

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

I. Statement of Policy

The Waterville Central School District (herein the “WCS District” or the “District”) is committed to providing all students, teachers, District personnel, and visitors with a safe and pleasant environment. This summary does not replace the Code of Conduct.

Our purpose is to offer a quality education in an environment free of discrimination, harassment and bullying. All students have the right to access educational and extracurricular activities on an equal basis. Therefore, we have adopted a “Code of Conduct” that applies to everyone involved in our schools. Our Code explains the rights and responsibilities of all who utilize our facilities or ride our buses. The guiding principles are those of kindness, positivity, respect, tolerance and honesty. We ask students to help us maintain a safe environment by treating others with courtesy, alerting us when they have heard or seen something concerning, asking for help, and accepting responsibility for their actions. Our Code focuses on respect for the rights and property of others and on the safety of everyone. In order for the WCS District to function properly, the conduct of students must conform to conditions that promote learning. Principals and teachers in New York State are charged with maintaining a productive learning environment. No student had the right to disrupt the learning process. Students who refuse to follow the rules by being disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, or violent or who place others in physical or moral danger will be disciplined. This discipline could range from a warning to permanent removal from school.

II. Age-Appropriate Restatement of Waterville CSD Code of Conduct

- A. You should never feel that it is not safe for you to come to school and participate in all school activities. You should never be prevented from concentrating on your schoolwork because another student or staff member is teasing you, making fun of you, pushing you around, or threatening you in some way because of your race, color, weight, national origin (where your family comes from), citizenship or immigration status, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), or sex.
- B. You may not act toward another student in a way that reasonably might make them feel threatened or unsafe, or that might reasonably make them unable to concentrate on their work, because of what you think about their race, color, weight, national origin (where your family comes from), citizenship or immigration status, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), or sex. It is against school rules for you to do this by your physical actions or by your verbal

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

statements, including electronic messages. This kind of conduct is prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at all school-sponsored events.

For more information regarding the WCSD Code of Conduct, visit the District website at <https://www.watervillecsd.org/>.

III. The Role of Teachers, Administrators, Other School Personnel, the Board and Parents

Students, parents/guardians, instructional staff, administrators, the Superintendent and the Board of Education, (the Board) are all parties in maintaining safe, orderly and effective schools. The roles of and expectations for each of these individuals are specified in the Code of Conduct.

The District Dignity Act Coordinators for each school are as follows:

Andre Padis, JSHS Principal
Telephone: (315) 841-3842

Crystal Chrisman, MPS Principal
Telephone: (315) 841-3784

The Dignity Act Coordinators are trained in methods to respond to human relations in the areas of race (including but not limited to hair texture or protective hairstyles), color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), and sex. They are available to speak with any person who has witnessed possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying or if that person has experienced treatment that may be prohibited discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

IV. Prohibited Conduct and Consequences

A. No person, either singly or in concert with others, shall:

1. Willfully cause physical injury to any other person or threaten to do so for the purpose of compelling or inducing such other person to refrain from any act which they have a lawful right to do, or to do any act which they have a lawful right not to do.
2. Willfully damage or destroy property of the District or remove or use such property without authorization.
3. Without permission, express or implied, enter into any private office of an administrative officer, faculty member or staff member. This prohibition

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

does not apply to law enforcement officers or individuals designated by the Superintendent to conduct lawful investigations of alleged misconduct.

4. Other than a student or employee, enter a classroom or the building beyond the administrative office without written permission of the Superintendent or their designee. Parents of students (who are not prohibited by being in their child's classroom by court order) need not obtain written permission from the Superintendent or designee. However, such individuals must be invited by the classroom teacher and must check in with the Building Pincipal's office upon arrival and departure.
5. Enter upon and remain in any building or facility for any purpose other than for authorized uses, or in such manner as to obstruct its authorized use by others.
6. Without authorization, remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Refuse to leave any building or facility after being requested to do so by an authorized administrator.
8. Obstruct the free movement of persons and vehicles in any place to which these rules apply.
9. Deliberately disrupt or prevent the peaceful and orderly conduct of classes, lectures and meetings, or deliberately interfere with any person who desires to express their views, including invited speakers.
10. Have in their possession upon any premises to which these rules apply, any knife, shotgun, pistol, revolver, or other firearm or weapon without the written authorization of the Superintendent, whether or not a license to possess the same has been issued to such person.
11. Possess, consume, use, distribute, purchase, sell, or exchange illegal substances on school property.
12. Distribute or post any written material, pamphlet or poster without the prior written approval of the Superintendent. This should not be construed as conflicting with any rights conferred on staff members by contract or law.
13. Use in either words, clothing or signs profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

language or words which may incite or offend another person; or constitute a health or safety hazard (including clothing that promotes the sale or use of alcohol, tobacco and/or illegal substances) or a substantial disruption or material interference with the mission, work or discipline of the school community.

14. Urge or incite, guard, protect, aid or abet others in the commission of any of the acts herein prohibited.
15. Plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing, harassment/bullying and/or discrimination as defined in Section I (B) of the Code of Conduct, labeled "Definitions."
16. Violate any law.

B. Penalties and Procedures

1. In the case of a violation of this section or any other provision of this Code of Conduct:
 - a. Any individual authorized to be on school property or at a school function (other than students or staff) that violates the rules of this Code will be directed to leave the property or function. In the event of their failure or refusal to do so, the Superintendent or designee shall cause their ejection from such property.
 - b. In the case of any unauthorized individual who is on school property or at a school function, the Superintendent or designee shall inform the individual that they are not authorized to remain and direct them to leave such property. In the event of their failure to do so, the Superintendent or designee shall cause their ejection from such property. Nothing in this section should be construed as authorizing the presence of any such person at any time, nor affect their liability for prosecution for trespassing, loitering, etc., as prescribed in the Penal Law.
 - c. In the case of a student, charges for violation of any of these rules shall be presented and shall be heard and determined in the manner provided in the applicable sections of this Code of Conduct or Section 3214(3) of the Education Law.
 - d. In the case of a faculty member having tenure, charges for

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

misconduct and violation of these rules shall be made, heard and determined in accordance with Section 3020-a of the Education Law.

- e. In the case of a faculty member not having tenure, the Superintendent shall conduct a hearing after written notice to the teacher of the charges and shall determine the punishment of the teacher if found guilty.
- f. In the case of any staff member who holds a position in the classified Civil Service which is covered by Section 75 of the Civil Service Law, charges of misconduct for violation of any of these rules shall be made, heard and determined as prescribed in that section.
- g. In the case of any staff member who does not hold a position in the classified Civil Service and is not covered by the provisions of Section 75 of the Civil Service Law, the Superintendent shall conduct a hearing after written notice to such staff member of the charges, and shall determine the punishment if such staff member is found guilty.

2. Discipline will be based on the following levels:

a. Level A:

These misbehaviors constitute minor infractions of school rules which cause little harm and minimal disruption. They are best handled quickly and informally. If the behaviors continue, however, their very persistence may make them disruptive enough to cause them to be treated as more serious infractions with more stringent consequences.

b. Level B:

Misbehaviors included at this level are frequent and/or serious enough to disrupt the learning climate of the school and affect the student's own ability to learn. Some of these infractions may be a result of misbehaviors which continue even after disciplinary measures are taken under Level A. Because of the frequency and/or seriousness of these misbehaviors, the administrator assumes the major responsibility for corrective action.

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

c. Level C:

Classified at this level are behaviors which may cause lasting harm to the misbehaving student or which may threaten the health, safety, or emotional well-being of others in the school. If the possibility exists that misbehavior(s) at this level violates criminal law(s), administrators may contact law enforcement officials. In most cases, efforts will be made to remediate through disciplinary action at the school.

d. Level D:

Except for unmodified Level C behavior, the acts listed at this level are clearly criminal. They represent a direct and immediate threat to the welfare of others or may result in serious injury to the student, other people, or property. In most cases, they require administrative action which immediately removes the student from school and calls for the intervention of appropriate authorities (i.e. unmodified Level C misbehavior; stealing, possession of stolen property, and/or sale of stolen property; indecent exposure; tampering with and/or activating a fire alarm; providing, selling, and use of drugs, illegal chemical substances and/or alcohol; assault and battery, etc.).

3. Students who violate the Code will be subject to a consequence. Typically, consequences become more severe if the misbehavior continues and can range from an oral warning to permanent suspension from school. Students and parents/guardians have rights. Students are to be informed of the reason for any consequences and will have an opportunity to explain their version of the event that led to the disciplinary action.
4. We expect all students, parents/guardians, visitors, and members of the staff to dress neatly and appropriately for all school activities and functions. Our dress code is explained more completely in the Code, but it requires students to dress in a manner that will not interfere with the main purpose of school education. Any student who is not dressed appropriately will be asked to correct the problem. Anyone who refuses will be subject to discipline.

C. Law Enforcement Agencies and Juvenile Delinquency Complaints

In the case of a violation of this section or any other provision of this Code of Conduct which constitutes a crime, the Superintendent has established the

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

following procedures to report such an incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to follow through with filing a criminal/juvenile delinquency complaint:

1. Any individual who believes that they have witnessed a crime either on school property or at a school function should report it to the appropriate Building Principal or their designee. The Principal/designee will gather the necessary information to determine whether they believe that a crime has been committed. If so, the appropriate local law enforcement agency will be contacted immediately. If not, the Principal/designee will take whatever disciplinary steps may be necessary, consistent with this Code of Conduct. These procedures should be followed in all circumstances except for reporting “child abuse in an educational setting” where the procedures for reporting such incidents are set forth in the statute.
2. If, in consultation with the local law enforcement agency, the District is deemed the appropriate entity to file a criminal/juvenile delinquency complaint against the Code violator, the appropriate school official (e.g., Building Principal) will be expected to file such a complaint. Where the victim of the crime is an individual, whether a student, teacher, staff member, visitor, etc., the crime victim will be strongly encouraged to file such a complaint.

V. Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of Students

A. Student Rights

1. Students of this District shall have the rights afforded to students under the provisions of the Federal and State constitutions and the laws of the State of New York.
2. Learn in an environment free of harassment/bullying and/or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, (including but not limited to hair texture and protective hair styles), color, weight, national origin, immigration status or citizenship, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), sex or any other legally protected status;
3. Participate equally in all school functions regardless of actual or perceived race (including but not limited to hair texture and protective hair styles), color, weight, national origin, immigration status or citizenship, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

(including gender identity or expression) sex or any other legally protected status;

4. Have complaints about school-related incidents investigated and responded to.
5. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
6. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
7. Have complaints about school-related incidents investigated and responded to.

B. Responsibilities of Students

It shall be the responsibility of the students to:

1. Be aware of and obey school rules and regulations.
2. Accept responsibility for their own actions.
3. Respect the rights of others, including the right to secure an education in an environment that is orderly and disciplined.
4. Attend school regularly and punctually.
5. Take advantage of the academic opportunities offered at school.
6. Be supportive of and participate in school functions.
7. Maintain habits of personal cleanliness.
8. Respect school property.
9. Strive for mutually respectful relationships with teachers and administrators recognizing their role as a surrogate parent in matters of behavior and discipline.
10. Contribute toward establishing and maintaining an atmosphere that generates mutual respect and dignity for all.

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

11. Be informed regarding student rights and responsibilities and comply with all rules and regulations of this Policy.
12. Act and speak respectfully about issues/concerns.
13. Use non-sexist, non-racist and other non-biased language.
14. Respect and treat others with tolerance and dignity regardless of actual or perceived race (including but not limited to hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, weight, national origin, immigration status or citizenship, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), sex or any other legally protected status.
15. Use communication that is non-confrontational and is not obscene or defamatory.
16. Report acts of harassment/bullying and/or discrimination, and other inappropriate actions that threaten the physical and/or emotional safety of others to the appropriate staff member, building administrator, or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC).

The above bill of rights and responsibilities shall be publicized and explained to all students on an annual basis. The manner and extent of the publication shall be determined by the Superintendent or their designee.

C. Security Searches (Students)

The Board authorizes administrators to undertake searches of students and their possessions (e.g. pocket contents, book bags, handbags, etc.) when there is reasonable individualized suspicion that a student has violated or is violating the law, District policy or regulation or school rules. District also retains the authority to examine the contents of all school property, such as student lockers, staff work areas, and both physical and digital files.

D. Student Conduct

1. Acceptable and appropriate conduct by students shall be consistent with the student responsibilities outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Whenever possible, teachers and staff members are encouraged to use realistic, age appropriate positive and progressive discipline and remedial

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

techniques which reward and enforce positive behavior. The District shall formally recognize responsible student behavior in forums such as the National Honor Society induction ceremony, academic awards assemblies and certificates for perfect attendance. The District encourages the development of additional methods of recognition.

2. Examples of Unacceptable and Inappropriate behavior
 - a. Any violation of law
 - b. Being under the influence of alcohol on school property or at school functions; possessing, selling, consuming, distributing, exchanging, purchasing or being in possession of alcohol on school property or on a bus going to or from a school function or at a school function as defined by Section I (B).
 - c. Being under the influence of, the use, possession, sale or gift, distribution, purchase or exchange of Illegal Substances or Tobacco Products, as defined in the Code, or any instruments for the use of such Illegal Substance or Tobacco Product such as pipe, syringe, lighters or other paraphernalia, while on school property or on a bus going to or from a school function or at a school function as defined by Section I (B) of the Code. Excepted is any drug taken in accordance with a current prescription signed by a physician which is to be taken by that particular student at the time in question.
 - d. Stealing, lying, cheating, plagiarism or other acts of dishonesty.
 - e. Academic Integrity.
 - f. Verbal or physical intimidation.
 - g. Fighting or causing physical harm to another; or encouraging, aiding or facilitating another student to commit a physical or verbal threat or act of physical violence.
 - h. Disrespect toward an administrator, faculty or other staff member.
 - i. Possession or use of a weapon, as defined in this Code, on school property, at a school function or on a school bus.

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

- j. Violation of the Dress Code.
- k. Failure to comply with the directions of a teacher, administrator or other school employee.
- l. Engaging in acts of harassment/bullying or sexual harassment as defined in this Code, District policies, and the law.
- m. Using in either words, clothing, or signs, profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive language or words which may incite or offend another person; or constitute a health and safety hazard (including but not limited to clothing that promotes the sale or use of alcohol, tobacco and/or illegal substances) or a substantial disruption or material interference with the mission, work or discipline of the school community.
- n. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
- o. Lateness for, missing or leaving school or class without permission or an excuse given by a faculty member.
- p. Any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
- q. Unacceptable classroom behavior including being disrespectful to a teacher or staff member or inappropriate talking in class.
- r. Unacceptable bus behavior including not staying seated, throwing objects, excessive loudness or other activities that distract the driver of the bus.
- s. Public displays of affection.
- t. Gambling.
- u. Vandalism of school property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, staff member, student or any person lawfully on District property.
- v. In addition to the preceding standards of conduct, the District prohibits harassment/bullying and/or discrimination as defined in this Code, against any student by staff members or students. Such

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

conduct may include but is not limited to, conduct that creates a hostile environment by conduct (with or without physical conduct) or verbal statements, intimidation, or abuse.

The prohibition of harassment/bullying and/or discrimination includes, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation, or abuse based on the student's actual or perceived race (including but not limited to hair texture and protective hair styles), color, weight, national origin, immigration status or citizenship, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), sex or any other legally protected status.

E. Student Dress Code

As a general principle, students have the right to determine their own dress as it relates to taste and appearance. However, all students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions.

Students should dress in a manner that is appropriate and respectful of a professional learning environment. Issues of student dress will be handled on a case-by-case basis in a manner that demonstrates respect for the student.

Students may be required to wear appropriate protective gear in applicable classes (including, but not limited to, family and consumer science, physical education, technology, agriculture, and science lab settings). Students shall not be permitted to wear apparel that:

- a. is profane, lewd or offensive
- b. constitutes a substantial disruption or material interference with the mission, work or discipline of the educational environment and overall school community
- c. constitutes a health or safety hazard (including but not limited to clothing that promotes the sale or use of alcohol, tobacco and/or illegal substances); or
- d. otherwise infringes upon the rights of others.

Nothing in this Dress Code will be construed to limit the ability of students to dress and/or groom themselves in a way that allows them to express their gender identity, or to permit the discipline of students for doing so.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

Nothing in this Dress Code will be construed to limit the ability of students to wear protective hair styles (including but not limited to braids, locks, and twists) or to wear their hair in a particular texture, or to permit the discipline of students for doing so.

Students who violate the dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item or replacing it with an acceptable article of clothing. Any student who refuses a request by the Building Principal to cover, remove, or replace the item shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the Code, up to and including suspension from school.

F. Possession of a Firearm

A student who possesses a firearm on District property or at a District event shall be suspended out-of-school for a minimum of twelve (12) months, provided that the Superintendent may modify this period of suspension on a case-by-case basis.

G. Disciplinary Responses to Student Misconduct

The purpose of all discipline is to teach students appropriate and constructive behaviors. Disciplinary measures shall be balanced, age appropriate, and address the seriousness of the offense and, where applicable, to the previous discipline record of the student.

Disciplinary penalties contained in this Code are advisory. As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. Additionally, a student's first offense in one category, coupled with multiple offenses in other categories may result in a harsher penalty than that of another student who does not have a similar violation history. However, the District reserves the right to impose any level of discipline, even for a first offense, as the facts may warrant.

The District's Code divides types of misbehaviors into four (4) levels of increasing seriousness, with more stringent disciplinary measures provided for at each level. If an infraction appears to fall between two (2) levels, it should be categorized and dealt with at the less stringent level. At each level there are examples of infractions to be treated at that level. The list is intended to be descriptive rather than exhaustive. Each level also has a description of procedures which school officials should follow in administering discipline, and a menu of disciplinary choices. Because each child and each misbehavior is different, school officials have the discretion to tailor the discipline for each infraction to best encourage the child to make better choices in the future through remedial actions

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

to help improve student behavior, reduce repeated misbehaviors, and contribute to a more positive school environment.

Disciplinary actions may result from any incident occurring on school property, a school bus, or at a school function. Disciplinary action may also be taken if an incident occurs off school property and is deemed to be disruptive to the educational process.

H. Removal of Disruptive Students from the Classroom.

Teachers are authorized by the Education Law and the Code of Conduct to remove a student from the teacher's classroom if the student is substantially disruptive of the educational process, or if the student substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom.

A disruptive student may be removed from a teacher's classroom by the teacher for no more than two (2) days of instruction for each incident of substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority.

I. Student Suspension from School

1. The suspension of students shall be conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct and with Section 3214 of the NYS Education Law.
2. Minimum Suspension for Students who Repeatedly are Substantially Disruptive:

Students who repeatedly are substantially disruptive to the educational process or who substantially interfere with the teacher's authority in the classroom may be subject to an in-school or an out-of-school suspension.

3. Minimum Suspension for Violent Students

Students who are deemed to be "violent students" as defined by Education Law Section 3214 shall be subject to a minimum out-of-school suspension as defined by the Code of Conduct.

J. PINS Petition/Referral to Human Services Agencies

Students may be referred to outside agencies as appropriate for assistance in addressing behavioral or other problems.

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

VI. Responses to Instances of Inappropriate Conduct

Students, Parents/Guardians and others shall report students who are having problems or appear to be having problems regarding matters covered in the Code of Conduct to the building administrator.

Teachers and Student Service Personnel shall report orally to their Principal, the Superintendent, or designee any incident of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination that they witness or that is reported to them, not more than one (1) day later; and file a written report not later than two (2) school days after the initial oral report.

Principals shall report to the Superintendent, or designee any incident of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination that they witness or that is reported to them, not more than one (1) day later.

The **Superintendent** shall process in a timely manner all reports of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, including insuring that an appropriate investigation is conducted and appropriate reports are made to law enforcement.

VII. Discipline of Students with Disabilities

The Board recognizes that the need to address disruptive or problem behavior within its schools may result in the suspension, removal or other discipline of students with disabilities eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Article 89 of the Education Law (Article 89) and their implementing regulations. It also recognizes that these students with disabilities enjoy certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them.

VIII. Conduct by School Employees

Acceptable conduct by school employees shall be consistent with the role of teachers and staff outlined in the Code of Conduct.

IX. Prohibition of Corporal Punishment

The use of physical restraint will align with NYS law and regulations, and as outlined in Policy 7068.

X. Standards and Procedures to Assure the Security and Safety of Students and School Personnel.

POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1005.1

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE
CODE OF CONDUCT

The District has an established emergency management/school safety plan, which has been developed in accordance with applicable law and regulation to assure the security and safety of students and school personnel.

XI. Copies of the District's Code of Conduct

This document is a plain language summary of the District Code of Conduct. Copies of the District Code of Conduct may be obtained through your student's school office or the Office of the Superintendent.

Waterville Central School District
Approved by the Superintendent: 07/31/25