

PARK AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026 - 2027

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **CANCELLATIONS**
- **DELAYED OPENINGS**
- **EVACUATION**

Information concerning cancellation, delayed opening of school on bad weather days, or evacuation will be provided via the following:

Cable: Local Cable Access Channel 194

Television: WBZ Channel 4
 WCVB Channel 5
 WHDH Channel 7
 NBC Boston Channel 10
 Fox TV Channel 25
 NECN Channel 77

Website: www.webster-schools.org

Park Avenue Elementary may also use the telephone messaging system known as **ONE CALL NOW** as a rapid notification and communication service to communicate with parents. The phone numbers on file through PowerSchool provided by families at the start of school will be the main number used in the One Call Now program. If your phone number changes during the year, please notify us immediately.

If students are already at school, and it is necessary to dismiss before standard school hours, you will be notified through the Cable/TV channels, and district website, and if necessary, One Call Now.

Should an evacuation of the building be necessary, it will be conducted along our fire drill procedures. Students will proceed to a determined evacuation area by staff in an orderly fashion. Staff will report attendance to their assigned staff leader to ensure that all students are accounted for.

Your cooperation in this matter will help us provide a smooth and safe dismissal for students.

PARK AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
58 PARK AVENUE
WEBSTER, MA 01570
TELEPHONE: 508-943-4554 FAX: 508-949-1668

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(These sections include but are not limited to policy in regards to: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Discipline and Disciplinary Hearings, Special Education and Special Education Procedures.)

AHERA Notification.....72

Ms. Amy Puliafico, Principal

Mrs. Jessica Ochocki, Assistant Principal

Mr. Matthew Aronian, Dean of Students

58 Park Avenue * Webster, Massachusetts 01570 - Ph: 508-943-4554, Fax: 508-949-1668



August 2026

Dear Park Avenue Elementary School Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year Park Avenue Elementary School! It is with great excitement and pride that I welcome you to another wonderful school year. At Park Avenue, we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where every child feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.

Our dedicated staff works each day to ensure that all students are challenged academically while also supported socially and emotionally. We believe strong partnerships between school and home are essential to student success, and we look forward to working closely with you throughout the year. Together, we can help our students grow into confident learners, kind classmates, and responsible citizens.

As part of our Webster Public Schools, we are guided by the motto of “Empowering every student to learn with purpose, grow through challenge, and lead with integrity.” This reflects our commitment to helping students become curious learners, resilient problem-solvers, and compassionate leaders both inside and outside the classroom. At Park Avenue, we strive each day to create meaningful learning experiences that inspire students to reach their full potential.

This handbook is designed to provide important information about our school’s expectations, procedures, programs, and resources. We encourage you to review it carefully and refer to it throughout the year. Clear communication and shared expectations help us maintain a positive school climate where all students can thrive.

At Park Avenue Elementary School, we value respect, responsibility, kindness, and perseverance. We are proud of our school community and the collaborative spirit that makes our school such a special place for children and families.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We are excited for a successful school year filled with learning, growth, and memorable experiences. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions, ideas, or concerns. We are honored to work with your family.

Sincerely,

Amy Puliafico
Principal
Park Avenue Elementary School



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Park Avenue Elementary School Office

Phone: 508-943-4554

Fax: 508-949-1668

Principal, Ms. Amy Puliafico	ext. 14011
Assistant Principal, TBD	ext. 10169
Assistant Principal, Mrs. Jessica Ochocki	ext. 14014
Dean of Students, Mr. Matthew Aronian	ext. 14012
Nurse, Ms. Stefani Poletta	ext. 19001
Nurse, Ms. Alicia Bowes	ext. 19001
Adjustment Counselor, Mrs. Renee Freeman	ext. 10346
Adjustment Counselor, Ms. Samantha Lopez-Avila	ext. 10346
Adjustment Counselor, Ms. Gina Wojnarowicz	ext. 10134
Adjustment Counselor, Ms. Rongina McClelland	ext. 10226

Webster Public Schools Central Office Administration

Phone: 508-943-0104

Superintendent, Mrs. Monique Pierangeli
Assistant Superintendent for Federal Programs and Data, Dr. Patricia Mackay
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Mrs. Desiree Moniz
Director of Student Support Services/Title IX Officer, Shari Haire
504 Coordinator, Shari Haire
Assistant Director of Student Support Services, Carol Cohen
Director of Curriculum, Mrs. Deborah Rivera
Business Manager, Lisa Kontoes
Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer, Shari Haire
Director of Food Service, Ms. Kelsey Sanders
IT District Manager, Mr. Jon O'Neill

Bully Hot-line - 508-943-0104 ext. 40001

Webster Middle School Office

508-943-1922

Bartlett High School Office

508-943-8552

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Park Avenue Elementary School is an equal opportunity institution. According to State and Federal law, no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX Compliance Officer. “

PAE IMPORTANT DATES

***½ day dismissal begins at 12:00 noon**

<i>August 24th - 25th</i>	<i>New Teacher Orientation</i>
<i>August 26th- 28th</i>	<i>District Opening Professional Development</i>
<i>August 31st</i>	<i>First Day of School Gr. 1-12</i>
<i>September 7th</i>	<i>No School Labor Day</i>
<i>September 8th</i>	<i>First day of school K students</i>
<i>September 14th</i>	<i>First day of school PreK students</i>
<i>September 24th</i>	<i>Open House</i>
<i>October 12th</i>	<i>No School (Columbus Day)</i>
<i>October 11th</i>	<i>No School - Professional Development for</i>
<i>November 11th</i>	<i>No School (Veteran's Day)</i>
<i>November 17th</i>	<i>½ day for students - Parent Conferences (by appointment Grades K - 4)</i>
<i>November 25th</i>	<i>½ day for students - Thanksgiving break begins</i>
<i>November 26th - 27th</i>	<i>No School (Thanksgiving Break)</i>
<i>December 24th- 31st</i>	<i>No School - Holiday Break</i>
<i>January 1st</i>	<i>No School - New Years Day</i>
<i>January 18th</i>	<i>No School (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)</i>
<i>January 19th</i>	<i>No School - Professional Development for teachers</i>
<i>February 3rd</i>	<i>½ day for students - Professional Development for teachers</i>
<i>February 15th -20th</i>	<i>No School (MLK Day and Winter Vacation)</i>
<i>March 3rd</i>	<i>½ day for students - Professional Development for teachers</i>
<i>March 26th</i>	<i>No School - Good Friday</i>
<i>April 7th</i>	<i>½ day for students - Professional Development for teachers</i>
<i>April 19th - 23rd</i>	<i>No School - (Patriots Day and April Vacation)</i>
<i>May 5th</i>	<i>½ day for students - Professional Development for teachers</i>
<i>May 31st</i>	<i>No School (Memorial Day)</i>
<i>June 15th</i>	<i>Last day of School (½ day for students)</i>
<i>June 18th</i>	<i>Juneteenth Observed</i>

PARK AVENUE STAFF 2026 - 2027



<u>Special Education</u> Aliya Zubi - School Psychologist Lisa Boisvert - Team Chair PreK Tara Shea - Team Chair Gr. 1 - 3 Dan Zimmer - Team Chair 4th Grade Christina Cabrera - Kindergarten Inclusion Faith Veronis- Gr. 1 Inclusion . Deborah Castellani - Gr. 2 Inclusion Barbra Guillotis - Gr. 3 Inclusion Susan Micciche - Gr. 4 Inclusion Lori Piniarski - BCBA-Gr. 2-4 Brittany Openshaw - BCBA PreK - 1 Marie Daley - Resource Room Elizabeth Waye - Betz - Resource Room William Gammetto - PreK Sub Separate Cathleen Nikosey - Academic Learning Center Intermediate Lisa Falco - Foreman - Academic Learning Center Primary Nora Werme - Academic Learning Center Transitional Heather Wilcox - STAR	<u>Preschool</u> Alicia Blair TBD <u>Kindergarten</u> Sarah Cole Lori Hanlon Alicia Hashey Amy Jordan Maryland Sheridan Erin Tetreault-MCCrillis Alicia Coakley	<u>Grade One</u> Amanda Maihiot Ashley Bounphaysonh Danielle Calnan Lorelle Dodge Amanda Gottlieb Stephanie Lit Sarah Coyle
<u>Grade Two</u> Lynn Brown Tara Whiting Jennifer Kelley Pamela Minarik Lisa Simonis Abbigail Poplawski	<u>Grade Three</u> Cathy Cournoyer Brandon Meece Kerri Williams Gina Kajano Jacob Bond Michelle Alder	<u>Grade Four</u> Annalise Sherman Rebecca Beaupre Michelle Boulay Shari LaBrec Peter LeBlanc Amy Pinto Kim Forget
<u>Unified Arts Specialists</u> Callan D'Ascanio - Art Kim Theriault- STEAM Shelby Kirejczyk - Technology Jenna MacDonald- Music Leslie Pietz - PE Kyle Kreidler - PE Anja Kennedy - Library/Media	<u>Academic Support Services</u> Meghan Coutu - ELL Tracie Vangel - ELL Rebecca Pasceri - ELL Cassandra Taylor - ELL Lori Trahan- ELL Sue Ricard - Acad. Interventionist Joy Simonelli- Acad. Interventionist <u>Instructional Coach</u> Tara Gelineau <u>Behavior Coach</u> Julie Laub	<u>Nursing Services</u> Stefanie Poletta Alicia Bowes <u>Adjustment Counselors</u> Renee Harrington-Freeman Samantha Lopez-Avila Rongina McClelland Gina Wojnarowicz
<u>Related Service</u> Lisa Cotter - SLP Torri Hendra- SLP Rachel Jewell- SLPA Erica Iacuzzio - COTA Christine MacManus - SLP Donna Smith - COTA Bridget Hamilton - OT TBD-SLPA	<u>Administrative Staff</u> Amy Puliafico-Principal TBD- Assistant Principal Jessica Ochocki - Assistant Principal Matthew Aronian- Dean of Students Cari Reed - Lead Admin. Assistant Yvonne Torres- Admin. Assistant	<u>Cafeteria and BIC Staff</u> Kelsey Sanders - District Food Director Stacey Easterling - PAE Manager Annemarie Livernoche Marcella Bugbee Lisa Hickman Joan Geotis Shanna Blanchard Meire Walters

	<u>Custodial Staff</u> Shawn Hetherman - Head Custodian Steve Camerano Marciel Villegas Kyle McCann	
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VISITORS

Upon entering the building, please report to the main office. Visitors/Volunteers to the school who are guests must have a Visitor's/Volunteer's Badge and must sign their name, time of arrival and departure in the logbook at the office. The badge should be visible at all times and in plain view. Before exiting, the Visitor/Volunteer needs to return the badge to the office. All visitors must abide by the rules of Park Avenue Elementary School.

THE SCHOOL DAY

General Schedule

8:20-8:35 am: Students enter the building and go to their classroom - Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC)

8:35 am: Tardy bell rings - Students are marked tardy at this time. Instruction begins.

11:15 am -1:20 pm: Lunch/Recess

3:05 pm: Dismissal

NOTE: Half day dismissals are at 12:00 PM.

Daily instruction includes literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, learning skills and social skills. We use a 7-Day Cycle for art, technology, music, physical education, library and STEAM. Students have a recess and lunch break each day.

Carline Arrival & Dismissal - Please see page 33 carline and bus information

Staff members are not available to supervise children before 8:20 am or after 3:25 pm.

Parents assume responsibility for the safety of their children until 8:20 am. Please do not leave your child unattended on school property before or after school. This includes walkers. Morning walkers may come into school through the Park Ave and Ray St. entrances. Drop-offs in the parking lot on the first floor are not permitted during normal arrival time. Afternoon walkers MUST be picked up at the Ray Street entrance with a family dismissal number. For your planning purposes and student safety, walkers will be dismissed last at the parent pick-up line location.

TARDY

Students arriving after 8:35 am are tardy and will need to be accompanied into the building with an adult to the main office (Park Ave. entrance) before going to their classroom.

DISMISSAL

General Dismissal Details

Each school year parents must submit an updated Student Transportation Form indicating how their child will be going to and from school. When transportation changes occur, young children often get confused. Therefore, for safety purposes, **a written note must be submitted or a call made to the main office for any dismissal change.** Without a written note or adult confirmation indicating a change, your child will go home according to the Student Transportation Form submitted at the beginning of the school year. Emails, DOJOs and phone calls to the teacher during the day are not reliable means of communication for dismissal changes.

*In the interest of student safety, parents who plan to release their child to another person at dismissal **MUST send a note to the main office** that identifies the adult to whom the child will be released. Park Ave Elementary School **CANNOT** release any student to a person unless they are on the student's emergency card or named in a parental note and have a dismissal number.*

DISMISSAL NUMBERS

All students/families are given a dismissal number upon registration. Parents/guardians are the only ones given this number. If you lose this number you will have to come to school with a photo ID to get the number. Students will only be dismissed from school if the adult has the child's **Family Dismissal Number.**

This process is for the safety of students. If you send someone else to pick up your child he/she **must know the dismissal number and have a picture ID** or the child will not be dismissed to this person. If the adult does not have the dismissal number, they will need an ID and listed as a contact in our student information system. You are the only one that can give out this number so you can ensure the safety of your child during dismissal.

Please follow all other dismissal requirements including writing a note and making sure you keep the emergency contacts updated.

- The dismissal number was sent home ON each child's class placement letter. Students in grades 1-4 will use the same number as last year.
- If a family has a Kindergarten through Grade 4 student, there will be ONE Family Dismissal Number for the FAMILY.
- Understanding that some families are blended, if there is a need for additional dismissal numbers, please contact the main office.

Please notify the office immediately if you have more than one dismissal number for your family so the error can be corrected.

Early Dismissal by Parent:

It is important to remember that our teachers are teaching and our students are learning right up until dismissal at 3:05 PM. Please remember that **EARLY DISMISSALS INTERRUPT LEARNING.** Please make every effort to avoid dismissals during the school day. Your efforts to

schedule doctor appointments, etc. before or after school will be greatly appreciated. Early dismissal should be reserved for emergencies that arise during the school day. Please note that dismissals from the office after 2:30 PM are **highly discouraged**. At that late hour, the office is preparing for regular dismissal.

Early dismissal from school is granted only upon parental request specifying the time, date, and who is picking up the child. **All individuals picking up should have the student dismissal number and have appropriate ID.** Office staff will call your child upon your arrival. If your child is ill and should be sent home, the nurse or office will notify you and ask that you please pick up your child in a timely manner. Pick-ups that occur on a regular basis may be arranged for the year if the parent sends a note to the teacher and the office indicating the change for the year.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is the most important first step at ensuring students are receiving the education they need and deserve. The Webster School Committee has adopted an Attendance Policy, which includes standards of attendance. The school committee does recognize that parents/caregivers have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly in accordance with state law. (M.G.L. 76:1, 76:1B, 76:16, 76:18, 76:20). All Webster Public Schools follow Massachusetts General Law in regards to student attendance.

The Department of Elementary & Secondary Education tracks student attendance and identifies students who miss 10% or more of school as chronically absent. Research has shown that chronic absenteeism erodes the academic and social skills needed to succeed in school.

What does Massachusetts State law say about attending school?

- Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76 requires that all children between the ages of six and sixteen attend school daily.
- A public school district may excuse up to 7-day sessions or 14-half day sessions in any period of six months.
- The law requires that schools annually provide parents/guardians with instructions for calling a designated phone number at a designated time to inform the school of a student's absence and the reason for the absence.
- Parents/guardians must provide the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number so that they may be contacted during the school day to inquire about said absence.

Based on this law, students may be approved for up to 7 excused absences in a 6 month period.

Excused absences are defined as follows:

1. Illness with medical documentation
2. A medical appointment that must be made during the school day
3. Observing a recognized religious holiday when the observance is during school
4. A family emergency
5. A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose that has been approved by the school
6. Educational disruption caused by a student's homelessness, unplanned hospitalization, or placement in foster care or a youth development center
7. Dismissal by the school nurse for illness

*****Note: Vacations will not be considered excused and should be avoided during days school is in session.***

Webster Public Schools uses a tiered system of intervention for addressing student learning and behaviors, which includes the development of regular school attendance. The District will implement a tiered system of support that is universal, targeted, and includes intensive levels of intervention. Based on the school's knowledge of excused or unexcused absences, the district will implement:

- 1. Universal Attendance Interventions (1-5 days by between Day 1 and 90 or between 60-180)**
 - a. By Day 3 of unexcused absence, two way communication by designated staff member as determined by school
 - b. By Day 5 of unexcused absence, a letter home regarding attendance by counselor
 - c. By Day 5 of unexcused absence, a two way communication by designated staff member as determined by school
- 2. Targeted Attendance Intervention (6-10 days between day 1-180)**
 - a. Parent/student meeting with counselor and other support staff/administration to develop a plan for improved attendance and/or make up for missed time.
 - b. By Day 10 of absence a letter home from administration regarding attendance
 - c. Possible home visit by designated staff member as determined by school
 - d. Consideration for filing a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) with Dudley District Juvenile Court or 51A with the Department of Children and Families.
- 3. Intensive Attendance Intervention (11 or more days)**
 - a. Home visit by counselor and school administrator
 - b. Parent/student meeting with guidance counselor to develop a plan to make-up academic deficits resulting from absences from school - Outside support agencies may be involved in this meeting

- c. By day 18 of absence a letter home from the superintendent's office regarding attendance
- d. Consideration for filing a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) with Dudley District Juvenile Court or 51A with the Department of Children and Families.

Tardiness

Students are considered tardy after 8:35 a.m. Tardy students **MUST** report to the office for a late slip before entering their classroom. Tardiness will be excused only if you have a note of acceptable explanation, such as a dentist or doctor appointment. We strongly encourage students to be punctual in school arrival. Arriving late to school is disruptive to the student and to the student's classroom. Tardiness to school will be counted as time lost within the provisions of the Attendance Policy.

Parental Responsibility

Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring that a child under their control attends school daily. It is a crime for a parent or guardian to cause their child to not attend school. If a child fails to attend school for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any six month period, the school may file a child protection or court action against the responsible parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians who are in need of support to help improve the attendance of their child should contact the school counselor for assistance.

Absences

Parents/caregivers must provide a written explanation of the absence and/or tardiness of a child. Please submit this explanation to the school office on the day of the child's return to school, including:

- Name of student
- Date of absence
- Reason for absence
- Parent or Guardian signature.

Whenever possible, this notification can be provided in advance of the absence/tardy in circumstances where advanced notice is possible. In addition to a written notification, whenever a student is absent/tardy from school, the parent **MUST** call the school before **8:45 am** at 508-943-4554. Please state:

1. Your child name
2. Name of your child's teacher
3. Reason for absence/tardiness
4. Phone number where you can be reached during the day in case a return call is necessary.

In the event a student's parent/caregiver has not informed the school of the absence/tardiness, the parent will receive a daily attendance "robo-call."

Webster Public Schools uses a tiered system of intervention for addressing student learning and behaviors, which includes the development of regular school attendance. The District will

implement a tiered system of support that is universal, targeted, and includes intensive levels of intervention. Based on the school's knowledge of excused or unexcused absences, the district will implement:

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Webster Public Schools Before and After School Program provides care for school aged children from Kindergarten through Grade 4. The program operates when school is in session, providing quality school based programming for students in an enjoyable atmosphere that is comfortable and safe. They offer homework support, indoor and outdoor recreation, and snacks. Children participate in hands-on enrichment activities using science, art and technology. The program's philosophy is that each child deserves the love and respect that will foster self-esteem, independence and self worth. The program provides for all aspects of child development; physical, intellectual, social and emotional.

The Webster Public Schools Before and After School Program located at the Park Avenue Elementary school is self-supporting and is run under the Webster Public School system. Weekly tuition is determined by the number of days in which your child is registered. The program opens its doors for the morning session at 6:30 am until 8:30 am each day. The afternoon session begins at 3:00 pm and runs until 6:00 pm each day.

Registration information is available at www.webster-schools.org or contact Ms. Lois Taylor, Program Director: (508) 808-1887

CAFETERIA

Free breakfast and lunch is available for all students PreK to 4. Milk costs \$0.45 if purchased for a cold lunch from home.

Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC)

Breakfast is provided free of charge to all students and is served daily in classrooms. Students should report directly to their classrooms at 8:20 a.m. to participate. A healthy breakfast to start the day helps students feel energized, focused, and ready to learn. We encourage all students to take advantage of this free opportunity. Any unopened, non-perishable food items remaining from the Breakfast in the Classroom program may be placed on a classroom sharing table for other students to enjoy.

Lunch Time Conduct

Students are expected to enter the cafeteria calmly, remain seated while eating, use appropriate voice levels, follow adult directions, and contribute to a safe, respectful, and welcoming lunch environment. Staff may use brief settling routines as appropriate to support an orderly transition from recess to lunch.

Each lunch period is supervised by school staff to ensure a safe and positive environment for all students. School Staff members also supervise recess and reinforce school-wide expectations to help all students remain safe, respectful, and responsible throughout the school day.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER

Parents must notify the office of any change of address or telephone number as soon as it occurs. The school needs to have a working telephone number at all times in case of an emergency. The **ONE CALL NOW** messaging system provides rapid notification and communication with parents, requires current telephone numbers. Please contact the office with updated contact information as needed. If a student is moving out of Webster please contact the main office.

CLASS PLACEMENT

The process of creating class lists for the fall begins in the spring. team of grade level special educators, school adjustment counselors, teachers, as well as building administration, use multiple pieces of information and data to form classes that are balanced according to the academic, social and emotional attributes of the students. By creating balanced classrooms, each student will be given an equal opportunity to be in any teacher's class.

During this process, the teachers have a responsibility to help build the class lists; however, they do not have the responsibility of assigning teachers to classes. The Administration Team reviews the final lists (including new students to the district) and then assigns teachers to the classes. Students and families are notified in June of placement for the following year.

SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS **PBIS**

At Park Avenue Elementary School, we are committed to creating a positive, safe, and supportive learning environment for all students through our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. PBIS is a proactive, school-wide approach that teaches, models, and reinforces the behaviors that help students succeed both academically and socially.

Our school-wide expectations are simple and consistent:

Be Safe

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

These expectations are explicitly taught and practiced in all school settings, including classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, recess, buses, and school events. Staff members regularly acknowledge and celebrate students who demonstrate these behaviors, helping to build a positive school climate where all students can learn and thrive.

PBIS recognizes that appropriate behavior, like academic skills, must be taught and reinforced. When students make mistakes, staff work to reteach expectations, provide support, and help students develop the skills needed to make better choices in the future. School staff use behavior and attendance data to

identify patterns, monitor school climate, and develop supports that promote positive behavior and student success.

When behavioral concerns arise, staff members respond in ways that are developmentally appropriate, restorative, and focused on student growth. Responses may include reteaching expectations, problem-solving conversations, restorative practices, loss of privileges, parent communication, or other interventions designed to support positive behavior. More significant or repeated concerns may require additional collaboration among families, teachers, counselors, and administrators to develop individualized supports.

Families play an important role in supporting student success. Parents and caregivers who have questions or concerns regarding student behavior or discipline are encouraged to contact their child's classroom teacher first. If additional support is needed, school administrators are available to assist in resolving concerns and developing a plan for success.

Behavior Expectations:

At Park Avenue Elementary School, we use a school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework centered on three core expectations:

Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible.

These expectations guide student behavior in all school settings, including classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, recess, buses, and school events. Staff members, administrators, and adjustment counselors work together to explicitly teach, model, practice, and reinforce these expectations throughout the school year. Specific teaching of skills is done in greater detail at the beginning of each school year as well as following longer breaks from school.

To promote a positive learning environment, students are also taught and expected to use designated voice levels in various school settings. Consistent expectations help create a safe, respectful, and productive school community for all.

Throughout the year, students are recognized and celebrated for demonstrating our school-wide expectations through a variety of classroom, grade-level, and school-wide acknowledgments and celebrations

.SAFE

Setting	What It Looks Like
Hallways & Stairs	Walk facing forward, hands to yourself, one step at a time, hold the railing
Cafeteria	Eat only your own food, let adults know about spills, two hands to carry trays
Playground	Use equipment properly, Hands to Self
Classroom	Keep body in learning space
Arrival/Dismissal	Follow adult directions, move directly to your destination

Bathroom	Use the bathroom and wash your hands before returning to class
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RESPONSIBLE

Setting	What It Looks Like
Hallways & Stairs	Walk on the right side, pick up dropped items, treat bulletin boards with care
Cafeteria	Clean up after yourself, talk with friends at your table
Playground	When the whistle blows, stop play, take a knee and line up when the monitors signal,
Classroom	Follow directions the first time, take care of your materials, try your best
Arrival/Dismissal	Bring what you need to school and home, keep track of your things
Bathroom	Only 3 students at a time, wait your turn, and throw items in trash

RESPECTFUL

Setting	What It Looks Like
Hallways & Stairs	Be patient with slower walkers, give space, monitor voice level (level 0 or 1)
Cafeteria	Monitor your volume level, keep your food in your own space
Playground	Take turns, include others in play
Classroom	Raise your hand, listen when others speak, treat others how you want to be treated, appropriate voice level
Arrival/Dismissal	Wait in line with a calm body, give others space, listen for your cue
Bathroom	Give others privacy, return to class quickly in case someone is waiting

Suspension/Expulsion (Due Process):

A student may be suspended for a violation of student regulations on the first offense if it is judged to be serious by school officials. In general, a student will face suspension from school when efforts to have his/her behavior conform to school standards and regulations through the use of reason and disciplinary action have failed to bring about a desired change.

Before a student receives a suspension the following procedure will take place:

- The student/parent will be notified with an oral or written notice of the infraction.
- The student/parent will be given an explanation of the basis for the infraction.
- The student/parent will be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story.
- When suspended, a student may not take part in any school related activities, including field trips, assemblies, or be on school grounds, etc.

It is to be noted that we strive to follow progressive discipline and to take into consideration the developmental needs of each student. We also understand the importance of providing students with physical and mental breaks and will work closely with our adjustment counselor team in

providing safe and supportive, proactive measures to address behavior needs. Progressive discipline may come in the form of writing a letter of apology, a missed recess, conferencing with an administrator, a call home, etc., before issuing a more serious response. Students may also be provided with an opportunity to “turn things around” by engaging in a restorative practice that connects a teachable component when responding to misbehavior. An in-house suspension may be issued at which time a student will work with a facilitator to continue their school day within the building. These types of responses will typically happen before an out of school suspension is issued. However, unsafe or on-going behaviors may result in an out of school suspension and is at the discretion of building administration, following the above guidelines as listed.

In-School Suspensions

- The principal is responsible for in-school suspensions procedures relative to (M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H, M.G.L. c. 76, section 21, and 603 CMR 53.00) informing the student of the length of the in-school suspension, which may not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year, if the principal determines that the student committed the offense scheduling the meeting with the parent/guardian for the day of the in-school suspension or as soon as possible and documenting at least two attempts to reach the parent for the purpose of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

Short Term Suspensions

- The principal is responsible for the short term suspension procedures relative to (M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H, M.G.L. c. 76, section 21, and 603 CMR 53.00) the principal's hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and if so, the remedy or consequence to be imposed, providing the student and parent with written notification of the determination, the reason for it, based on available information including mitigating circumstances; and if the student is short term suspended, the duration of the suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and other schoolwork needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

Long Term Suspensions

- The principal's hearing for long-term suspensions are to include the following due process rights for students and parents relative to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H, M.G.L. c. 76, section 21, and 603 CMR 53.00:
 - The right to review the student's record and principal's documents in advance.
 - The right to be represented by counsel or lay person at own expense.
 - The right to produce witnesses and cross examine witnesses presented by the school.
 - The right to request an audio recording of the hearing.
- The superintendent's hearing relative to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H, M.G.L. c. 76, section 21, and 603 CMR 53.00 will include: timely student or parent appeals, obligation to include the parent in the hearing, audio recordings, and the availability of an audio copy, a copy of which shall be provided to the student and parent upon request (prior to the hearing, the district must inform all parties that an audio copy will be made of the hearing).
- The written determination for a long-term suspension must include:

The disciplinary offense, date, and hearing participants;
Key facts and conclusions;
Length and effective date of suspension and return to school;
Opportunity for the student to receive education services during removal; and
Student right to appeal to the superintendent.

Emergency Removals

- The principal may remove a student temporarily relative to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H, M.G.L. c. 76, section 21, and 603 CMR 53.00 when the student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are an integral part of the communication between home and school. Through these conferences, better assessment of each child's progress can be achieved. Annual conferences are scheduled in November. However, parents may request a conference with a teacher, or teachers, anytime during the school year. It is important that teachers be able to give you their full attention while discussing your child's progress. **Rather than dropping in unexpectedly, please contact the teacher to arrange a convenient time to meet.**

CORI CHECK

The law requires all volunteers to have a CORI check every three years. This includes volunteers for recess supervision, classrooms, and field trips. If you are interested in volunteering for any events during the school day, you will need to go to the Superintendent's office with a photo ID and fill out the appropriate paperwork. The CORI process may take up to two weeks, so please plan accordingly to get your CORI check back in time to volunteer for your desired event.

DRESS CODE

We encourage our students to take pride in their personal appearance and to consider school to be their "job", as the job of learning is very important. Because we believe that school is a place of learning and that some manner of dress interrupts this process, we request that parents and students please be aware of the following:

Unacceptable Dress Attire:

- Clothing that implies or denotes alcohol, drugs, smoking/tobacco or other inappropriate images are not allowed

Guidelines:

We also encourage parents to dress children appropriately for the current weather conditions, wearing coats/outerwear/long pants during the winter, as well as wearing shoes, high-top sneakers or boots when snow is on the ground. Please make sure that shoes/sandals have straps across the heel to hold them securely to the feet and are sturdy for outdoor play. You will receive a class schedule, which includes when students are in Unified Arts. Students should wear sneakers on days when they have Physical Education.

To support a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment, students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for school. Any clothing, accessories, or personal items that substantially disrupt the educational process, create a safety concern, or interfere with the learning environment may be deemed inappropriate by school administration. If a student's attire does not meet these expectations, the student may be asked to change into alternate clothing available through the school or contact a parent/caregiver to provide appropriate attire.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a valuable part of Park Avenue's educational program. Parental permission is required. Students on field trips represent our school and should understand that they remain under school supervision at all times. All policies such as no food or drink on the bus and no electronic devices apply to field trips.

We are fortunate that the Park Avenue PTO supports our field trips through their annual fundraisers. The PTO pays for as much of the transportation and admission price as possible. Parents are asked to pay the remainder of the admission fee if necessary. If you are interested in volunteering to chaperone a field trip please see CORI CHECKS on page 22 of this Student Handbook.

PARENT FIELD TRIP CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Volunteering as chaperones for field trips is greatly appreciated. Field trips are a fun way to expand the learning of our students in a hands-on way outside of the school. While participating in a field trip everyone represents Webster Public Schools. It is expected that chaperones honor the requests of teachers around the rules and expectations of field trips.

Expectations of all chaperones:

- have an approved CORI check on file with the Superintendent's office
- travel with the students to and from the field trip on school transportation (due to possible legal and custody issues known by the school)
- will be assigned a group of students that they will be responsible for during the entire field trip (frequent counting helps to make sure you have everyone all of the time)
- **MUST** stay with the students **AT ALL TIMES**
- bring his/her lunch (since trips to snack bars are not allowed)
- **MUST** stay in the designated areas of the field trip
- be on time for all scheduled events including possible shows or activities
- be at the right place at the right time for departure

Expectations during the trip:

- Stay with your group of students at all times.

- Do not put suntan lotion or bug spray of any kind on any student as some students have allergies that only parents know about (this is why we ask parents to do it before the student comes to school).
- Follow any specific rules or guidelines required by your destination.
- **Do not go** to any gift shops, even for your child (not all of our children have money to spend).
- **Do not go to any snack bars** or purchase any food for any child - even your own.
- If you take pictures of your child and his/her classmates, please remember to respect the privacy of other families. **Do not post any pictures on social media formats.**

HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Every effort is made to care for your child's physical, mental and emotional well-being while he/she is in school. Sick and injured children are given emergency care, but the responsibility for treatment rests with the family.

It is of the utmost importance that the nursing office has correct contact information for parents/guardians, as well as emergency contacts. Please review the verification form sent home for your student and update all contact information so that we can reach you in case your student experiences illness or injury while at school.

The health of the children is a cooperative effort between home and school. If your student has a health issue, please contact the school nurse with this information.

Illness and Injury at School:

The nurse is available for students who become ill or injured during school hours. Students must check with their teacher before going to the nurse. All injuries sustained during school hours should be reported to the nurse when they occur. Injuries sustained at home are to be taken care of by parents, and if necessary, parents should notify the school nurse of this. The nurse will determine if a student who is ill or injured will be dismissed. Parents must provide transportation home for any sick or injured child. Sick or injured students will be dismissed from the nurse's office.

A physician's note is required if a student has been absent for three or more consecutive days and/or if a student is not to participate in gym class. A physician's note is also needed if a student requires use of the elevator at school.

In case of serious injury/illness, the immediate concern is to aid the injured or sick student. Emergency care and first aid will be provided until a parent or other assigned adult responsible for the child is contacted.

Please make certain that we have updated contact information for any parent/guardian/emergency contact including change of address, workplace or phone number.

The following procedures for serious injury/illness are to be used as general guidelines only:

1. The school nurse or building administrator will determine the seriousness of the injury.

2. The school nurse or building administrator will immediately contact the parent or legal guardian.
3. The child may be taken to the hospital based on the determination of the school nurse, building administrator, and the parent. Depending on the seriousness of the injury, one of the following two procedures may be used to transport the student to the hospital:
 - a. The parent will come to school and transport the student to the hospital
 - b. School personnel will call 911 to request an ambulance to transport the student to the hospital.
4. In case of serious injury, the Superintendent will be immediately notified of the nature of the injury, its seriousness, and the status of the situation.

Medication:

Children may not transport ANY medication (prescription or over the counter) to school.

All medication **MUST** be brought into school and given to the nurse by an adult. In order to administer medication at school, the following is required:

- Medication in the original labeled prescription container.
 - Medication order signed by the doctor on file with the school nurse.
 - Parent/guardian signed medication administration consent form.
 - The school nurse administers any medication that must be taken at school.
- (See full District policy below.)

Illness at home:

Please check your child carefully before sending him/her to school if they do not feel well in the morning. Guidelines for when to keep your child home:

- Temperature of 100 or more. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea present during the past 24 hours. Your child must be free of vomiting or diarrhea without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If on an antibiotic for contagious illness, he/she must be on the medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

As a guide, a child who has been diagnosed with any of the following contagious illnesses may return to school ***ONLY*** when the following has been met:

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Can return once a student has been on antibiotic eye drops for 24 hours.
GI Virus	Can return once no fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours without medication, and the student is feeling better.
Impetigo	As determined by the physician or school nurse, usually 24 hours after treatment has started or scabs are no longer open.
Strep Throat	Once the condition has been treated for 24 hours with antibiotics, the student is fever free (without medication) and the child is feeling better.

Lice:

The Webster Public Schools Nursing Offices will follow the protocols outlined by the American Academy of Pediatric and the recommendations of the national Association of School Nurses with regards to the management of head lice in the school setting. Research by the Harvard School of Public Health advises against exclusion and no-nit policies, as well as the elimination of the whole class/school screenings. Periodic home head checks by parents/guardians, resulting in early detection, treatment and removal of live lice and nits, is the most reliable method for controlling pediculosis. The nurses within the WPS Nursing Offices will offer support to families as time and resources allow through screening, notification and educational literature. To follow evidence based best practice, students exhibiting signs of possible head lice infestation are referred to the health room for an assessment. Symptoms prompting a referral may include complaints of an itchy head, excessive scratching or sighting of a louse, and can be made by a student, a parent/guardian, or a member of the school staff.

If the nurse discovers a case of head lice by the presence of live lice or nits, the parent/guardian will be notified and the treatment information will be provided. The student will be dismissed at the end of the school day, unless the parent/guardian chooses to dismiss earlier. Siblings and other persons of close contact may be assessed for an infestation at the nurse's discretion. Parents/guardians will be advised on treatment and recommended to consult with their physician for further treatment recommendations if necessary.

The student, accompanied by a parent/guardian, will be checked when they return to school to ensure that treatment and nit removal are being done effectively, and to allow for further teaching/counseling regarding treatment follow through. If nits are found after treatment, the student may attend class per the nurse's discretion. If evidence of lack of treatment, prolonged infestation or an incomplete treatment follow through is present, the student may be excluded from attending school at the nurse's discretion.

Life Threatening Allergies:

Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools, parents and physicians work together to minimize risks and provide a safe environment for allergic students. **In order to protect our students with life threatening allergies, all classrooms will be NUT FREE classrooms for in class snacks. Nut products will be allowed only in the cafeteria for lunchtime.**

School's Responsibility:

The school will work with the school team and parents to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school day including the classroom, in the cafeteria, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus.

This includes the development of a Food Allergy Action Plan. The school nurse reviews policies/procedures with staff and creates and shares Individual Health Care Plans/Emergency Action Plans with all school personnel responsible for the child's welfare. We also strive to educate children in age appropriate self-management of their food allergy including:

1. Safe and unsafe foods
2. Strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
3. Symptoms of allergic reactions
4. How and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy related problem

5. How to read food labels (when age appropriate)
6. Review policies/procedures with the parents, school staff, the child's physician, and the child after a reaction has occurred.

Family's Responsibility:

1. Notify the school of the child's allergies.
2. Notify the Bus Company of the child's allergies.
3. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide. Include a photo of the child on the form for easy identification.
4. Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including the classroom, in the cafeteria, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus, as well as a Food Allergy Action Plan.
5. Replace any expired or used medication as quickly as possible after notification by the School Nurse
6. Review policies/procedures with the school staff, the child's physician, and the child after a reaction has occurred.
7. Help educate the child in age appropriate self-management of their food allergy including:
 - safe and unsafe foods
 - strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
 - symptoms of allergic reactions
 - how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy related problem
 - how to read food labels (when age appropriate)

Student's Responsibility (when age-appropriate):

1. Should not share food with others
2. Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen
3. Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level

Webster Public School Policy on the Administration of Medication:

Students who require medication during the school day must bring a physician-signed order and a note from a parent giving the school nurse permission to give the medication to the child. Additionally, the medication must be given to the nurse, along with the doctor's prescription/order, the parent permission, and medication must be in the original medication bottle containing the prescription label. Please do not send medications in plastic bags or in unmarked bottles – no medications will be administered without the original prescription label indicating dosage and the name of the prescribing physician.

Prescription drugs (for which the student has a valid prescription) must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent during school hours and will be administered by the school nurse, if necessary. No over the counter drugs are to be carried by the student. If these drugs are necessary they must be contained in the school nurse's office. The Webster Public Schools will not tolerate possession, distribution or manufacture of any illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverages in school or on school property. This policy also applies to prescription drugs when they are not turned into the school nurse. The school nurse is available to answer any questions in regard to any of the health guidelines.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

It is important for teachers, parents and administration to establish positive lines of communication from the very beginning of each school year and to maintain regular communication during the school year. Individual teachers communicate with parents in a variety of ways including weekly or monthly newsletters, flyers, agendas, phone calls, Class DoJo and emails. Information about class events is sent home with students in a variety of ways including a schoolwide bi-monthly newsletter.

Park Ave Elementary School works to create a school environment where parents/caregivers are welcome to have open communication with school staff ~~with questions and concerns~~ regarding academic and social matters. Parents/caregivers who wish to contact school staff should please use these guidelines for assistance in getting needed information:

- First, please contact your child's classroom teacher. This is the most direct way to obtain the information you need. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response before following up.
- For further questions and/or concerns, please contact a member of the administration team. This may include the Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students. Administrators can directly assist in resolving questions or concerns once the classroom teacher has been contacted.

HOMEWORK

There are many reasons to establish a regular routine for homework for young children. Homework helps a child develop important study habits that will be of value throughout their schooling. A regular routine also helps a student learn to be self-regulated and take responsibility for his/her own learning. Skills that are learned at school can be reinforced by practice at home and homework can be a time to work together to bring home and school closer together. Homework also provides a window for parents into your child's schoolwork and what is happening in your child's classroom.

Homework expectations are determined by each individual classroom teacher based on the needs of their students and the instructional goals of the class. Teachers use their professional judgment to decide whether homework is appropriate and how it can best support student learning outside of the school day.

INTERNET USE

Students will follow the "STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY" available for review on our district website. Students are expected to use good judgment and immediately notify the teacher of anything that is questionable.

Students have access to technology in their general education classroom on a daily basis and as part of their technology special 1x every 7 days. We have Chrome-books, which increase access to technology by allowing daily instruction to be enhanced.

Students are taught to use the Internet to do research and to access educational information and games. Students must have parental permission and be monitored by a teacher during

Internet use. Should a parent prefer that his/her student not have Internet access, the student will still be allowed to use a computer for word processing and educational programs.

Users will agree to follow the rules stated below and to use the Internet in a constructive manner. **The parents and students signatures are part of the Signature Sheet included with the Handbook Summary. It must be signed and returned before a student can begin using the Internet at school.** If at any time a parent wishes to reverse their decision, it is the parent's responsibility to fill out and date a new permission slip.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the computer, just as they are in the classroom or on the playground. Guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Do not use a computer to cause harm to others or their work.
- Do not damage the computer or network in any way
- Do not violate copyright laws
- Do not view, send or display offensive messages or pictures
- Do not go into another student's folders or files
- Notify an adult immediately if something inappropriate or bad comes on the screen

If a student violates these rules, consequences may include removal from the computer for the day or for longer periods of time depending on the frequency and severity of the misuse.

Users will agree to follow the above stated rules and to use the internet in a constructive manner.

LOST AND FOUND AND VALUABLES

Lost and Found:

Please label all of your child's belongings that come to school including jackets, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, books, etc. It is common that students don't recognize their own possessions when looking for them. Lost and found items that are collected throughout the school will be brought to and stored at our designated Lost and Found station. Periodically, the administration will display unclaimed items for families to view and identify. These items may be showcased through school social media posts or displayed on tables during school events to provide parents and guardians with additional opportunities to reclaim lost belongings.

Valuables:

Electronic games, PDAs, IPODs and other electronic **devices are not allowed in school.** These items can be easily lost, stolen or broken and **the school will not take responsibility for these items.** This is also true for other valuables including trading cards, such as baseball and Pokémon cards. The only exception is cell phones (see policy), which must be turned off and kept in backpacks during the academic day. However, the school will not be responsible if lost, stolen or broken. This includes field trips. The school may confiscate any items felt to be distracting to students or others in the educational setting. Parents will have to pick up these items from administration.

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Park Avenue Elementary School is an equal opportunity institution. According to State and Federal law, no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX Compliance Officer

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. Report discrimination/harassment to the appropriate guidance counselor. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students must be notified by the counselor.
2. In those instances where an informal resolution is appropriate the investigator will advise and assist the individuals in resolving the matter.
3. If step 2 fails, report the incident to the Principal or Assistant Principal for further assistance in resolving the matter. Disciplinary action may be taken.

Students are encouraged to report suspected incidents of bullying and discrimination/harassment/sexual harassment to teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, other PAE School staff, parents or any trusted adult. Anyone receiving a report should convey the report to the Principal or designee. The Principal, or designee, will be responsible for handling all complaints by students or adults alleging bullying or discrimination/harassment/sexual harassment. The administration will promptly investigate all allegations and will make every attempt to secure the anonymity of the victim(s) and the reporter(s).

OPEN HOUSE

We have an Open House scheduled during the first month of school annually. Families are encouraged to join us to meet your child's teacher, visit the classroom, bring in any supplies you are able to donate and get acclimated for the new year. Exact date and time will be sent home with placement letters in August.

"There will be an Open House on September 24th, 2026 from 6-8 pm."

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Park Ave PTO is a group of parents who are involved in planning events to help enhance the children's educational experience at PAE. They raise funds for annual field trips, educational

programs, and hold community events. The PTO has a strong presence in the school and puts on many events, such as a school carnival and the “Me & Someone Special Dance”.

Parent participation is needed and encouraged! Monthly meetings will be tentatively held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 5:00pm in the Park Ave Library unless otherwise determined by the PTO Board in collaboration with the building principal . Volunteering may be done anywhere from just one event for just one hour for any event we have. Any and all help is greatly appreciated! We look forward to a great year together!

PHOTOGRAPHING AND VIDEO RECORDING OF STUDENTS

During the school year, the Webster Public School may authorize various organizations such as the local news media and parent groups to photograph or videotape students engaged in activities related to school programs. These pictures may be used on a bulletin board, in a newsletter, or some type of educational publication designed to illustrate or describe an activity sponsored or promoted by the Webster Public Schools, including social media. If parents have a concern relative to their child appearing in any of these photographs or videotapes, please check the appropriate place on the separate Handbook /Guidelines Policy Signature Sheet.

RECESS

Students in all grade levels go outside each day for a recess period before or after lunch. They will alternate between the different age-appropriate playgrounds on a weekly basis. All students are expected to take part in outdoor activities. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and for active play.

Children will go outside unless it is raining or the temperature is extremely cold (20 degrees or below, including wind chill). When it is raining or there is deep snow on the playscape areas, students will have recess indoors. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately when the weather gets cold, including mittens, hats, snow pants, and boots.

Students are expected to follow the school's Code of Conduct at all times during recess. Behavioral expectations are reinforced through our PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program and are addressed in accordance with the school's Educator Behavioral Flow Chart. Recess is an important opportunity for students to practice responsibility, respect, safety, and positive social interactions while enjoying time outdoors.

REPORT CARDS & GRADING

Park Avenue follows a trimester schedule for report cards, which are issued approximately one week following the end of the trimester. Trimesters fall within the following time frames:

Trimester 1	August 31st - November 30th
Trimester 2	December 1st - March 19th
Trimester 3	March 22nd - June 15th

At PAE, we use a Standards-Based Report Card to communicate student progress toward grade-level learning expectations. This approach focuses on the specific skills and standards students are expected to learn at each grade level rather than assigning traditional letter grades.

Our goal is to provide families with clear and meaningful information about each child's academic progress, growth over time, and development of important learning behaviors that contribute to success in school.

Academic progress is measured using grade-level standards aligned with the curriculum taught throughout the school year. Students are assessed based on their understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at their grade level.

Teachers use multiple sources of evidence when determining student progress, including:

- Classwork and independent practice
- Teacher observations
- Small group instruction
- Classroom discussions and participation
- Projects and performance tasks
- Assessments and quizzes
- Ongoing progress monitoring

Academic progress is reported using the following scale:

3 – Meets Grade Level Standards

The student consistently demonstrates understanding of grade-level skills and concepts independently and is meeting grade-level expectations.

2 – On Track to Meet Grade Level Standards

The student is making appropriate progress toward grade-level expectations and continues to develop the skills needed to demonstrate full mastery.

1 – Needs More Time

The student is still developing understanding of grade-level standards and requires additional time, practice, and support to meet grade-level expectations.

N/A – Not Assessed at This Time

This standard has not yet been introduced or formally assessed during the current reporting period.

It is important to understand that report card ratings reflect a student's current level of progress at the time of reporting rather than an average of all work completed during the trimester.

Because learning builds throughout the year and expectations increase over time, ratings may change as students continue to develop new skills.

In addition to academic progress, students are evaluated on important learning behaviors, referred to as Habits of Mind, that support success both in school and beyond the classroom.

These habits reflect how students approach learning, interact with others, and take responsibility for their work.

Habits of Mind are reported using the following indicators:

C – Consistently

The student regularly demonstrates this behavior independently and consistently across settings.

S – Sometimes

The student demonstrates this behavior inconsistently or may require occasional reminders or support.

R – Rarely

The student demonstrates this behavior infrequently and requires frequent reminders, support, or guidance.

Habits of Mind are reported separately from academic progress to ensure academic ratings reflect student mastery of learning standards.

Families are an important part of the learning process. Student progress is communicated through report cards, parent-teacher conferences, classroom communication, and regular updates throughout the school year.

We encourage families to reach out to their child’s teacher with any questions regarding report card ratings, academic progress, or ways to support learning at home.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Education Reform Act of 1993 requires that each school establish a School Advisory Council to promote shared decision making within the school community. The council is composed of the principal, elected parents, teachers and community members. Its members assist the principal in the identification of the educational needs of the students, review of the budget and the formulation of a school improvement plan. The make-up of the council encourages diverse perspectives in the formulation of a consensus plan. Please contact the Principal if you are interested in being a member of this important council.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Student photographs are taken annually in the fall. Although every child is photographed; this does not obligate the parents in any way to make a purchase. Pictures are also taken in the spring without the requirement of purchase.

SECURITY

Building Security & Safe Schools

In order to maintain building security, our school has a locked door policy. Doors will be locked at all times. People wishing to enter will need to do so at the Park Avenue entrance where the main office is located. Press the buzzer, identify yourself, and state the reason for your visit. All visitors **MUST** sign in at the main office and wear a visitor's badge when in the building.

Children deserve to learn in an atmosphere that is safe, secure, nurturing, and orderly, and one that is free from drugs, crime and violence. Each school in Webster has developed a "building crisis action plan". This plan provides us with a standardized response in the event of an emergency or crisis in the building. Part of our plan provides for making the building as secure as possible from intruders. All exterior doors are locked during the day. Visitors must enter through a 'buzzer system' at the main entrance and register in the office. We insist that all visitors to the building wear a badge at all times.

Emergency Procedures

Administration shall have full authority for action in the event of an emergency that threatens the safety and security of persons in the school building or on school grounds unless specifically directed otherwise by the Superintendent.

DRILLS

Fire Drills

Fire drills are practiced on a regular basis as required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is important that when the fire drill alarm sounds everyone leaves the building by the designated route as quickly and quietly as possible.

The fire drill alarm will sound alerting everyone within the building of fire drill status. Teachers will secure their rooms and exit by the fire drill procedures posted in each room.

Hold in Place and Lock-Down Emergency Procedure Drills

We will practice both of these whole school safety drills periodically throughout the year. These drills may be held with and without police presence to help children learn and understand what the procedures are at school to remain safe. We will be using the A.L.I.C.E. protocols during our lock-down drills. Parents will be informed by letter and/or a One Call following a Lock-Down Drill.

Evacuation Drills

Each year we may practice an evacuation of the whole school. Students will exit the building using the evacuation procedures. Students will proceed to a determined evacuation area by staff in an orderly fashion. Staff will report attendance to their assigned staff leader to ensure that all students are accounted for.

Missing Student

The following protocol will be followed in the event that a student should be reported as missing from class or from school. The protocol includes the following steps:

- A thorough and complete search of the building
- Communication to parent/guardian following confirmation that the child is not present in the building.
- If applicable, additional communication will be made to:
 1. School personnel involved in the child's programming
 2. After school program / Child Care Workers
 3. Bus Company
 4. Superintendent of Schools

Local police will be contacted for assistance in locating the missing child should he/she not be found after making the above contacts.

Once the child is located, the incident will be documented and all personnel involved in the search process notified. In cases where it has been determined that the child has left school grounds without permission, a student/parent/administrator conference will follow and appropriate consequences will be assigned.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Webster Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a group of parents/guardians whose children may or may not have special needs and who attend Webster Public Schools or programs funded by Webster Public Schools. Any parent/guardian is welcome to join SEPAC. You do not have to be the parent/guardian of a child with a disability to become a member.

For more information about SEPAC, including meeting schedules and upcoming events, please contact the Student Support Services Office at 508-943-0104.

STUDENT RECORDS

Access to Student Records

According to 603 CMR 23.02 guardians or divorced/separated, foster, or unmarried parents have access to the student record unless contrary written agreement between parents or a court order governing the rights of such parents is brought to the attention of the Principal.

Confidentiality of Records

As per District policy no individuals or organizations other than parents and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record

without specific, informed, written consent of the parent of the student except where State regulations specifically authorize third parties.

Transfer of Records

No records, files or data directly relating to an individual student shall be made available to anyone without the consent and written notification of the parents or guardian.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

Park Ave Elementary School will be administering benchmark assessments in Reading Fluency, English Language Arts, and Mathematics and for all students in the fall, winter and spring. The results from these assessments are used to better plan for instruction at all grade levels within the school. Additionally, Park Ave, like every other school in Massachusetts, conducts MCAS testing in grades three and four each spring. All students who attend public school in Massachusetts are required to participate in MCAS testing. We use the results of this state-wide assessment to better evaluate our curriculum and programming in all subject areas. Our school community takes the assessment process very seriously and devotes much time and thought to ensuring that our students have the greatest possible opportunity to meet with success.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

School Adjustment Counselors

The elementary years are a time when students begin to develop their academic self-concept and their feelings of competence and confidence as learners. They are beginning to develop decision-making, communication and life skills, as well as character values. It is also a time when students develop and acquire attitudes toward school, self, peers, social groups and family. At PAE, our school counseling program provides education, prevention and intervention services, which are integrated into all aspects of children's lives. Students may participate in these services individually or in small groups. Early identification and intervention of children's academic and social/emotional needs is essential in removing barriers to learning and in promoting academic achievement.

TELEPHONES

Cell Phones

Many students use cellphones to communicate with parents/caregivers at the end of the school day. Students who choose to bring cell phones to school must abide by the following rules:

- **Cell phones must be turned off** at all times.
- **Cell phones must be stored securely inside backpacks**
- Students holding or using cell phones during the school day may have the cell phone confiscated; **a parent/caregiver will be contacted to come pick up the cell phone at the main office.**
- Students who need to make emergency calls between 8:20 am and 3:05 pm may ask to use the office phone to contact a parent/caregiver - **cell phones should not be used during the school day for any reason (i.e. calls, texting, recording, etc.)**

Cell phone guidelines apply at bus stops and during bus rides to and from school.

School Telephone

As the school telephones are necessary for incoming communication, school telephones are not available to students during the school day except in case of emergencies (which will be determined by school staff). Additionally, students are not allowed to use the school telephones during the school day to make plans for after school play dates.

TRANSPORTATION

School bus transportation is provided for all students K-4 attending Park Avenue Elementary School regardless of distance. Students should not be left at the bus stop unattended and will not be dropped off without an authorized adult present. However, an exception may be made for older siblings (Grades 9 - 12 only) to receive a student at the bus door. *All requests for an older sibling to receive a student at the bus door must be submitted in writing to the PAE administration for prior approval. A bus driver may not grant permission for this to occur.*

If your child is returned from the bus and you are later than 4:00 picking up your child, your child will be sent to the School's After School program and you will be charged for the day's attendance to the program.

Older siblings are not typically allowed to walk younger siblings home from the school without an adult present during their time at Park Avenue School, due to safety concerns. However, an exception may be made for older siblings in Grades 9 - 12 only. *All requests must be submitted in writing to the PAE administration for prior approval. This includes all Park Avenue students in Pre-K through Grade 4.* **Please review the below bus rules with your student.**

At the bus stop:

- Arrive 5-10 min. prior to pick up time
- Never run to or from the bus
- Stand back from the curb
- Wait for the driver's signal before crossing
- Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus
- Never crawl under a school bus to pick up an item

On the bus:

- Always obey the bus driver's instructions
- Stay in your seat and face front at all times
- Talk quietly, don't yell or shout (volume 1 or 2)
- Don't push or shove
- NO food or drink allowed on the school bus
- Keep all items in your backpack, including cell phones

Webster Public Schools does not offer door to door bus service. Bus routes are designed to be safe and efficient. All stops are considered a safe location and are approved prior to the start of the school year. **No change will be allowed to the student's daily bus assignment unless a residence or after-school care has changed.**

Park Avenue School should be notified if there is a change in your child's residence or day care that requires a change in the school bus stop and school bus that they are assigned to. **No changes are allowed without prior approval from the school and the bus company.**

BUS CONDUCT

Bus Conduct Reports

The bus is considered an extension of the classroom, therefore, all school rules apply. Safety and courtesy requires appropriate conduct while boarding or riding the bus. Conduct on the bus should be the same as classroom conduct, with the bus driver receiving the same respect and courtesy due a teacher or staff member.

The bus driver maintains student behavior on the bus. The bus driver may use short-term methods such as an assigned seat in the front of the bus, as a time-out to rethink bus behavior. The bus driver or monitor may also institute assigned seating on the bus.

A student will be issued a bus conduct report for inappropriate behavior which will be given to School Administration. School administration will take needed actions following a conduct report. This may include a student and parent meeting with administration, conduct report sent home for parent signature, in school consequence, seat change, or may result in suspension from riding the bus. Repeated suspensions from the bus may result in expulsion from riding the bus.

CARLINE

Carline Arrival:

Students coming to school via carline may only be dropped off via the Ray St. entrance. Cars will line up in the Ray St. driveway and down Ray St. toward Park Ave. Left turns into the driveway from Ray St. are not allowed. Please adhere to the following directions for dropping your child off in the morning:

- Wait with your child in the vehicle until signaled to let your child get out of the vehicle.
- Only allow your child to exit on the passenger side of the vehicle
- Have all materials ready to allow for a quick exit.
- Stay in line and only move when the whole line is moving and follow the flow of traffic
- Follow adult signalling for when to move and when to allow children out of the car.
- Stay alert during drop off and drive slowly for student safety.
- Be patient during drop off
- No car drop offs are allowed in the front of the building until after 8:35
- At 8:35- the cones will be put up in the driveway- any drop offs after that are tardy and must come to the front and walk your child in.
- Do not drop your child off on Ray St., only once you are in the driveway and a staff member has signalled it is safe to do so.

We understand that at the beginning of the year, students may need help exiting your vehicle. By the end of October, all students should be able to exit the vehicle independently.

Carline Dismissal:

At the end of the day, pick ups happen in the Ray st. Driveway. All pick ups should get in line no earlier than 2:45 pm- dismissal starts at 3:05. The line starts in the driveway and extends down Ray st and onto Park ave. No Left turns into the driveway are permitted. Cars should not do U-turns on Park Ave to get into line.

- Be prepared to give your dismissal number to a staff member as you wait in line

- Students will be sent out according to the order dismissal numbers are given
- Follow adult directions for pulling up to get in line, even if you see your child in line.

We understand that at the beginning of the year, students may need your help getting into the car and buckled. By the end of October, students should be able to get into the car and buckled independently.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Opportunities

Park Avenue Elementary School welcomes volunteers for our many activities and events. Volunteers are welcome in our classrooms and within our PTO (see page 28). Please contact your child's teacher if you are interested in helping on a regular weekly basis or for individual events such as special projects and/or field trips. The laws of confidentiality bind all volunteers who are working in any capacity in the school setting. Information obtained through observation or participation in classrooms is completely confidential. **** The law also requires all volunteers to have a CORI check every three years. You will need to go to the Superintendent's office with a photo ID and fill out the appropriate paperwork. It takes about two weeks.**

WEBSITE

Please visit the district's website at www.webster-schools.org. From there, you can find the Park Ave webpage. You will find the school calendar, lunch menus, bus routes, nurse information and student support information on our website. You will also find important district updates. Weather related delays could be accessed through the district website.

WEBSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

Title I School-Parent/Guardian Compact for School Year 2026/2027

School Responsibilities The Park Avenue Elementary School will:	Parent/Guardian Responsibilities We, as parents/guardians, will support our children's learning in the following ways:	Student Responsibilities I, the student, agree to do my best to:
• Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment.	• Making sure our child arrives at school on time and attends school every day. • Making sure that homework is completed.	• Be at school on time unless I am sick. • Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need to. • Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.

● Hold high standards and expectations for student achievement. ● Hold parent/guardian-teacher conferences during which this compact will be discussed. ● Provide parents/guardians with frequent reports on their children's progress. ● Provide parents/guardians reasonable access to staff.	● Monitoring my child's progress regularly. ● Reading to or with my child every day. ● Attending conferences, open houses, and other school events to the best of my ability. ● Communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or district.	● Give to my parents or the adult who is responsible for me all notices and information from my school.
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The Webster Public Schools and the parents/guardians of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, agree that this compact outlines how parents/guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents/guardians will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

POLICY AC - NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Webster School Committee and Webster Public Schools (WPS) are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Webster Public Schools.

The Webster Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of WPS from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities. It is the policy of WPS to comply with both state and federal laws.

This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements. The Webster School Committee commits to:

1. Promoting the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encouraging positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Working toward a more integrated society and enlisting the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Using all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and address the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school district, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations.
6. Initiating a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school district in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Webster Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

Allegations of discrimination, harassment, and related retaliation (except for Title IX) will be addressed through the District's School Committee Policy AC-R, *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure*.

*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

LEGAL REFS: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 - <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117>

CROSS REF: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

ACAB, Sexual Harassment

GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity

IJ, Instructional Materials

JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

SOURCE: MASC August 2022 as amended January 2025

POLICY ACA - NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY ON THE BASIS OF SEX

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school district's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

The Webster Public Schools shall provide a notice of non-discrimination along with the contact information for its Title IX Coordinator as set forth below. The notice shall be given to students; parents, guardians, or other authorized legal representatives of elementary school and secondary school students; employees; applicants for admission and employment; and all unions and professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Webster Public Schools.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION & RELATED TITLE IX INFORMATION

The Webster School Committee and Webster Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Webster Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. Webster Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator is Director of Student Support Services, 77 Poland Street, Webster Ma 01570, 508-943-0104 X 40029.

The Webster Public Schools' nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at <https://www.webster-schools.org>

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to <https://www.webster-schools.org>

The District shall prominently include all elements of its notice of nondiscrimination set out above on its website and in each handbook, catalog, announcement, bulletin, and application form that it makes available to persons entitled to notice under this section, or which are otherwise used in connection with the recruitment of students or employees.

LEGAL REFS.: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE 603 CMR 26:00

REFERENCE: USDOE Notice of Interpretation –
<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-confirms-title-ix-protects-students-discrimination-based-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity>

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation
ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure
ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure

SOURCE: MASC - July 2024 rev MLM PC

POLICY JICFA- E HAZING:

The Webster Public Schools is committed to uphold the Massachusetts General Laws against hazing and would pursue disciplinary action against those that either commit an act of hazing or who do not report such an act.

CH. 269, S17. Crime of Hazing: Definition; Penalty

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH 269, S18. Duty to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonable practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S 19, Hazing Statutes to be provided; Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school. and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or-private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing.

The Board of Regents and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make a report.

POLICY JIC - STUDENT DISCIPLINE:

The Webster Public School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents/guardians.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, 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 remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by

DESE and shall have each Principal sign a document acknowledging receipt thereof, which shall be placed in their personnel file.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed (except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy), a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension:

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent/guardian oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent/guardian an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent/guardian in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent/guardian present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian

Emergency Removal:

A 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 including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent/guardian 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/guardian; 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 of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension – not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days

The hearing with the Principal shall be 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.

At a minimum, 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 as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent/guardian, 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.

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

The Principal shall notify the student and parent/guardian 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, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public 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.

Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)

The hearing with the Principal shall be 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.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, 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/guardian'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/guardian 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/guardian upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent/guardian, 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.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent/guardian.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public 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 suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Hearing

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 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 shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. 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/guardian and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. 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 decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the

student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

SOURCE: MASC – August 2022

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H ¾; 76:17

603 CMR 53.00

Chapter 222 An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School

Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and

Questions and Answers Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA's) Discipline Provisions.

NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c.71, S. 37H or 37H½. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

Chapter 222, An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School, addresses continuation of educational services for students when they are excluded from school.

New Federal Guidance related to Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that students are effectively supported when responding to behavior that is based on a student's disability that could lead to student discipline has been added as a legal reference.

WPS PROCEDURE ON DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Federal and state laws and regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is implemented under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:

The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.

When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct

and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP-"manifestation determination.

If the Team determines that the student's misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability, the Team will convene to review the student's functional behavior assessment and will create, review, or modify, as necessary the student's behavior plan and IEP. Under such circumstances, the student will be returned to his/her current placement unless the Team determines that another placement is required to provide the student with FAPE (free appropriate public education).

If the Team determines that the student's misconduct is not a manifestation of his/her disability, then the district may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer an appropriate education program to students with disabilities, which may be in an interim alternative setting.

Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may unilaterally place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days under the following circumstances:

- 1) if the student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or at a school function;
- 2) a student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function
- 3) a student has inflicted serious bodily harm/injury upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.
- 4) *on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.*

Webster Public Schools will provide written notice to the parent of all rights to appeal and to an expedited hearing. If the parent chooses to appeal, during the appeal the student stay put in the interim alternative placement, unless the parent and district agree otherwise.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Section 504:

"No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his handicap, as defined in Section 706(8) of this title, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service." (29 U.S.C. §794)

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who (1) has or (2) has had a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity or (3) is regarded as handicapped by others. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself or performing manual tasks.

In compliance with the Webster School District's non-discrimination policy, all programs, services, courses of study, co-curricular and athletic activities are offered without regard to race,

color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or handicap. In accordance with Section 504, it is the policy of the Webster Public Schools to provide a free and appropriate public education to each handicapped student regardless of the nature or severity of the handicap.

It is the intent of the Webster Public Schools to ensure that students who are handicapped with the definition of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be handicapped under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Parents/guardians who would like information should contact the 504 Coordinator.

Discipline of a Student Under Section 504 & ADA:

Under various federal and state laws and regulations, students with disabilities may not be discriminated against in discipline matters on the basis of their disability or impairment. In addition to those rights, the following procedures will be implemented to comply with state and federal laws and regulations regarding students with disabilities. Procedures for students eligible for special education services are set forth in “Discipline of Special Needs Students” in this handbook.

Definition:

A student with a disability is a student who has or is perceived to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This category includes students who are found to have such impairment currently, have a record of having such impairment, or who are perceived as having such impairment.

Procedure:

In the event that a student is found to have violated a school rule after implementing the general due process procedures (notice and hearing) provided in this Handbook, the principal or his/her designee shall ascertain whether the student has been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504.

If the District has prior knowledge that the student might have a disability, that is, if the parent expressed concern in writing, the parent had requested an evaluation or district staff expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel, then the district will refer the student for an expedited evaluation. In this case, the student will receive protections in the same manner as a student with a disability until ineligibility is determined. If the prior knowledge such as, the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student, the parent has refused special education services, or an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility, then the district can issue discipline in the same manner as a student without a disability. When the district has no prior knowledge, but the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, district procedures include conducting an expedited evaluation for the student consistent with federal requirements.

If the student has not been identified as disabled, the principal or his/her designee must consider whether the circumstances surrounding the disciplinary incident suggest the existence of a disability. In the event that the principal or his/her designee concludes that there is no reason to suspect a disability, the student may be disciplined according to the regular disciplinary sanction under the student handbook. If the circumstances suggest that the student

may be disabled, the principal or his/her designee shall refer the student to the 504 Committee to evaluate whether the student has a disability.

If the student is identified or has previously been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504, prior to taking disciplinary action which would result in a suspension of one to ten days the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student's misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability and assure that all disciplinary actions are consistent with the mandate of Section 504.

If the student is identified a student with a disability under Section 504 and/or is referred for consideration of 504 eligibility, the disciplinary sanction, or cumulative disciplinary sanction could result in a suspension from the school for more than ten (10) days, the 504 Team determines that a Manifestation Determination review be held to determine:

if the student is, or continues to be disabled, and; his/her misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability; or the violation of school rules is related to a failure to accommodate the student's disability or implemented the 504 plan. If the team determines that these elements are met, an alternative placement may be offered. If these elements are not met, then the student can be disciplined in the same manner as any other student.

The student will not be suspended from school; provided, however, the 504 Committee may determine that the student's 504 plan should include modifications to address the student's misconduct including, but not limited to, delivery of educational services at an alternative site, behavioral modification plans, or any other appropriate modification or accommodation or disciplinary consequences consistent with Section 504.

In the event that the student previously has been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504 and/or upon an initial 504 evaluation the 504 Committee determines that the student is, or continues to be, disabled but his/her violation of school rules is not related to his/her disability, a failure to accommodate or an inappropriate or unimplemented 504 plan, regular disciplinary sanctions under the student handbook may be imposed.

Evaluation/Re-evaluation: Initial evaluations pursuant to this policy, and re-evaluations of students with disabilities under Section 504, who may be subject to suspension or expulsion for more than ten consecutive days, shall be conducted pursuant to Section 504.

POLICY JICI - WPS POLICY ON POSSESSION OF WEAPONS

For the purposes of this policy, a "weapon" includes but is not limited to a gun, knife, or any other device or object used or attempted to be used to inflict bodily harm on a person. This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions of the Webster Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students.

A student shall not possess, use or attempt to use any weapon on school premises or at a school-related event. In order to protect students in the Webster Public Schools, the Principal may/will expel for a minimum of one calendar year any student found in possession of a gun or a knife on school premises or at a school-sponsored event. In addition, the Principal may/will expel any student who uses or is found in possession of any other weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored event.

All lockers available to students are the property of the Webster Public Schools. Use of the lockers by students is regulated by the School Administration and all lockers are subject to inspection by the School Administration at any time. Any weapon(s) or other contraband found in a locker in violation of school policy may be considered to be the property of the student assigned to that locker for purposes of disciplinary action under this code.

For security reasons, students will not be permitted to wear hats, outerwear (coats and jackets) or carry large book/gym bags with them through the school day. Students must store all book bags, gym bags, hats, and outerwear (coats and jackets) in their locker during the school day.

POLICY JICG - WPS POLICY ON SMOKING OR USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Smoking, vaping and/or the use of tobacco products of any type shall be prohibited 24 hours a day, seven days a week on school property (building and grounds), at any school related events, and within any school owned contracted/leased vehicles.

WPS POLICY ON CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The Webster Public Schools abide by MA G.L., c94C, §32J regarding Controlled Substance Violations in, on, or near school grounds. Prescription drugs (for which the student has a valid prescription) must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent during school hours and administered by the school nurse, if necessary. No over the counter drugs are to be carried by the student. If these drugs are necessary they must be contained in the school nurse's office. The Webster Public Schools will not tolerate possession, distribution or manufacture of any illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverages in school or on school property. This policy also applies to prescription drugs when they are not turned into the school nurse. Staff members who suspect a student of being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances including prescription medicines are required to report that information to the building principal.

POLICY JICFB - Webster Public Schools Bullying Policy

Webster Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Webster Public Schools District (henceforth referred to as "The District") is to maintain a safe and secure school environment conducive to teaching and learning. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in response to M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 (as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010), prohibiting bullying in schools.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. The intention of this plan is to strengthen existing protections for our students. Additionally, it serves as a tool for our faculty and administration to promote strategies that will allow our District to prevent issues of violence, bullying and other acts of aggression.

The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies and our community to prevent issues of violence. All members of the school community have a responsibility to support and promote these objectives. The District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner, respecting individual differences.

The District does not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school buses, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. The District investigates all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and takes prompt action to end that behavior. The District supports this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

The policy applies to all members of the school community including, but not limited to: students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parent/guardians and visitors to district buildings.

PRIORITY STATEMENT

The Webster Public Schools community is a safe and secure environment which provides for the education of the whole student, including healthy habits of the mind and body. Therefore, the District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. Toward that end, we do not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school buses, on school grounds, or in school-related activities.

The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. We promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. We take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing and implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in ensuring all employees teach students to be civil to one another and promote pro-social behaviors. All staff are responsible for setting pro-social priorities and for staying current with up to date research and practices on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. District Administrators and Principals, utilizing established council and advisory mechanisms, will involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing, implementing and evaluating the Plan.

A. Public involvement in developing the Plan

This Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan has been developed by a cross section of educators from the Webster Public Schools. The planning team included district-level administrators, principals, counselors, and teachers, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. The Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan used the Model Bullying and Prevention Plan developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a template.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the original Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan approved by the School Committee in 2010, after being open for public comment, November 10, 2010 through December 3, 2010.

This plan was then amended on September 10, 2013 to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, who are defined to include, but are not limited to "educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, and athletic coach or advisory to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional."

In 2020, the Anti-Bullying Task Force, composed of staff, counselors, administrators, updated this plan. This revised plan was open for public comment, February 11, 2020 through March 1st,

2020. It was shared with the English Language Parent Advisory Council, the Webster Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and all School Councils. During the public comment periods, copies of the Plan were available in the main office of each school, the superintendent's office, and on the district's website. This plan and policy was then approved by the School Committee on April 14, 2020.

This plan was amended in 2025 to include the following: "The plan affords all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law." This plan was then approved by the School Committee on April 8, 2025.

B. Assessing needs and resources

The Webster Public Schools assesses needs and resources as part of an ongoing assessment of data in the context of analyzing resources, strengths, and gaps in the following manner:

- As a Turnaround District, each school has had several Turnaround Site and Monitoring Site visits and reviews through American Institute of Research. These site visits include surveys of staff to assess school culture and learning environments.
- Student incident data is analyzed at each school and reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- Social-emotional curriculum/ Advisory group/ WIN block data
- District Safety meetings
- Students at Risk meetings / Roundtable meetings / Child Study meetings

This ongoing process assists schools in the district in identifying needs. Based on these findings, action steps may include revising or developing protocols and procedures; expanding community partnerships including law enforcement; and setting priorities for future prevention and intervention efforts. This ongoing process helps to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and informs decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

Additionally, at least once every four years beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Similar tools to the student survey can be used with faculty, staff, parent/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs.

C. Planning and oversight

The following identifies those responsible for tasks required under the Plan:

- Any school personnel who receives a report of alleged bullying contacts a counselor and/or school administrator the same day the report is received and a prompt investigation ensues.

- Administrators, Teachers, and Support Teams collect and analyze school-wide data on bullying to assess the current climate and to create action plans for improvement.
- District Leadership Team, School Administrators, in conjunction with the Professional Development Committee, plan ongoing professional development required by law.
- School Administrators, Counselors and Staff utilize the approved forms from this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for recording, tracking, and accessing information related to targets and aggressors.
- School Administrators will submit monthly bullying incidents to the Superintendent and the Superintendent will provide updates to the School Committee.
- The District and all schools make this Plan and informational materials available in order to advise parents/guardians on proper reporting procedures.
- The School Committee and the District Administrative Leadership Team annually review and amend student handbooks and codes of conduct to include the Plan and provisions under Massachusetts General Law.
- The Anti-Bullying Task Force considers input from students, parents/guardians, faculty, administrators, law enforcement and the community to make recommendations to the School Committee for revisions of current policies and protocols under the Plan.
- The School Committee supports and approves all revised policies.
- The Superintendent and the District Leadership Team reviews and ensures implementation of the anti-bullying curricula.
- School Administrators, School Psychologists, Counselors, and all Staff implement the supports to respond to the needs of targets, aggressors and by-standers.
- Director of Technology, in conjunction with the District Leadership Team, develops protocols and procedures for computer and Internet safety.

D. Developing Safe School Climates

The district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil and respectful manner, and respect individual differences. The district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning in a safe school environment.

While we promote an environment to celebrate diversity, we are cognizant that some students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics; including, but not limited to: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, academic standing, physical appearance, language,

and/or mental, physical and developmental disabilities. All school personnel will be responsible for monitoring and creating safe school climates and all school personnel will take specific steps to create safe and supportive learning environments that prevent bullying. The policy affords all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF TRAINING

Training for faculty and staff will be included in the Mandated Training offered by the District at the onset of the school year. Staff members hired after the onset of the school year will complete Bullying Prevention and Intervention Training along with all Mandated training for the Webster Public Schools as part of their orientation to the District.

A. Annual staff training on the Plan

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff responsibilities under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district.

B. Ongoing professional development

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of schoolwide and districtwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas for professional development may include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
- building relationships and communicating with families

- constructively managing classroom behaviors
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- applying constructive disciplinary practices
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

C. Written notice to staff

The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff responsibilities, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, bystanders, families, and others are addressed. A continuum of services is available to enhance the district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying. Available services should reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of those involved.

A. Identifying resources

The District conducts a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services. After the initial mapping of resources is complete, the District develops recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services. The mapping of resources is conducted by members of the counseling and administrative teams. Recommendations based on mapping of resources and identification of needs are made to the Anti-Bullying Task Force.

B. Counseling and other services

The District continues its practice of connecting students and families with community service agencies as appropriate. The site-based student support team, the building principal, the school psychologist and any other appropriate staff member is responsible. The counseling team, with input from school administration, develops safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, provides social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offers education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Possible interventions include but are not limited to behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

C. Students with disabilities

As required by MGL c. 71B, §3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when a student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student is vulnerable to bullying,

harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the IEP Team considers what should be included in the student's IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. This includes determining whether specific accommodations, specially designed instruction, or related services are necessary in order to meet the needs of the child.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The District provides age appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade in the school district's curricula. Curricula is evidence-based. Effective instruction includes classroom approaches, whole school initiatives and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches:

Bullying prevention curricula for the Webster Public Schools will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- Using scripts and role playing to develop skills
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance
- Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies
- Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts.

The Webster Public Schools promotes teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts. The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment and they underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including students with disabilities, of all race, color, homelessness, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity,

ethnic background, national origin, religion, economic status, and disability in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws

- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students may require disciplinary action
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development
- Using the Internet safely
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

C. Curriculum development

The Webster Public School counseling team, building principals, curriculum coordinators, district administrators, and Anti-Bullying Task Force review and support the implementation of appropriate curriculum in the following ways:

- Review existing appropriate evidence-based curriculum and methods of delivery of Bullying Prevention
- Review new materials and make recommendations for adoption of appropriate curriculum
- Support the development of lessons, referring to the stated objectives and guidelines, for consistent use at each level

D. Curriculum implementation

The Webster Public Schools implements approved evidenced-based curricula. **See Appendix A**

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the district has established policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or

retaliation. These policies and procedures ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

It is an expectation of the District that all staff members are required to report any bullying or harassment incident they see or learn about. The district promptly and reasonably investigates all allegations of harassment, including bullying. The principal or designee at each building are responsible for handling all complaints alleging harassment or bullying.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying, is prohibited. Gateway Behaviors such as teasing, name calling, taunting, exclusion, spreading of rumors or gossip including, but not limited to, online behaviors, staring, making faces, mimicking, rough housing and physical altercations will not be tolerated.

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member are recorded in writing.

Extend protections are given to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, who are defined to include, but are not limited to “educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, and athletic coach or advisory to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee, when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor; or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor; or to the superintendent or designee, when a member of the school committee is the alleged aggressor.

Any instance of bullying or retaliation must be reported. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. A report may be made using the anonymous reporting system by going to www.webster-schools.org, or by sending an email to bullying@webster-schools.org. Anonymous reports may also be made by calling the Bullying Prevention Hotline at 508.943.0104 x40001.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district:

- Makes the Plan and reporting forms available on the website www.webster-schools.org
- Provides the Plan and reporting forms in the most prevalent language(s) or language of origin of students, parents/guardians, upon request.
- At the beginning of each school year, the school or district provides the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation.

a. Reporting by Staff

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee, when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor; or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor; or to the superintendent or designee, when a member of the school committee is the alleged aggressor. Any instance of bullying or retaliation must be reported. The requirement to report as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

b. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

a. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee takes steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not be limited to:

- creating a personal safety plan
- pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus
- identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target
- altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target
- contacting parents/guardians

The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

b. Obligations to Notify Others

- ***Notice to parents or guardians.*** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to the situation. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- ***Notice to Another School or District.*** If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- ***Notice to Law Enforcement.*** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. If an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

c. Investigation

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. (Align this with school or district procedures.)

d. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will:

- determine what remedial action is required, if any
- determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

e. Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building. Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills

- making a referral for evaluation

Taking Disciplinary Action. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

Consequences for confirmed bullying will include referrals, interventions, and /or disciplinary actions as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct, School Committee policies and any collective bargaining agreements.

If a student has been found in violation of the bullying policy, the District will impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action to end and prevent further occurrences of the action(s). The District will take into account harm suffered by the target(s) as well as any damage to school or District property. The nature of the action taken must comply with District and school disciplinary policies. Any disciplinary or corrective action shall conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law. Action concerning students may include a written warning; classroom transfer; suspension (short- or long-term); exclusion from school-sponsored functions; after-school programs and/or extra-curricular activities; limited or denied access to parts or areas of the building; exclusion, expulsion, referral to law enforcement authorities; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; awareness training; empathy development awareness programs; counseling or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of conduct and/or school disciplinary code. The District complies with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others. The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

f. Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff

All incidents of bullying by school staff will be thoroughly investigated. As appropriate, disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school employee may include, but is not limited

to, a written warning, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal from certain duties, employment, termination, supervision, training, and counseling.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Parent education and resources. The school or district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO,, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

Notification requirements. Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The Webster Public Schools pledges to prepare all students to be life-long learners and responsible citizens. The Webster Public Schools are committed to maintaining a safe school environment free of bullying, in accordance with the current School Committee Policy.

Bullying of students by other students, student to teacher, teacher to student, parent to teacher, teacher to parent, administrator to teacher, teacher to administrator any district employee against another district employee will not be tolerated by the Webster Public Schools.

The District has implemented strategies for protecting a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about an act of bullying. Such strategies include but are not limited to:

- The development of a safety plan
- Check-in with counselors, administration or other staff
- Staff escorts
- Modified schedule/class assignment
- Increased supervision in high traffic areas
- Increased communication among staff

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. Problem Resolution System

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student or a member of school staff who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is "The repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear or harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying."

Cyberbullying is "Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting

creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v) inclusive of the definition of bullying.”

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Target is a student or member of the school staff against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Harassment:

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, creed, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability, or any behavior directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms and potentially causes them to suffer substantial emotional distress.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse.
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature.
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grade level, achievements, or other school matters.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for a student’s education or of a student’s participation in school programs or activities.
- Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s school performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive school learning environment.

Other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to males or females.

Hazing:

Hazing or initiation procedures (physical or otherwise) are prohibited in school or in connection with any school related activity.

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the WPS, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Nothing in the Plan prevents the District from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or the District to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Review and Approval: March 25, 2025

APPENDIX A: **Forms**

APPENDIX B: **Anti-Bullying Curriculum**

APPENDIX C: **Additional curriculum support activities**

You can also file Bullying Complaint, or pose questions or comments in any of the following ways:

- *Call the Bullying Prevention Hotline at 1-508-943-0104 ext. 40001*
- *Send an email to bullying@webster-schools.org*
- *Drop a note at your school office or at the Administration Office*

Bully Prevention Resources:

for more information on bully prevention visit these websites:

<http://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/> MARC

<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/educators/index.html>

<http://www.cfchildren.org/Second Step/Steps to Respect>

<http://www.schoolengagement.org/index.cfm/Bully%20Proof%20Your%20SchoolBullyProof>

APPENDIX A: Forms

___ BHS ___ WMS ___ PAE

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INITIAL INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report: _____

This line may be left blank if an anonymous report is being made

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the: ☐ Alleged Target of the behavior ☐ Reporter (not the target)

3. Check whether you are a: ☐ Student ☒ Staff member ☐ Parent ☐ Other (specify) _____

4. Your email/telephone number: _____

5. Information about the Incident:

Name of Alleged Target (of behavior): _____

Name of Alleged Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

6. Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

7. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.

Staff member receiving this Report: _____ Date: _____

BULLYING REPORT INITIAL INVESTIGATION

Alleged Target: _____ Alleged Aggressor: _____

1. Investigator(s): _____ Position(s): _____

2. Interviews:

X Interviewed alleged aggressor Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed alleged target Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed witnesses Name: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

3. Any prior documented incidents by the alleged aggressor? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, have incidents involved alleged target or target group previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION ☐ Yes ☐ No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

Form Given to: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date Received: _____

CONCLUSIONS FROM INITIAL BULLYING REPORT INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

☐ YES

If yes:

☐ Bullying

☐ Retaliation

☐ NO

If no:

☐ Incident documented as recess squabble _____

☐ Discipline referral only _____

2. **Contacts:**

☐ Alleged Target's parent/guardian Date: _____ ☐ Alleged Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

☐ Administration Date: _____ ☐ Law Enforcement Date: _____

3. **Action Taken:** _____

4. **Describe Safety Planning:** _____

Follow-up with Alleged Target:

scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____

Follow-up with Alleged Aggressor:

scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____

Report forwarded to Principal: Date _____

Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date _____

(If principal was not the investigator)

Investigation completed by: _____ **Title:** _____

Investigator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Administrator receiving this Report: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX B

Anti-Bullying Curriculum

School	Program	Grades
PAE	Second Step	PK-4
	Second Step Anti-Bullying Units	K-4
WMS	Second Step	5-8
BHS	Lions Quest	9-12

APPENDIX C

Additional curriculum support activities

The District supports programs and activities that promote the value of a positive school climate with healthy and respectful behaviors. Although some of these programs and activities are not evidence-based or specifically targeted to bullying prevention, they will continue to be evaluated for potential implementation.

1. PBIS - Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions - All Buildings/District-Wide: Teaches expectations of all students to promote a safe learning environment and positive culture.
2. Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)
3. Diversity Club - BHS
4. Morning Meeting - PAE
5. Responsive Classroom - PAE
6. Advisory BHS and WMS
7. Service learning projects

AHERA Notification

Webster Public Schools Office of Business and Finance

Lisa Kontoes
Business Manager
Email: lkontoes@webster-schools.org
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Office Manager
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77 Poland Street
PO Box 430
Webster, MA 01570
PH 508-943-0104
FX 508-949-2364
Mass Relay 800-439-0183

Date: July 1, 2026

AHERA NOTIFICATION

Dear Parents, Students, Legal Guardians, and Employees:

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Schools with known asbestos conditions were inspected and suspect materials were sampled by licensed state inspectors and rated according to EPA AHERA protocols. Please find listed below the District schools and the results of their inspections. Every three years, schools containing asbestos materials must be re-inspected to determine if any known or suspected asbestos-containing buildings materials (ACBM) have changed and recommendations are made on the managing or abatement of the ACBM.

Educational Facility Name and Address:

Park Ave Elementary School (No Asbestos Present)
58 Park Avenue
Webster, MA 01570

Webster Middle School (No Asbestos Present)
75 Poland Street
Webster, MA 01570

Bartlett High School
52 Lake Parkway
Webster, MA 01570

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be developed and implemented to monitor any known or inspected ACBM. The plan has several ongoing requirements: Publish a notification on management plan availability and the status of asbestos activities; educate and train its employees about asbestos and how to deal with it; notify short-term or temporary workers on the locations of the asbestos containing building materials; post warning labels in routine maintenance areas where asbestos was previously identified or assumed; follow set plans and procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos containing building materials; and survey the condition of these materials every six months to assure that they remain in good condition.

It is the intention of the Webster Public Schools to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a health and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan in the school administrative office during regular business hours. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the number listed below.

Lisa Kontoes
Business Manager
Webster Public Schools
77 Poland Street
Webster, MA 01570
lkontoes@webster-schools.org