

WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HANDBOOK FOR
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

2011-2012

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Winchester Public Schools

Mission

To provide all students with an outstanding education in a nurturing yet challenging environment that fosters academic achievement, healthy social and emotional development, enthusiasm for education and a life-long love for learning.

Vision

To strengthen and promote Winchester's tradition of outstanding education for all, ours will be an exemplary public school system that works in partnership with students, parents, and the community to:

- Challenge every student appropriately and positively with a comprehensive curriculum that simultaneously emphasizes academic fundamentals, real-world skills, and healthy social and emotional development;
- Encourage every student and every teacher to reach his/her potential by providing a safe, nurturing, and rich learning environment that inspires leadership, enthusiasm for education, and a life-long love for learning;
- Prepare students to thrive in an increasingly complex, diverse world and to possess a strong sense of civic responsibility and citizenship;
- Value, support, and recognize skilled and passionate teachers committed to educating our students as individuals and as members of a caring and connected community; and
- Embrace and cultivate communication to support effective student learning and healthy development and to improve community awareness of the issues, challenges, accomplishments, and achievements that together define our school system.

We Value...

- Quality teaching by teachers who are passionate learners capable of inspiring and motivating students through their mastery of content and pedagogy and their joy for teaching and learning.
- The unique strength of every student and we commit to nurture each as an individual and as a partner in learning.
- A rigorous and comprehensive academic program and the tools and materials to support it.
- Respect and sensitivity toward self and others.
- Rich interaction between students and teachers.
- An environment that promotes and cultivates a life-long love for learning.
- A positive school culture and a nurturing climate.

Winchester Public Schools

Winchester School Administration

154 Horn Pond Brook Road
781-721-7004
<http://www.winchester.k12.ma.us/>

Superintendent of Schools	Mr. William McAlduff
Assistant Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Rhonda Cohen
Business Manager/Human Resources	Mr. John Danizio
Pupil Services Administrator	Dr. Linda Stapp
Director, Educational Technology	Mrs. Annamaria Schrimpf

Winchester School Committee

Mr. Chris Linskey, Chair
Mr. Michael Schindelman, Vice Chair
Mrs. Sarah Girotti
Mr. Chris Nixon
Mrs. Sarah Swiger

Regular sessions of the School Committee are held at the Lynch Elementary School Library at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are open to the public and are also televised on Winchester Cable TV Channel 9/37. Regular meetings are scheduled every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month.

Winchester Parent Organizations

Winchester School Association (WSA)

All parents and guardians of school children in Winchester are also members of the Winchester School Association, an umbrella organization for the seven individual school parent associations. WSA provides enrichment programs for all elementary students.

Winchester Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

This is a town-wide committee to advise the school committee and school department in the area of Special Education and to facilitate communication within the community about Special Education. It also provides parents of children with special needs an opportunity to meet one another. Meetings are open to the public and are announced in school newsletters, the local paper and on community cable television.

Winchester Public Schools

Statement of Nondiscrimination

NONDISCRIMINATION

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage 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. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

Title 1 Coordinator:	Dr. Rhonda Cohen
Title II ADA Compliance Coordinator	Dr. Linda Stapp
Title IV Civil Rights Coordinator	Mr. John Danizio
Title IX Coordinator (employee related)	Dr. Rhonda Cohen
Title IX Coordinator (student related - Ambrose)	Ms. Leigh Petrowsky
Title IX Coordinator (student related - Lincoln)	Mrs. Kate Scanlon
Title IX Coordinator (student related - Lynch)	Mrs. Christine Kelley
Title IX Coordinator (student related - Muraco)	Mrs. Laurie Kirby
Title IX Coordinator (student related – Vinson-Owen)	Mr. Grant Smith
English Language Education Coordinator	Mrs. Pam Cairns
Homeless Education Coordinator	Mr. William McAlduff
504 Coordinator	Ms. Sherri Lewis-Sholler
Harassment Coordinator (Ambrose)	Ms. Leigh Petrowsky
Harassment Coordinator (Lincoln)	Mrs. Kate Scanlon
Harassment Coordinator (Lynch)	Mrs. Christine Kelley
Harassment Coordinator (Muraco)	Mrs. Laurie Kirby
Harassment Coordinator (Vinson-Owen)	Mr. Grant Smith

Winchester Public

Schools

2011-2012

School Calendar

New Staff Orientation August 24 & 25
 Teachers First Day August 29
 Students First Day August 30
 Students Last Day June 12*
 (if no snow days)
 Teachers Last Day June 13
 (if no snow days)

First Day Schedule

Grades 1-5 Early Release
 Grades 6 & 9 7:45 am-10:40 am
 Grades 7-8,10-12 11:30 am-2:15 pm
 PreK & K Individual Schedule

Second Day Schedule

Grades 1-5 Early Release

School Hours

Lincoln, Muraco, Vinson-Owen

Grades 1-5 8:30 am - 2:35 pm
 Kindergarten 8:30 am -12:15 pm

Ambrose & Lynch

Grades 1-5 8:45 am - 2:50 pm
 Kindergarten 8:45 am - 12:30 pm


McCall and High School

7:45 am- 2:15 pm

Early Release Dismissal Times

Lincoln, Muraco, Vinson Owen 11:30 am
 Ambrose, Lynch 11:45 am
 McCall & High School 11:10 am

KEY GUIDE

ER1-5 Early Release-Grades 1-5
 ERPK-8 Early Release PreK-8
 Parent Teacher Conferences
 ERPK-12 Early Release PreK-12
 PDNS Professional Day-No School
 NS No School
 V Vacation
 Snow Days

AUGUST 2011 (2 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	ER1-5	ER1-5			

SEPTEMBER 2011 (20 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	NS	3
4	NS	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

OCTOBER 2011 (20 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	NS	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	ERPK-8	ERPK-8	ERPK-8	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

NOVEMBER 2011 (18 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	PDNS	NS	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	ERPK-12	NS	NS	26
27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER 2011 (17 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	ERPK-12	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	V	V	V	V	V	31

JANUARY 2012 (20 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	V	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	NS	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2012 (16 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	ERPK-12	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	V	V	V	V	V	25
26	27	28	29			

MARCH 2012 (22 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	ERPK-8	ERPK-8	ERPK-8	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL 2012 (15 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	2	3	4	ERPK-12	NS	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	V	V	V	V	V	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

MAY 2012 (22 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	ERPK-12	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	NS	29	30	31		

JUNE 2012 (8 Days)

S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	ERPK-12				16
17			22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	3

*The Department of Education requires school districts to schedule 185 student school days. The days identified by the snowman symbol are days 181 to 185. If school is cancelled at any time during the year the last day of school moves an additional day for each day cancelled. If there are no cancelled days the last student day is June 12, 2012.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Education in the Winchester Public Schools requires regular and punctual attendance to enhance high levels of participation on the part of its students. Parents and guardians of children who attend our schools have special responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, as required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, section 1. The law states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. Up to seven day sessions and fourteen partial day sessions may be excused by the school district within any six month period.

Winchester Public Schools Attendance Policy

Absences and Tardy Information

A parent or guardian must call the school office if a student will arrive later than the school's starting time. Students who arrive late must check into the office with a parent/guardian. A parent or guardian must call the school office by 9:00 AM to notify the school that a child will be absent, tardy, or dismissed. If no call is received and a child is missing from his/her classroom, the school will call home to check on the child.

Excused Absence/Excused Tardy

Students may be excused from school temporarily for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or quarantine
- Bereavement
- Observance of major religious holidays
- Emergency medical or dental treatment
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of principal)

Early Dismissals

The public school day must be left free for school purposes. It is not possible to dismiss children for dancing lessons, shopping trips and the like. Children will be dismissed only for medical and dental appointments, which are unable to be scheduled after school, and for emergency situations. All written requests for dismissal are referred to the Principal for approval and action.

Whenever a child is to be dismissed during the school day, due to parent request or illness, the child must be picked up at the office by a parent, guardian, or an adult designated by the parent. Children will not be allowed to walk home alone for any reason during school hours nor will children be allowed to wait outside for their rides.

Family Vacations

Scheduled school vacations occur in December, February, and April. Vacations taken at times other than designated school vacations are considered unexcused absences. Parents are strongly advised not to take vacations during school days and/or conferences, as children miss important instruction, discussion, and activities that allow guided practice of new skills. Instructional time that is missed while a child is on vacation cannot be replaced. Requests for advance work from classroom teachers for vacations during school days will not be honored. Students are responsible for making up missed work upon their return to school. Timelines for the completion of missed work are determined by the teachers. If such an absence is unavoidable, students are encouraged to keep a journal of their activities that may be shared with their classmates when they return to school. Families of students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 are reminded to be aware of MCAS testing dates in the spring.

Staying after School

Children may remain after school for special help, completion of work, or disciplinary reasons. The teacher and/or principal will notify and make appropriate arrangements with parents before a child remains after school. Children will not be detained after 3:15 unless transportation has been arranged.

Inclement Weather

- *“No School” Announcements*

The Superintendent of Schools determines when school will be cancelled. Every effort will be made to call in “No School” announcements to the following television channels before 6:00 AM:

WBZ - Channel 4
WCVB - Channel 5
WHDH - Channel 7
WFXT - FOX 25
WinCam - Channel 9/37
www.winchester.k12.ma.us

Normally, the decision is not made until the early morning hours of the day in question. The Superintendent may notify parents of a “No School” Announcement via an automated call placed through the school district’s School Messenger system. It is imperative that the school office has updated contact information for all students at all times. Information regarding school cancellations or delays may also be found at:
<http://mail.winchester.k12.ma.us/~aschrimpf/snowcancellation>

- *Delayed Opening*

Due to weather conditions, the school district may call a Delayed Opening. Like the “No School Announcement,” a “Delayed Opening” announcement may be reported on the television stations listed above, made to parents via an automated call made through School Messenger and/or reflected on the District’s website at:
<http://mail.winchester.k12.ma.us/~aschrimpf/snowcancellation>

Please do not drop your child/children off more than 15 minutes prior to the stated delayed opening time. There is no adult supervision before this time. This is an important safety factor.

Emergency School Closing

Rarely, school is cancelled during a day that school is in session. If school is cancelled because of an emergency during the day (e.g., no heat in a building, impending severe storm, etc.), you will be contacted through the School Messenger system. Please be sure that the school has your most updated information and list of adults who have permission to take your child/children home should you be unavailable. Please note, also, that per standard dismissal procedures (such as when a child misses a bus), that children will not be dismissed to the custody of other parents, neighborhood families, etc., unless the school records (student information forms) indicate that it is permissible. These children will remain with school personnel until you or a designee arrives to pick them up.

Early Release Days

An early release day schedule for the year is distributed by the school and published in the local paper each fall. These afternoons are used for professional development and conferences with parents. Please check your school’s early release day dismissal time. Lunch is not served on these days.

School Lunch Program and Snacks

- Lunch

During the lunch period, children are afforded the opportunity to eat their lunch and socialize with peers. Students in grades K-5 may bring their own lunch to school or they can purchase a school lunch. School lunch menus are published monthly. The decision on whether to bring a lunch or purchase a school lunch is made on a daily basis. Classroom teachers collect school lunch orders when they take morning attendance. Milk (white, low fat or chocolate) is included with the school lunch. Milk or orange juice can also be purchased separately.

Lunch prices for the school year 2011-2012 are as follows:

Lunch: \$3.00 each
Milk: \$3.00/strip of 5 tickets
Ala Carte: \$6.25/strip of 5 tickets

Winchester schools participate in a federally subsidized lunch program for qualified families. Information is provided at the beginning of the school year.

- Snacks

Teachers in grades K through 5 typically give students an opportunity to have a snack at some point during the school day. In grades K, 1, and 2, there is a snack period. In grades 3 through 5, students are encouraged to bring a snack, which can easily and neatly be consumed during work periods.

Pupil Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

Common district progress reports are issued three times per year. Kindergarten students are given a Developmental Progress Profile. There is a common report card for Grades 1 and 2 and a common report card for Grades 3 to 5.

Parent conferences are scheduled for each fall and spring. Parents or teachers may request conferences at other times, as needed. Conferences should be a shared assessment of a child's progress and needs.

Homework

Homework is valued as a natural extension of the learning process that can link home and school. Homework serves to reinforce skills, develop independent work habits, encourage responsibility, and enrich curriculum. Homework activities can entail family reading, independent reading, spelling, math exercises, projects, research, occasional completion of school work, current events, etc. In September of each year specific grade level guidelines will be issued.

Volunteers

All volunteers serve at the discretion of the school faculty and staff and are subject to the Winchester Public School Volunteer Policy that is distributed in the fall and is available for parent and community viewing in the Principal's office.

- CORI checks

M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R requires all schools in Massachusetts to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students and those who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The CORI law requires a school or district to notify all persons for whom a CORI is requested that such information is being or may be obtained. Prospective employees and volunteers are required to complete and sign a CORI Request Form which is available through the secretary at each of our six elementary schools. The Request Form is used to document that we have provided you with notice that a CORI is being conducted and to verify your identity through a government issued form of photographic identification (usually a driver's license).

School Safety

- Fire Drills, Evacuation, and Relocation

In the event that a need arises that requires the evacuation of a school building, students will immediately leave the building accompanied by the staff and report to assigned locations. They will remain outside the building until the building is deemed safe by the proper authorities. If a situation arises where students must be evacuated and relocated, the school staff will escort them to a safe, predetermined location and the automated School Messenger system will be activated to notify you as to how you can pick up your children.

Emergencies are unexpected, unpredictable, and take many forms. No one can be fully prepared for

everything that may happen, but some measures are helpful in any emergency. Each school has an Incident Management Team (IMT) comprised of Administration, Allied Health Care, teachers and other staff as needed. The Central Office also has an IMT. The school district has an IMT team made up of a representative from each school and the Central Office as well as representatives from Police and Fire. This team is co-chaired by Police, Fire, and a School representative. This team acts as a steering committee, developing plans, procedures and providing additional support to the school during an incident, including post incident evaluation and debriefing.

- **Lockdown/ Shelter-in-Place**

In the event that a circumstance outside is cause for a school to be secured (for example, a potentially dangerous individual in the area of a school or some kind of chemical polluting the air, etc.), the school would go into Lockdown or Shelter-in-Place. A Lockdown means that each classroom will be secured by locking the doors, the students would be moved to an area of the room away from doorways and windows and wait quietly until the Incident Commander or the authorities informs the staff that the Lockdown is over and they may resume normal activities. No one will be allowed in or out of the building at that time. Shelter-in-Place would require locking all outside doors and closing windows and possibly turning off the ventilation system. Students and staff would be free to move about within the interior of the building only.

Special Education Services

A student may be eligible to receive special education or related services under state and federal guidelines. Following a series of pre-referral activities such as the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan and Teacher Resource or Strategy Team, a child may be referred for a Special Needs Diagnostic Evaluation. After a comprehensive battery of tests, the child's parents/guardians and the diagnostic team members meet to discuss the test results and identify if an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is necessary. Upon completion of the evaluation, the evaluation team must answer the following questions:

1. Does the student have a disability? If so, what type of disability?
2. Is the student making effective progress in school? If not, is the lack of progress a result of the student's disability?
3. Does the student require specially designed instruction in order to make effective progress in school or does the student require related services in order to access the general curriculum?

Special Education services available in the schools include resource room, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. These providers deliver specialized or remedial services to children to help them develop strategies and skills, which allow them to continue to experience success in the classroom. Children may be seen due to a specific learning disability, language processing, fluency, and voice disorders or a developmental delay.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

This is a federal act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a handicap in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. A person with a handicap is anyone who: has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Life Threatening Allergies

It is the policy of the Winchester School Committee to ensure full access to a free and appropriate education for all students within the Town of Winchester, including students with life-threatening allergies (LTAs), by establishing age-appropriate procedures and guidelines that minimize the risk for students with LTAs. The procedures and guidelines on LTAs exist at both the district and school building levels.

Winchester Public Schools cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment for all students with LTAs, but WPS is committed to working towards minimizing the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educating the community and maintaining and regularly updating a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all parties within the system, beginning with parents notifying school personnel regarding their child's medical condition, including any known allergies.

The goal of the Winchester Public Schools is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prevent any occurrence of LTA reactions
- Prepare for any allergic reactions
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies

In accordance with the following procedures and protocols, an Emergency Allergy Action Plan (EAAP) and an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) will be developed for each student after receipt of written notification from the student's parent of a physician-diagnosed LTA. Parents of children with LTAs, asthma or medical issues should meet with the school nurse to develop Individual Health Care Plans.

Health Services

Winchester School Health Update: A health update request for each student is sent home by the school nurse at the beginning of each school year. Parents are required to complete this form annually and return it to school. This form is necessary to keep student health records current.

Health Entry Requirements

- Immunizations: All immunizations must meet Massachusetts's minimum requirements and must be certified in writing by a licensed physician. The Commonwealth's School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, requires the following immunizations of all children entering kindergarten:
 - ☑ DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus) - 5 or more doses.
 - ☑ DT - Booster every 10 years.
 - ☑ Oral Polio - 4 or more doses.
 - ☑ MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) - 2 doses.
 - ☑ Varicella vaccine or medical documentation of Chicken Pox for all students entering kindergarten.
 - ☑ Hepatitis B vaccine series is required for all children.
 - ☑ Exemption is possible for medical or religious reasons. See the school nurse for more information.
- Mandated Preschool Vision Screening: All students entering kindergarten in 2008, or after, are now required to have new stereopsis vision screening by the child's physician.
- Lead Screening: Required for all students entering kindergarten.
- Physical Examinations: All students entering as new students (including transfer and kindergarten) must have written proof of a physical exam by their private physician.
- Fifth Grade Physical Examinations: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, School Health Unit, now requires all 5th grade students to have a complete physical exam before they transition to McCall. An examination completed between June 1, 2008 and June 1, 2009 will be accepted. Please forward the required documentation to the school nurse in September if your child had an exam during the summer and throughout the school year as the exams are completed.

- **Health History:** A health update form is sent home at the beginning of each school year to students in grades K-5. Parents are required to complete these forms to enable the school to keep health records current.

- **Illness**

A child should remain at home for his or her own welfare and for the protection of other students if he or she has any of the following:

- a severe cold
- persistent cough
- sore throat or swollen glands accompanied by a fever
- an undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- earache
- red eyes or drainage from the eyes
- vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- a fever during the past 24 hours

If a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified and will be expected to provide transportation for their sick child. Children will not be allowed to leave school alone and should be picked up from the school health office.

Medication

The school nurse is the only school personnel authorized to administer medication. (Other designated personnel may be authorized to give medication to a student while away from school on a field trip or in an emergency, life-threatening situation.) Whenever possible, the medication schedule should be adjusted to fall outside school hours. If it is not possible, a written, signed, dated request must be made by the physician and the parent authorizing the dispensing of medication in school. Written authorization from the parent/guardian only is needed for over-the-counter medications.

An authorized adult should deliver the medication to the school nurse or secretary. No student should carry medications on the school bus or in the school building. If a parent prefers, he/she may come to school and administer the medication.

Screening

The following health screenings are administered to all students:

- VISION - *screening performed annually in grades K-5*
- HEARING - *screening performed annually in grades K-3*
- POSTURAL - *screening performed annually in grade 5*
- HEIGHT & WEIGHT - *measured in grades K-5*
- PEDICULOSIS – *grades K-5*

Communicable Diseases

- *Chicken pox:* Isolation from school for (1) week following appearance of rash. All eruptions must be dry and scabbed over. Most children are now immunized.
- *Strep Throat* (including Scarlet Fever): Children may return to school after being on adequate antibiotic medication for 24 hours and after being without fever for 24 hours.
- *Rashes:* Undiagnosed rashes are considered contagious and children should remain at home until a diagnosis has been made.

Pediculosis (Head Lice) Guidelines

- Provide effective management of head lice in school
- Minimize student absences due to head lice infestation
- Educate community about head lice: prevention, identification, and management.

Pediculosis Procedure:

If a child is found to be infested with lice, he/she will be referred to the parent or guardian for appropriate treatment. The child may return to school after adequate treatment in consultation with the school nurse. The nurse may exclude a student until the treatment is deemed satisfactory for re-entry. If there are two or more identified cases in one classroom parents will be notified. When a parent/guardian discovers head lice on their child, please notify the school nurse so appropriate precautions can be taken to prevent their spread to classmates.

Transportation Policy

Bus - for All Students

School Bus schedules and routes are published in the Winchester Star newspaper approximately one week before the start of school. Bus schedules and routes may also be obtained by contacting the Winchester School Department Business Office. If the published route or schedule does not meet your needs, please contact the School Department Business Office at (781) 721-7001 to discuss possible modifications or alternatives. There is a fee for bus service. Students must have a bus pass in order to board the bus. The application and fee structure can be found on the district's website.

Bus - for Kindergarten Students

All Kindergarten students are eligible to take the bus home from school regardless of how far they live from the school. Kindergarten students will be dropped off at their homes except if the bus cannot get to the home and except on early release days when all students are dropped off at the scheduled bus stops. An adult must be at home to meet Kindergarten students. There is a fee for kindergarten bus students. Contact the Winchester School Department Business Office at (781) 721-7001 for further information.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

- *Procedures for Drivers and Parents:*
In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the school principal. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal will suspend the student's transportation privileges with written notice to the parent. Bus privileges may be denied permanently if a third incident occurs, following a conference with the Superintendent of Schools or designee. The responsibility for transportation will rest with the parent if the privilege is denied.
- *Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop:*
Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus and while in transit.
- **Required Conduct Aboard the Bus:** Riders must remain in seats when the bus is in motion. Whistling and shouting are not permitted. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden. Smoking/drugs/alcohol are prohibited. The following disturbances are prohibited:
 1. Harassment of others
 2. Pushing or wrestling
 3. Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
 4. Talking to the driver
 5. Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
 6. Climbing over seats
 7. Opening or closing windows
 8. Leaning out of windows
 9. Littering

Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus. Parents and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year. The same standards of conduct and any written rules that apply during the school day will apply on the buses.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON HARASSMENT (INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT)

The Winchester Public Schools is committed to providing faculty, staff and students an environment which allows them to pursue their careers and studies in physical and emotional safety. Therefore, schools and offices must be free of any type of harassment or physical threat to well-being. All persons associated with the school system, including, but not limited to, the school committee, the administration, faculty, staff and students are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from harassment. These same individuals are strongly encouraged not to tolerate, even by silence, any violation of this policy by others.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment refers to conduct, behavior, or comments that are personally offensive, degrading, or threatening to others. This policy refers to, but is not limited to, insulting or harmful comments or actions based on a person's race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, physical characteristics, or disability. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, name calling, threats, unsolicited physical contact, unwelcome and insulting comments and gestures, and the display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading or offensive to any individual, ethnic, racial, religious or gender group.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which is included in this policy and, as defined here, is illegal and is a violation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Massachusetts General Laws, c.151, section 4B. In addition, the Massachusetts Fair Education Practices Law and Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972 make any form of sexual harassment in any program of study in any institution an unfair educational practice. For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests, for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as term or condition of an individual's employment, academic work or participation in extracurricular activities;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment.

Procedures for Reporting Harassment

In determining whether an alleged incident constitutes harassment, the **building Principal** (unless involved as a party) will serve as the hearing officer vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the following procedures. The following steps should be followed in the reporting/resolution process. In attempting to reach a resolution, the totality of circumstances, including the developmental level and age of the students involved will be considered.

Student Level One

Sexual harassment

Any student in **the secondary schools** who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the incident to one of the two advocates for students appointed in each of the secondary schools. If a student reports the incident to another staff member, and the staff member determines that harassment has occurred, he or she must, even if the situation has been resolved, report the incident to one of

the two advocates. At the **elementary level**, a student should report the incident to the classroom teacher or to any other teacher who will report the incident to the student's classroom teacher, even if he or she has resolved the situation. At either the elementary or the secondary schools, all incidents and their disposition will be reported to the Principal.

The advocate or teacher will examine the totality of the circumstances and the context in which the alleged incident occurred. The teacher/advocate will attempt to resolve the problem by conferring with all parties, including the parents or guardian as appropriate, and the Title IX Coordinator in order to obtain a clear understanding of the facts. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If the advocate/teacher is not successful in resolving the situation or a decision is made to move the complaint forward, the incident must be referred to the school Principal.

Other types of harassment

All other harassment should be reported to a faculty member, including a guidance counselor or the school nurse. If that staff member is not successful in resolving the situation or a decision is made to move the complaint forward, the incident must be referred to the school Principal.

Level Two

In all cases of harassment, including sexual harassment, the Principal will hold an informal hearing to attempt to resolve the situation. He or she will involve the students' parents or guardian and the Title IX Counselor as appropriate.

Level Three

In the event that a student and/or parents are not satisfied by the resolution process at level two, they may file the complaint with the Superintendent of Schools within a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed thirty days. Hearing procedures for both students and staff are described after the staff section of this document.

Staff

Level One

Any staff member of the district who believes he/she has been subjected to harassment as defined by this policy, including sexual harassment, is to report the incident to the building Principal (unless he/she is the party involved, in which case, reporting moves to level two).

The Principal will examine the totality of the circumstances and the context in which the alleged incident occurred. After obtaining a clear understanding of the facts by conferring with all parties involved, the Principal will attempt to resolve the problem.

Level Two

In the event that a staff member is not satisfied by the resolution process, he/she may file the complaint with the Superintendent of Schools (unless he/she is a party, in which case the complaint goes to the school committee) within a reasonable amount of time not to exceed 30 days. Hearing procedures for both students and staff are described after the staff section of this document.

Hearing before the Superintendent

The purpose of the Superintendent's hearing will be to determine whether the school system's policy on harassment, including sexual harassment, has been violated, and, if so, the Superintendent will recommend appropriate consequences for the violation.

Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and the superintendent will not be bound by the procedures and rules of evidence of a court of law. In most

instances, complainants and respondents will be expected to speak for themselves, although, if desired, each party may be accompanied by an advocate(s) and/or legal counsel.

The Superintendent will act as the presiding officer of the hearing and may have counsel present for purposes of assisting in the orderly conduct of the hearing. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to clarify the issues and to define the areas of disagreement. To encourage a fair and focused hearing, the parties will notify the Superintendent at the start of the proceedings about the points of agreement and disagreement. The Superintendent will hear testimony and consider whether the school committee policy on harassment has been violated, and, if he or she so finds, will recommend appropriate consequences.

The Superintendent will:

- ensure an orderly presentation of all evidence
- ensure that the proceedings are accurately recorded by means of a tape or stenographic recording
- issue a fair and impartial decision based on the issues and evidence presented at the hearing no later than ten working days after the conclusion of the hearing or, when written arguments are submitted, ten working days after their submission.

Decision of the Superintendent

After all the evidence and the testimony are presented, the superintendent (or the school committee in the case of a charge against the superintendent) will deliberate to determine whether the school system's policy on harassment has been violated. If the superintendent/school committee finds that the policy has not been violated, that fact will be registered in the records of the hearing, and the written decision will be forwarded to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing.

If the superintendent/school committee finds that the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated, the hearing officer will prepare findings and will recommend a penalty for the respondent and relief for the complainant. The findings of fact as well as the recommended penalty and relief will be based solely on the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing.

Consequences of the Decision

If a student or staff member is found in violation of this policy, the consequences should reflect the severity of the harassment. These consequences may include, but will not be limited to, any one or combination of the following:

Student

- verbal admonition
- written warning, placed in student's record
- probation
- transfer to another school
- suspension from school and possible expulsion, with an additional hearing, following a finding that the policy has been violated.

If appropriate, the Superintendent may recommend some form of community service or school service, and may also make appropriate recommendations, such as professional counseling, and may recommend relief for the complainant which reinstates and restores the aggrieved party as much as possible.

Staff

- verbal admonition
- written warning, placed in individual's record
- probation
- suspension with/without pay, demotion/transfer to another role/building within the school system, removal from administrative duties within a building/department, dismissal

The Superintendent may also make appropriate recommendations, such as professional counseling, and may recommend relief for the complainant which reinstates and restores the aggrieved party as much as possible.

Prevention

In an effort to prevent harassment from occurring, discussions of all forms of harassment and their consequences will be integrated into curriculum and instruction at all levels of the school system. Training in the prevention and correction of harassment will be provided to staff. Staff members are encouraged to be vigilant about all types of harassment and to intervene and report any incidents which could be construed as harassment. Staff members are expected to engage student groups in discussions about the issue of harassment and to increase student awareness of reasons not to engage in harassment.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Winchester Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying within the school community.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying" means 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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying 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 the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

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

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Winchester School district if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- infringe on the rights of the victim at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development, monitor and update a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a victim of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The victim shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses. Support staff shall assess an alleged victim's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

Retaliation

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

Victim Assistance

The Winchester Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both victims and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Winchester Public Schools website.

DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students identified as having special needs

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. The IDEA and M.G.L.c. requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).
 - A) Students with special needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days. Such suspensions may be carried out without any further or additional process. Students with special needs may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
 - B) Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of his/her disability and the district provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward his/her goals.
 2. The IDEA and M.G.L.c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including himself/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP team.
 3. The IDEA and M.G.L.c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
 4. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination. Relevant members of the team meet for the manifestation determination, and they answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's IEP?
Is the misconduct caused by or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?
- A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review but no later than five (5) school days after the review.
5. If the team finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in this handbook. The student will receive educational services during this period of suspension or exclusion. If the team finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see #3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the team will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.
 6. The principal (or designee) will notify the special education office of the suspendable offenses of a special needs student, and a record will be kept of such notices.

Students identified as having a disability and provided with a Section 504 plan

1. Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan?

Is the misconduct caused by or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

Discipline of Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to students who have not yet been found eligible for IEPs if the school district is deemed to have knowledge that the students were eligible for IEPs before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is "deemed to have knowledge" if:

- (1) the child's parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child's teacher that the child needs special education and related services;
- (2) the child's parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or
- (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel.

However, a school district is not "deemed to have knowledge" if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child's parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services. If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Open Enrollment

The School Committee shall vote annually on an open enrollment option for the coming school year and shall identify the elementary schools eligible for participation. This option is made available to parents whenever possible in recognition of the individual differences which exist in children and to enable the children to be enrolled in the school which best meets their needs. The School Committee voted not to have open enrollment for the school year 2011-2012.

Non-Custodial Parents' Rights

In order to obtain access to the student record, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request to the principal. Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent. The school will provide the non-custodial parent with access after twenty-one (21) days unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documents that the noncustodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5) (a).

Acceptable Use Policy

Computer and Internet Rules

STUDENT PRIVILEGES

Students may use the Internet to

- locate material to meet educational needs.
- participate in distance learning activities.
- ask questions of and consult with experts.
- communicate with other students and individuals for educational purposes.

All students at the elementary school will use the Internet under the direct supervision of the teacher.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students will

- treat the people you “meet” on the Internet with respect.
- treat computers responsibly.
- act as a representative of the school by showing responsibility.
- tell a teacher or another adult if any inappropriate sites are accessed by accident.
- follow all of the instructions given and stay only in the areas the teacher suggests.
- actively use the information found on the Internet in learning (projects, reports, and discussions).
- respect documents of classmates—no reading, deleting, copying or modifying of classmates’ files.
- never give out personal information online (addresses, phone numbers, pictures, etc.) or arrange personal meetings with anyone met online.

Students are advised that e-mail and /or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential and that there are consequences for choosing not to follow the Internet rules.

Student’s Signature: _____

Parent’s Signature _____ Date: _____

These rules are set forth from the Acceptable Use Policy adopted by the school committee on March 1999 for the Winchester Public Schools. A detailed Acceptable Use Policy will be placed in computer labs and the principal’s office at each school for parent or community viewing.