complete my assignments and ask for help when I need to.
- Share my progress and struggles with my family or caregiver
- Share all notices and information that I receive from my school with my family/guardian every day.

Signature of School Representative

Date

Signature of Family Member/Guardian

Date

Signature of Student

Date