

ENLIGHTENMENT SCHOOL



STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK 2026 - 2027

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

THIS HANDBOOK IS CURRENT AS OF 8/1/2025 AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

| EVERY STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING RISES TO SUCCESS |

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Students & Families,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 - 2027 school year as well as provide the information in this handbook to ensure a safe and smooth transition back into school. There is much to look forward to and much to celebrate.

As the principal, I am thrilled for us to work together in this vibrant and diverse community and steward the mission, vision and core values of Waterbury Public Schools.

Our school is a place where every unique learner is valued, supported and inspired to achieve their fullest potential. We are dedicated to fostering a strong collaborative partnership between home, school, and community. We believe that a united effort from educators, families and partners is crucial for creating a nurturing and successful learning environment.

Safety is among our top priorities- physical, emotional, and intellectual. We are committed to providing a secure and inclusive space where all students can thrive. Our team will continue to implement comprehensive safety measures and ensure that everyone feels protected and respected each and everyday.

Meeting the needs of our diverse students is at the heart of our mission. We are excited to offer personalized learning experiences, support services, and innovative programs to cater to the individual strengths and interests of each student. Our goal is to empower every learner to excel academically, socially, and emotionally. Please reach out to me at lauren.miele@waterbury.k12.ct.us or 203.574.8050 if I can assist you in any way.

Here is to a year filled with growth, achievement, and meaningful connections. Together, we can make this the most exceptional school year yet.

Warmest Regards,

Lauren A. Miele, Principal

MISSION

The mission of Enlightenment School is to provide a supportive and inclusive alternative program for students who face behavioral, social, emotional and academic challenges. We are committed to fostering a nurturing environment that respects individual differences and empowers students to overcome obstacles, develop essential life skills, and achieve academic potential. Through personalized support, innovative teaching methods, and comprehensive resources, we aim to cultivate resilience, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging- equipping students with the tools they need to succeed academically and thrive socially and emotionally.

VISION

Our vision is to create a transformative alternative program that serves as a beacon of hope and opportunity for students grappling with behavioral, social, and emotional challenges, alongside academic hurdles. We envision a community where every student feels valued, understood, and supported, regardless of their struggles or setbacks. Through a holistic approach that integrates therapeutic interventions, personalized academic support, and a culture of empathy and acceptance, we aspire to empower students to discover their potential, embrace their uniqueness, and chart a path toward success and fulfillment. Our program seeks to not only address immediate needs but also to inspire lifelong growth, resilience, and meaningful connections within a supportive and inclusive environment.

MOTTO

Every Student in Good Standing RISES to Success

R - Respect Yourself & Others

I - Invest in Your Future

S - Stay Safe

E - Embrace Accountability

S - Show Readiness by Following Directives

STAFF DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION

Lauren A. Miele, Principal	lauren.miele@waterbury.k12.ct.us
Elona McGuire, Vice Principal	elona.mcguire@waterbury.k12.ct.us

CLERICAL

Jodi Tufano, Secretary	jtufano@waterbury.k12.ct.us
Susan Bresnahan, Admin Specialist	susan.bresnahan@waterbury.k12.ct.us

HEALTH & SAFETY

Officer Melninkaitis, School Resource Officer	nicholas.melninkaitis@waterbury.k12.ct.us
Lilliana Letra, School Nurse	lilliana.letra@waterbury.k12.ct.us

SUPPORT

Renee Sileo-Pettway, Counselor	rsileopettway@waterbury.k12.ct.us
Kristin Altwies, School Social Worker	kaltwies@waterbury.k12.ct.us
Mariah Serrano, Prevention Specialist	mariah.serrano@waterbury.k12.ct.us

School Phone: 203.574.8050

School Website: <https://enlightenment.waterbury.k12.ct.us/>

POLICIES

Please be advised that the Enlightenment Program follows all WPS board policy (<https://www.waterbury.k12.ct.us/students/school-district-handbook>) in addition to alternative guidelines as follows:

SCHOOL DAY & SCHEDULES

<u>REGULAR SCHOOL DAY</u>	<u>BELL SCHEDULE</u>	<u>A/B DAY SCHEDULE</u>
7:15 AM -12:57 PM	BLOCK 1: 7.20 AM-8.37 AM	All students will follow an alternating schedule and therefore will attend each of their classes every other day.
<u>EARLY DISMISSAL</u>	BLOCK 2: 8.38 AM-9:55 AM	
7:15 AM - 11:00 AM	BLOCK 3: 9.56 AM-11:13 AM	
<u>2 HOUR DELAY</u>	BLOCK 4: 11:14 AM-12:57 PM	
9:15 AM - 1:00 PM	(inclusive of lunch)	

Please note that Enlightenment follows the usual WPS calendar which includes holidays, early dismissals and delayed openings that are in place for all other schools. *For the purposes of open house & parent conferences, our program follows the **middle school** dates and times.*

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Safety is a top priority for our students and staff. Doors will open at 7:15 AM for all students to report to Block 1 and enjoy breakfast. Students are expected to remain in the building until dismissal at 12:57 PM. No student under the age of 18 will be permitted to leave school grounds without parental consent.

Arrival: All students will enter at the Griggs street entrance. There will be no supervision until doors open at 7.15 AM. Upon entrance, all students will turn in electronic devices (phones, tablets, air pods, speakers, smart watches) in a personal, sealed bag to be stored for the day and returned at dismissal. Office & nurse phones will be made available to students in case of emergency. In addition, all personal items will be checked for storage until dismissal in locked bins. These items include all outerwear (hoodies, jackets/coats, masks, hats, scarves, gloves) and bags of any kind including purses and backpacks. Female students in need of personal hygiene items may utilize the free dispensary machines placed in each female bathroom as well as the nurse's office. Any and all checked items are subject to search if deemed necessary by administration or campus safety personnel.

Students may bring an empty, refillable bottle into the building. All other beverages must be new, unopened and completely sealed in order to enter the building. *Please remember to open your beverages once inside the building and not before.*

All students will pass through a Garrett security device to ensure the safety of the school community. If needed, secondary measures including a metal detecting wand will be utilized to ensure no items in violation of school policy or local laws.

Late Arrival: Any student arriving after 7.30AM should ring the bell at the Griggs Street entrance to gain access to the building. Students should report the office window to sign in and receive a late pass to Block 1. *Students must be in school by 8:00AM in order to attend Block 1 classes and earn all scheduled credits unless called in Tardy by a parent or guardian or accompanied by a note.*

Dismissal: All students will exit via the Griggs Street doors, where all checked belongings can be retrieved. Buses will be called over the loudspeaker beginning at 12.45 PM followed by walkers. If a student is being picked up in general or on a specific day, please send a note or give the office a call to inform us so we can look for you at dismissal to dismiss your student. If your child needs to be dismissed earlier, please come in to sign them out via the Griggs Street entrance. No early dismissals after 12.30PM will be permitted so as to focus on an orderly and safe dismissal for the rest of the students.

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is necessary for all students to meet academic and social emotional success. You can help by making school a top priority. If a student must be absent from school, please call the office at 203.574.8050 by 7:30AM to report his/her absence. In order for absences to be excused, students must return to school with a note or other documentation (medical, bereavement, court appointments, etc.)

Students are considered chronically absent after 17 missed school days, excused or not. Chronic Absenteeism is irreversible and may result in retention or loss of credits. *If a student has an appointment, please consider bringing them in after or picking them up early rather than missing an entire school day.*

Students who have perfect or improved attendance on a monthly basis will be recognized & receive rewards! 🎁

CELL PHONE POLICY

As stated above, the Enlightenment program wishes to respect the important work of the learning environment by requiring that all electronic and wearable devices are turned in and off upon arrival. Phones/watches/headphones will be securely stored and returned at the end of the day. *No student will gain entrance into the building unless all such devices are turned in.* Office phones & chromebooks will be made available to all students as needed and in case of emergency.

WPS POWERSCHOOL & PARENTSQUARE

Students, parents, and guardians will have access to Waterbury Public Schools Powerschool in order to check schedules and academic progress. Students may use their WPS username and password to connect. Parents may also sign up for an account through the school office and by using our district's unique PowerSchool access code FCCT.

Parentsquare is used as the primary method of school communications. Please download the app to any device in order to receive important invitations, reminders, emergency alerts and to communicate with

the Enlightenment staff. It is also imperative that you update the school anytime your phone number(s) or email addresses change so you can be reached in case of emergency.

CURRICULUM

Students at Enlightenment follow the same curriculum guidelines as WPS comprehensive schools & google classroom serves as the primary tool for instruction. We aim to have our students complete most of their schoolwork within the academic day so as to provide the resources and support needed to meet success. Credit recovery (EdGenuity) is available outside of school hours for those who wish. If work is missed in school, the responsibility to make up work lies with the student and all makeup work must be completed within 5 days of returning to school except in cases of extended illness or extenuating circumstances to be determined by the administration.

NOURISHMENT

All students will be provided with breakfast and lunch on a daily basis during both full and reduced hour schedules. Students will enjoy breakfast in their Block 1 classrooms and transition to the cafeteria for lunch unless this privilege is revoked as a result of misconduct. No item that is not pre-packaged or sealed upon entry to the building will be permitted. This includes food items, beverages or snacks. Students must open items once cleared through security and not before. Lunches brought from home will be collected and redistributed to the student at their lunch time.

TRANSPORTATION

Students are offered bus transportation to and from school and is considered a privilege. As such, all Enlightenment students agree to follow the rules and directions of any bus driver or bus monitor. Failure to comply presents a safety hazard to the students on the bus, the driver, and the general public and therefore may result in temporary or permanent loss of riding privileges. Students will only be permitted to ride their assigned bus and enter and exit the bus at their assigned stop. Changes can only be submitted by a parent or guardian in writing or by calling the office. Administration will then seek approval at the district level to grant any such changes.

SEL / PREVENTION

Enlightenment students engage in a Prevention Intervention period on a weekly basis. This period is dedicated to providing all students with an opportunity to participate in social emotional learning and develop the skills and tools necessary to self-regulate. Topics of discussion are aligned to WPS Portrait of a Graduate and are facilitated by therapeutic staff members who focus on emotional development opportunities for students to reflect on their academic progress and set future goals for success.

RELATED SERVICES / STUDENT SUPPORT

All students are welcomed and encouraged to use support staff throughout the duration of their time at Enlightenment. Students will be made aware of the process for getting the services of the School

Counselor, Special Education Resource Teachers, School Social Worker, School Resource Officer, Behavior Technicians and Prevention Specialist included in their schedule.

As a team, we aim to empower students by modeling the mediation process of restorative justice to address challenges with our fellow peers and adults as a means of productive problem solving. The goal of restorative justice is to guide students in building empathy, reflection and sense of community responsibility. We prioritize and work diligently to build supportive and trusting relationships with each and every student as well as guide students to building positive connections with one another. Conflict is a part of life and when we work to repair relationships, our students and staff are happier and healthier!

When students are involved in conflict or affected by the wrongdoing of others, they can expect to engage in conversations that may include the following questions in order to see other perspectives:



Restorative practices do encompass an element of balance, *therefore some conduct will still result in logical consequences as restitution to assist in repairing harm and restoring peace and well-being in our learning community.* Overall, it is our mission to equip students with a sense of empathy and responsibility and help them to develop productive communication skills that will benefit them throughout adolescence and adulthood.

ATTIRE

Enlightenment students are **not expected to comply with the districtwide uniform policy**, however the following standards of appropriate dress will apply:

- No offensive language/messaging (drugs, alcohol, weapons, profanity, gangs, memorial “R.I.P” type shirts, hate, or pornography)
- No gang affiliation colors, beads, “flagging” bandanas
- **No crop tops**, halter, tank, or tube top type shirts are permitted. Upper legs, buttocks, and abdomen areas must be covered.
- No undergarments are to be visible at school. This includes bras, underwear and boxers.
- All hats, ski masks, headgear, bonnets and bandannas will be checked upon entry and are not permitted inside the building.
- Outerwear such as coats, jackets, hoodies, gloves, hats, and scarves are not permitted. A personalized large string bag will be provided for students to store such items and all bags will be placed in locked containers for students to retrieve upon dismissal.
- Failure to comply will result in denied access to the building and students will have to call for alternative attire or accept available attire provided by the school.

In addition, special themed dress up days will occur for a \$1 donation to the Student Activity Fund which funds incentives, prizes and special events for students in Good Standing!

SPECIAL NOTE ON SAFETY/ VIOLENCE/ WEAPONS

Absolutely no indication of gang, crew, or set affiliation will be tolerated. Any sign or article of clothing perceived to have gang affiliation is prohibited in the school setting and is grounds for immediate removal from the premises as well as referral to law enforcement.

Mandatory Expulsion: Please be advised that expulsion proceedings are mandatory in the Waterbury Public School system for certain offenses. Law prohibits students from possessing dangerous or deadly weapons that are capable of causing death or serious physical injury on school grounds. This includes: pistols, revolvers, dirk knives, switch knives, knives with auto spring and blade > 1.5 inches, slingshots, black jack, sand bag, metal/brass knuckles, stiletto, knives with blade > 4 inches, martial arts weapons, air rifles, BB guns, electronic defense weapons, gravity knives, billy, bludgeon, and mace.

PERSONAL DEVICES (CHROMEBOOKS)

Students will have access to desktop and chromebook computers in each classroom when needed. These devices are to be used for academic purposes only and will remain at the school at all times. Personal devices are not permitted and must be checked upon entry, including personal headphones/air pods.

Each student was provided an Acceptable Use Policy upon intake into the program. If this policy is violated or if equipment is damaged, students/families will be financially responsible and access to district devices may be revoked.

HALLWAY TRANSITIONS

Students are expected to transition from their assigned locations directly to their next assigned location and will be escorted and monitored by staff. Please be mindful of quick and quiet transitions so as not to disrupt the learning of others. All bathroom visits will include an escort and one student will be permitted to use the lavatory at a time.

If your child requires special accommodations, please notify the school. Failure to comply with orderly transitions and movement threaten the safety and well-being of your child and all other students and staff in the school and may result in administrative consequences/loss of privileges.

CARETAKER ACCESSIBILITY AGREEMENT

Please ensure you are accessible by phone or email throughout the school day in case of an emergency or any other student issues. It is imperative to have updated contact information on file. Please let us know if there is a change to your information.

For the safety of our students and staff, visitors are generally not permitted to enter the building without a pre-arranged appointment. While we will make every effort to accommodate families, our priority during the school day is the safety of students and maximized instruction, therefore appointments may be held before or after school hours.

MEDICAL NEEDS

If your child requires medication or has any serious health conditions or allergies that warrant special attention to accommodations, please contact the main office and notify the school nurse, Ms. Letra, directly.

Administration of Medication: In accordance with state statutes, medication cannot be administered to a student unless the school has a written order from a licensed medical prescriber and the signed authorization of a parent or guardian. This includes both prescription and over the counter medications. Students may not carry medications in school, including asthma inhalers and over the counter medications, unless the school has a valid medication order and signed parent/guardian permission to both administer the medication and to self carry medication on file. State of Connecticut statutes prohibit students of any age from carrying or self administering any type of narcotic or controlled medications in school.

****ACTION ITEM****

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

This acknowledgement confirms receipt of the policies, procedures, rights, and responsibilities of each Enlightenment student.

To sign your **REQUIRED** annual acknowledgement form, visit:

[**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM LINK**](#)

or scan:



We look forward to a smooth year for all of our students and families as we strive to achieve our mission and vision!