

WINCHESTER  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



HANDBOOK FOR  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

2019- 2020

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Human Rights Statement](#)

[WPS Mission Statement](#)

[Vision](#)

[We Value](#)

[Winchester Public Schools Calendar](#)

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

### WINCHESTER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

#### Winchester Parent Organizations

[Winchester School Association \(WSA\)](#)

[Winchester Special Education Parent Advisory Committee](#)

## FEDERAL LAWS GOVERNING STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO EDUCATION

### STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

**NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IDENTITY**

**INCLUSIVE SPORTS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION POLICY**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

[Absences and Tardy Information](#)

[Excused Absence/ Excused Tardy](#)

[Early Dismissals](#)

[Family Vacations](#)

[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 2:30 unless transportation has been arranged.](#)

[Inclement Weather](#)

[Delayed Opening](#)

[Emergency School Closing](#)

[Early Release Days](#)

### SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM, SNACKS AND FOOD IN CLASSROOMS

### PUPIL REPORT CARDS AND PARENT CONFERENCES

### SCHOOL SAFETY

[Fire Drills, Evacuation, and Relocation](#)  
[Intruder/ Shelter-in-Place](#)

[SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES](#)

[SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973](#)

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination against qualified persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. Section 504 defines a "disabled" person as anyone who: "Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working, or the person has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such impairment by others."](#)

[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.](#)

[TRANSPORTATION POLICY](#)

[STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES](#)

[ANTI-BULLYING POLICY](#)

[STUDENT DISCIPLINE](#)

[HARASSMENT](#)

[STUDENT RECORDS](#)

[STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY](#)

## **Human Rights Statement (Adopted by the Winchester Board of Selectmen September, 2009; 2012)**

Winchester is a community that is grounded in respect for every individual, and therefore protects all residents, employees, business owners, students and visitors in the enjoyment and exercise of human and civil rights. It is Town policy to ensure equal treatment and opportunity to all individuals regardless of race, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, ideology, socio-economic status, health, sexual orientation, age, military status or disability.

### **Non-Discrimination**

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, gender identity, 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, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability his/her complaint should be registered with the Title IX Grievance Officer.

### **Winchester Public Schools Mission Statement**

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 lifelong 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 lifelong love for learning.
- A positive school culture and a nurturing climate.

**WPS School Calendar**

[http://www.winchesterps.org/Calendar\\_19\\_20\\_Final\\_approved\\_3\\_5\\_19.pdf](http://www.winchesterps.org/Calendar_19_20_Final_approved_3_5_19.pdf)

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

<p><b>Ambrose Elementary School</b> Principal: Andrea Phelan <a href="mailto:aphelan@winchesterps.org">aphelan@winchesterps.org</a> School Hours: 8:10 - 2:20 Office Hours: 8:00 - 3:00 Early Release Day Dismissal: 11:20 Website: <a href="#">Click here</a></p>	<p>27 High Street Winchester, MA 01890</p>	<p>781-721-7012 781-721-7012 <a href="#">Fax: 781-721-5605</a></p>
<p><b>Lincoln Elementary School</b> Principal: Kelly Clough <a href="mailto:kclough@winchesterps.org">kclough@winchesterps.org</a> School Hours: 8:10 - 2:20 Office Hours: 8:00 - 3:00 Early Release Day Dismissal: 11:20 Website: <a href="#">Click here</a></p>	<p>161 Mystic Valley Parkway Winchester, MA 01890</p>	<p>781-721-7017 781-721-2296 <a href="#">Fax: 781-721-7040</a></p>
<p><b>Lynch Elementary School</b> Interim Principal: Nina Cullen-Hamzeh <a href="mailto:NCullenHamzeh@winchesterps.org">NCullenHamzeh@winchesterps.org</a> School Hours: 8:10 - 2:20</p>	<p>10 Brantwood Road Winchester, MA 01890</p>	<p>781-721-7013 Fax: 781-721-4480</p>

Office Hours: 8:00 - 3:30 Early Release Day Dismissal: 11:20 Website: <a href="#">Click here</a>		
<b>Muraco Elementary School</b> Principal: Leslie West <a href="mailto:lwest@winchesterps.org">lwest@winchesterps.org</a> School Hours: 8:10 – 2:20 Office Hours: 8:00 - 3:30 Early Release Day Dismissal: 11:20 Website: <a href="#">Click here</a>	33 Bates Road Winchester, MA 01890	781-721-7030 781-721-7030 x110 Fax: 781-721-0244
<b>Vinson-Owen School</b> Principal: Grant Smith <a href="mailto:gsmith@winchesterps.org">gsmith@winchesterps.org</a> School Hours: 8:10 - 2:20 Office Hours: 8:00 - 3:30 Early Release Day Dismissal: 11:20 Website: <a href="#">Click here</a>	75 Johnson Road Winchester, MA 01890	781-721-7019 781-721-7029 Fax: 781-721-2681

## WINCHESTER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

40 Samoset Road  
781-721-7004  
[www.winchesterps.org](http://www.winchesterps.org)

Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Judith Evans	781-721-7004
Assistant Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Jennifer Elineema	781-721-7006
Director of Finance	Ms. Ellen Whittemore	781-721-7080
Director of Special Education	Mrs. Pamela Girouard	781-721-7005
Director of Personnel	Ms. Laurie Kirby	781-721-7003

### Winchester School Committee

Ms. Michelle Bergstrom, Chair  
Ms. Zeina Marchant  
Mr. Chris Nixon,  
Ms. Karen Bolognese  
Mr. Brian Vernaglia, Vice Chair

Regular sessions of the School Committee are held at the Parkhurst School - School Committee Meeting Room 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month.

### **Winchester Parent Organizations**

Each school has a parent association, which supports building based enrichment programs at each school. In addition, PISC (Parent Inter-School Council) exists, which includes the parent association presidents from each school. PISC meets regularly to collaborate in an effort to support students across Winchester.

Parent Association President contacts:

Ambrose Chair: Kinzie Gensler <http://www.ambrosepto.org/>

Lincoln Co-Chairs: Julie Condron, Lauren Dean, Carey-Sue Barney <http://www.lincolnspace.net/>

Lynch Co-Chairs: Nora Walker & Stacey Princi: <http://lynchschooll.com/>

Muraco Co-Chair: Suzanne Trumbower and Sara Brown <http://www.muracoparents.com/>

Vinson-Owen Co-Chairs: Betsy Kelly and Kerri Porter <http://vinson-owen.com/>

### **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.

Chair: Stacey Irizarry <http://winspecialpac.org/>

### **School Councils**

A school council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members required to be established by each school pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 59C. Each elementary school has a school council and parent elections are held in the fall.

### **FEDERAL LAWS GOVERNING STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO EDUCATION**

Federal laws outline the rights of certain classes of students to an education. These laws are discussed briefly below. More detail governing these rights of students can be obtained in the principal's office.

**Homeless Students:** Every child without a permanent home has a right to the same appropriate public education as provided to all other children. A homeless child may enroll in school even though he or she does not have a permanent address.

**Title IX:** This law prohibits discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid on the basis of the student's gender. The district coordinator for

**Title IX is TBA. Section 504:** This law prohibits discrimination based upon any physical or mental handicap that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including but not limited to walking, hearing, performing manual tasks, learning, and working. The district coordinator for Section 504 is Ms. Jason Levene.

### **STATEMENT OF 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, gender identity 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, gender identity or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IDENTITY**

The Winchester Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or gender expression is not tolerated and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.

The Winchester Public Schools strictly enforces a prohibition against harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, of any of its students or employees by anyone, including any fellow student, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party, as such conduct is contrary to the mission of the Winchester Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education and employment. The school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or gender expression in the educational programs and activities of the public schools, and strives to create an environment where all students and staff feel safe, welcome and included.

The Winchester Public Schools takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Winchester Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which



may include termination of employment or school-related discipline. The provisions of the Winchester Public Schools' Nondiscrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, Anti-Bullying, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Equal Educational Opportunities and Equal Employment Opportunity policies are incorporated as if fully set forth herein.

If a student requires assistance under this policy, the student and/or the student's parents/guardians/caretakers should contact the principal. If a staff member requires assistance under this policy, the staff member should contact the human resources director.

To help create a safe and supportive environment for all students, the school district will, consistent with applicable laws and guidance, take the following steps pursuant to the following definitions:

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Gender identity is an individual's sincerely held core belief regarding their gender, whether that individual identifies as male, female, both, neither or in some other way (for example, individuals who identify in some other way such as nonbinary, queer, genderqueer or gender fluid).

Gender expression is the manner in which an individual represents or expresses gender to others, through such means as clothing, hairstyling, accessories, voice, behavior and mannerisms.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with their assigned sex at birth.

Transition is the experience by which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

Gender expansive is an umbrella term used to describe people who expand notions of gender expression and identity beyond what is perceived as the expected gender norms for their society or context. Some gender-expansive people identify with being either male or female, some identify as neither, and others identify as a mix of both. Gender-expansive people include those with transgender and nonbinary identities as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender.

## Names/Pronouns

A student or staff member has the right to choose a name and pronoun appropriate to the student's or staff member's gender identity, regardless of the student's or staff member's assigned birth sex and name that appear on the student's or staff member's birth certificate. School District files should accurately record and use the student's or staff member's chosen name and pronouns that are consistent with the student's or staff member's gender identity. Court orders are not required to update student or staff records to reflect changes in a student's or staff member's name and gender markers. A student's individual school will work with a

student and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student if they are involved in the process, or in the case of a younger student with the student and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers, to develop a plan for communicating any name and pronoun change within the school. Similarly, the Director of Personnel will work with individual staff members to develop a plan for communicating any name and pronoun changes within the district and community.

### Transitions

When a student transitions, the school may hold a meeting, upon request by student or the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student, with the student and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student if they are involved in the process, or in the case of a younger student with the student and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers, to develop a plan to provide a safe and supportive educational environment for the student and to address any concerns that may arise.

When a staff member transitions, the staff member may request a meeting with the human resources director, who may assist the staff member in navigating workplace concerns that the staff members has as a result of the transition.

### Privacy, Confidentiality and Student Records

Records with a student's or staff member's assigned birth name and sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical information related to gender identity or other information of a similar nature, if such records exist, will be maintained in a separate, confidential file. The school district shall ensure that all information related to a student's or staff member's gender identity shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable federal, state and local privacy laws and regulations. Information that may reveal a student's or staff member's gender identity to others will not be disclosed unless the school is legally required to do so, or unless the disclosure has been authorized by the student or staff member, or in the case of a younger student, by the student's parents/guardians/caregivers. Schools will consult with a student and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student if they are involved in the process, or in the case of a younger student with the student and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers, when determining whether any such information should be disclosed, and if so, how much information should be disclosed and to whom.

### Accessibility to Restrooms, Locker Rooms and Changing Facilities

A student or staff member may access the restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities that correspond to the student's or staff member's gender identity. Upon a student's or staff member's request, any student or staff member who is uncomfortable using a shared facility, regardless of the reason, shall be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative. Based upon availability and the appropriateness to address privacy concerns, accommodations that may be offered to a student or staff member who desires increased privacy may include, but are not limited to: (a) use of a nearby private area (such as a gender neutral restroom, gender neutral changing room, nurse's restroom, or a nurse's office); (b) a separate changing schedule, or (c) use of private area within a public area (such as, an area separated by a curtain, or a bathroom or changing stall with a door). Schools will consult with a student and the

parents/guardians/caregivers of the student if they are involved in the process, or in the case of a younger student with the student's parents/guardians/caregivers, to ensure accessibility and address any concerns that may arise.

### Physical Education Classes and Athletic Activities

In those instances where there are gender-segregated classes or activities, as opposed to co-educational classes and activities, a student must be allowed to participate in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity. (For more information, please see Winchester Public School's Inclusive Sports and Extracurricular Activity Participation Policy (JJIC).)

### Dress Codes

A student must be permitted to dress in compliance with the school district's dress code in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity. Staff members shall be permitted to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

### Other Gender-Based Activities, Rules and Practices

Schools should review and evaluate any gender-based activities, rules, and practices currently being utilized, and replace such gender-based activities, rules and practices with non-gendered alternatives. If there is a clear and sound pedagogical purpose to retain a gender-based activity, rule, or practice, a student must be allowed to participate in the activity, rule or practice in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

### Education and Training

The school district shall incorporate training about transgender and gender nonconforming students into its anti-bullying and non-discrimination curriculum, student leadership training, and staff professional development in order to promote a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff.

Consistent with this policy and applicable laws and guidance, the Superintendent of Schools shall promulgate administrative procedures to address steps that school staff should take to create a culture where transgender and gender nonconforming students and staff feel safe, supported and fully included. The administrative guidelines should, at a minimum, address the following areas: gender transition, names and pronouns, privacy, confidentiality and student records, gender markers on student records, restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities, physical education classes, intramural and interscholastic athletic activities, dress codes, and other gender-based activities, rules, policies and practices, and education and training.

### References:

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011) MGL c.4, §5 MGL c. 76, § 5 603 CMR 26.00 603 CMR 1.00 603 CMR 23.00 603 CMR § 23.04 603 CMR §§23.01 and 23.07.

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g

DESE – Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students

AC – ACAB, Subcategories for Nondiscrimination

GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity

JB – Equal Educational Opportunities

JICFB – Anti-Bullying

JJIC Inclusive Sports and Extracurricular Activity Participation Policy

## **INCLUSIVE SPORTS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Administrators, school staff, volunteers, students and others who interact with students (WPS community members) must be respectful of the ways in which individual people ask to be identified and, in general, employ the terms that WPS community members use to describe themselves. This policy extends to interscholastic athletic and extracurricular participation because they are valuable to students' physical, intellectual, social, and/or character development. Guided by our value of inclusion and in compliance with all applicable laws, our policy ensures that students can participate in athletics and extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

### **GENDER IDENTITY-BASED PARTICIPATION**

All students shall have the opportunity to participate in Winchester Public Schools' athletic and extracurricular activities in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on a student's records and without prior medical or mental health care.

Eligibility to participate. A student has the right to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with the gender listed on their school records. A student whose gender identity is different than the gender listed on the student's registration records shall have the right to participate in a manner consistent with their stated gender identity. For students whose school records indicate "non-binary" the student has the right to participate in sports teams of either gender; however, pursuant to MIAA policy, students are not permitted to try out simultaneously for MIAA sports teams of both genders.

If a student has an athletics issue under this policy, the student and/or the student's parent/guardian/caregiver shall contact the athletic director. If a student has an extracurricular activity issue under this policy, the student and/or the student's parent/guardian/caregiver shall contact the principal.

### **INCLUSION**

The Winchester Public Schools endorse the following policies to ensure the full inclusion of students participating in Winchester Public Schools' athletic and extracurricular activities.

1. Changing Areas, Toilets, and Showers. Students shall be able to use the locker room, shower, and toilet facilities consistent with the student's gender identity. Every student has the right to access a private enclosed changing area, shower, and toilet. No student shall be required to use separate facilities. Upon a student's request, any student who is uncomfortable using a shared facility, regardless of the reason, shall be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative.
2. Hotel Rooms. Students shall be assigned to share hotel rooms based on their gender identity, with a recognition that any student who needs extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.
3. Language: Affirmed Names and Pronouns. A student may have a name and pronouns that are different from what may be indicated by the student's school records. Coaches, administrators, officials, and other individuals engaged in student sports or extracurricular activities will endeavor to ensure that the student's affirmed name and pronouns are made known to and respected by others, including teammates, opponents, fans, volunteers, announcers, etc.
4. Dress codes and team uniforms. All students shall have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport/activity and that they feel comfortable wearing provided it maintains compliance with MIAA and National Federation sport specific uniform regulations. No student shall be required to wear a gendered uniform that conflicts with the student's gender identity. Dress codes for athletic teams when traveling or during a game day at school shall be gender-neutral. Instead of requiring a girls' or women's team to wear dresses or skirts, for example, school leaders, coaches or athletic directors may ask that team members wear clothes that are clean, neat, well cared for and appropriately "dressy" for representing their school and team.
5. Competition at another school. When discussing competitions and student expectations, decisions shall be made in consultation with the student and without violating a student's confidentiality or privacy. If requested by the student, school leaders, athletic directors, and coaches should communicate with their counterparts at other schools prior to competitions in which a transgender or gender expansive student is participating about expectations for treatment of the student to ensure access to appropriate changing, showering, or bathroom facilities, and to request the use of affirmed names and pronouns by coaches, opponents, officials, announcers, fans, media and other individuals engaged in student sports or extracurricular activities.
6. Training and Education: The District shall provide culturally competent training regarding this policy to all staff, including but not limited to athletic department staff, coaches and extracurricular advisors, and to all students, including athletic captains or extracurricular leaders, on an annual basis as well as at the start of each athletic season for the student-athletes. This policy shall be distributed to all staff, students and parents and posted on the District's website.

References:

ACA-1 Gender Identity Policy

MIAA Policy 28.3

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011) MGL c.4, §5 MGL c. 76, § 5  
 603 CMR 26.00 603 CMR 1.00 603 CMR 23.00 603 CMR § 23.04 603 CMR §§23.01 and  
 23.07.

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone #, Address in Winchester</b>
Title 1 Coordinator:	Dr. Jennifer Elineema	781-721-7006, 40 Samoset Rd
Title II ADA Compliance Coordinator	Ms. Pamela Girouard	781-721-7005, 40 Samoset Rd
Title IV Civil Rights Coordinator	Ms. Laurie Kirby	781-721-7003, 40 Samoset Rd
Title IX Coordinator (employee related)	Ms. Laurie Kirby	781-721-7003, 40 Samoset Rd
Title IX Coordinator (student - Ambrose)	Ms. Andrea Phelan	781-721-7012, 27 High St
Title IX Coordinator (student - Lincoln)	Mrs. Kelly Clough	781-721-7017, 161 Mystic Valley Parkway
Title IX Coordinator (student - Lynch)	TBA	781-721-7015, 10 Brantwood Rd
Title IX Coordinator (student - Muraco)	Ms. Leslie West	781-721-7030, 33 Bates Rd
Title IX Coordinator (student - VO)	Mr. Grant Smith	781-721-7019, 75 Johnson Rd
English Language Education	Ms. Laura Shanahan	781-721-7030, 33 Bates Rd
Homeless Education Coordinator	Dr. Judy Evans	781-721-7004, 40 Samoset Rd
504 Coordinator	Mr. Jason Levene	781-721-7020, 80 Skillings Rd
Harassment Coordinator (Ambrose)	Ms. Andrea Phelan	781-721-7012, 27 High St
Harassment Coordinator (Lincoln)	Mrs. Kelly Clough	781-721-7017, 161 Mystic Valley Parkway
Harassment Coordinator (Lynch)	TBA	781-721-7015, 10 Brantwood Rd
Harassment Coordinator (Muraco)	Ms. Leslie West	781-721-7030, 33 Bates Rd
Harassment Coordinator (Vinson-Owen)	Mr. Grant Smith	781-721-7019, 75 Johnson Rd

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

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.

### **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:

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

### **Early Dismissals**

The public school day must be left free for school purposes. 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 2:30 pm 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 (4); WHDH (5); WHDH (7); WFXT (FOX -25); WinCAM ((/37); and [www.winchesterps.org](http://www.winchesterps.org)

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.

### **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://winchesterps.org>

Please do not drop your child/children off more than 10 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.

# **ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES POLICY**

The Winchester School District serves children from many different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Out of respect for our students' different religious and ethnic traditions, and to ensure fair and sensitive treatment of all students, the district shall:

- Place responsibility for implementation of this policy on the school principal;
- Distribute school calendars to teachers, staff, and families that include those major religious and ethnic holidays whose observance would require absence from school or other accommodations;
- Impose no penalty or detriment on students who participate in observances of their family's major religious and ethnic holidays;
- Provide ample and flexible accommodations to allow students to make up subject material, assignments, and assessments within a reasonable time (assuming students will not do school work or study during their absence);
- Take major religious and ethnic holidays into consideration when scheduling test preparation, tests, and long-term assignments;
- Avoid scheduling one-time events (field trips, athletic events, music or theatre performances, auditions, group photographs, back-to-school functions, and graduation) when possible on major religious and ethnic holidays. Some major religious holidays begin at sundown on the preceding evening (for example, Jewish Holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and first day of Passover);

- Not require students observing major religious or ethnic holidays to participate or face penalties for their non-participation in school-scheduled events, such as in tryouts, athletic contests, or music performances;
- Not prevent coaches and advisors from holding optional athletic practices on major religious and ethnic holidays;
- Not deprive any student absent from school because of a religious or ethnic holiday of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence.

## SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM, SNACKS AND FOOD IN CLASSROOMS

### **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 2019-2020 are as follows:

Lunch:	\$3.25 Point of Sale purchase
Milk:	\$0.75 Point of Sale purchase
Juice:	\$0.75 Point of Sale Purchase
Soy Milk	\$1.50 Point of Sale Purchase

Menus can be found at: <https://schools.whitsons.com/ma/winchester-public-schools?page=menu>

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.

### **Food in Classrooms**

During the school day, all elementary schools will require that parties and celebrations be food-free. Food will

not be used as a reward or incentive for any student. Children are not allowed to share snacks or food with each other, either in school, on the bus, or at school sponsored events such as Field Trips.

## PUPIL REPORT CARDS AND PARENT CONFERENCES

Common district report cards are issued three times per year.

Parent conferences are scheduled for each fall and spring. Parents or teachers may request conferences at other times, as needed.

## HOMEWORK

We are committed to providing meaningful and relevant homework that fosters a love of reading and allows students the time to develop their skills and to explore their passions.

All students are encouraged to read every day at home, either with a family member or independently. Content-specific homework assignments will generally include some element of student choice and are designed to extend learning and build independence. Homework will not be assigned during weekends, holidays, and vacations.

It is not the expectation that parents take on the role of teacher or monitor for homework completion. Instead, parents can play a key role in encouraging learning, risk-taking, and exploration. Listed below are some suggestions for how students can explore their interests while connecting their learning to real-world applications.

While the suggestions listed below apply to students in grades K-5, your child's classroom teacher will provide you more specific homework guidelines that are developmentally appropriate for each grade level.

### **Reading:**

- Read to self
- Read to a family member
- Read aloud to your child
- Listen to audio books

### **Writing:**

- Journal (feelings or an event from the day)
- Keep a scrapbook highlighting key moments
- Write a letter or postcard
- Create lists

### **Math and Science:**

- Play outside and explore the world around them
- Cook and bake
- Design a plan to improve...
- Create and build

**Social/Emotional:**

- Explore outside interests
- Free play
- Time with family
- Good night's rest

## VOLUNTEERS

We value a strong home/school partnership and welcome the support of all members of our community. 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 administrative assistant 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.

### **Intruder/ 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 Intruder or Shelter-in-Place. An intruder 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 intruder 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

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination against qualified persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. Section 504 defines a "disabled" person as anyone who: "Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working, or the person has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such impairment by others."

### **Notification of Non-Discrimination Policy:**

The Winchester Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability and will not exclude such persons from participation in, deny to such persons the benefits of, or otherwise subject such persons to discrimination under, any program which receives Federal financial assistance (43 C.F.R. § 104.4). Winchester Public Schools has the responsibility to identify and evaluate a child, to afford eligible children equal access and opportunity to receive all appropriate educational services.

What to do if you disagree with the school's determinations:

If the parent or legal guardian disagrees with Section 504 Team determinations or related actions by the Winchester Public School professional staff, he/she has a right to a meeting to reconsider these determinations/actions by a school Administrator. Please send a letter stating your reason for the meeting within 30 days of receipt of the Section 504 Team's decision. Send request to:

Jason Levene,  
Administrator of Counseling Health and Wellness/504  
District Coordinator  
Central Office  
40 Samoset Road  
Winchester, MA 01890

[jlevene@winchesterps.org](mailto:jlevene@winchesterps.org)

You are also entitled to pursue a remedy through the United States Department of Education (USDOE) located at the Office for Civil Rights, New England Office:

U.S. Department of Education

33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491

Telephone: 617-289-0111, TDD: 877-521-2172 Email: OCR Boston @ed.gov

<http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html>

### **Parent and Student Rights under Section 504**

1. To take part in and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination due to handicapping conditions.
2. To have equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
3. To receive education in facilities comparable to those provided with non-handicapped students.
4. To be advised of your rights under federal law.
5. To receive notice with respect to a specific change in the placement of your child.
6. To receive all information in your native language and primary mode of communication.
7. To have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources, and by persons who know the student, the evaluative data used and placement options.
8. To examine records related to identification, evaluation, educational program and placement.
9. To obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost.
10. To a response from the school system for reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
11. To request amendment of your child's records if there is reasonable cause to believe they are inaccurate or in violation of the child's privacy rights. If the school denies this request, you will be notified within a reasonable time and advised of your right to a hearing.
12. To have transportation provided to and from alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if your child were placed in a program operated by the district.
13. To file a grievance with the school district over an alleged violation of Section 504 regulations.
14. To request an impartial hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement.
15. You and your child may participate in the hearing and have an attorney represent you. You have a right to ask for payment of reasonable attorney fees if you are successful in your claim.

### **WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If you believe that your child has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, you may file a grievance under this procedure.

Procedure:

- Grievances must be submitted to the Section 504 Coordinator within 10 days of the date you become aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
- A complaint must be in writing, containing your name and address. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
- The Section 504 Coordinator (or her/his designee) shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Section 504 Coordinator will maintain the files and records of Winchester Public Schools relating to such grievances.
- The Section 504 Coordinator will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after its filing.
- You may appeal the decision of the Section 504 Coordinator by writing to the Superintendent within 15 days of receiving the Section 504 Coordinator's decision. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.
- The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent you from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.

Contact Information:

Jason Levene  
Administrator of Counseling Health and Wellness/504 District Coordinator  
Central Office  
40 Samoset Road  
Winchester, MA 01890  
[jlevene@winchesterps.org](mailto:jlevene@winchesterps.org)

## 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 we



are 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, General Laws 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. (2 doses)

- o Hepatitis B vaccine series is required for all children.
  - o 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. An examination completed within one calendar year prior to entering school will be accepted. Please forward the required documentation to the school nurse.
  - Fourth Grade Physical Examinations: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, School Health Unit, now requires all 4th grade students to have a complete physical exam before they enter their 4th grade school year. An examination completed within one calendar year prior to entering 4th grade will be accepted. Please forward the required documentation to the school nurse.
  - 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 for all students who live less than two miles from school in grades K-5. 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.

## **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 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 On 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. Bullying
3. Pushing or wrestling
4. Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
5. Talking to the driver
6. Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
7. Climbing over seats
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.

### **Walkers**

1. Walk only on sidewalks. Be certain not to walk in streets or on private property.
2. Look both ways before you cross the street.

## **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 bullying, or cyber-bullying within the school community. As required by Massachusetts law, Winchester Public Schools has adopted an [Anti-Bullying Policy](#). Below is an age appropriate description of the types of conduct which students are expected to avoid in order to help prevent bullying:

### **Bullying Prevention**

You can help prevent bullying from happening if you follow this code of behavior.

1. Be kind to each other.
2. Do not use words that would cause a classmate to feel sad, upset, or ashamed.
3. Keep your hands to yourself. Do not kick, punch, pinch, or touch another student. Never touch another student in a way that might hurt them.
4. Consider other people's feelings at all times before you speak. Try your best not to hurt others' feelings.
5. Do not say or do anything to threaten another student.
6. Do not do or say anything that would make another student scared.
7. Do not tease, taunt, mock, embarrass, or humiliate your classmates.
8. If you are being bullied, tell an adult right away.
9. If you know another student is being bullied, tell your teacher, principal, parents, or another adult right away.
10. Review and follow our [anti-bullying policy](#).
11. If you bully another student, you will be disciplined, up to and including a long-term suspension from school.

### **Cyber-bullying Prevention**

You can help prevent cyberbullying from happening if you follow this code of behavior.

1. Do not write anything in an email, text, tweet, Facebook post, or in any other electronic forum that you would not say out loud for everyone to hear. Remember, these written messages are out of your control once you send or post them, and they may continue to exist long after you have deleted your copy.
2. Follow the rules above under "bullying" and apply them to electronic communications.
3. Remember that only one text, tweet, email, Facebook post, etc. may be cyber-bullying. We encourage parents and students to read our anti-bullying policy together to ensure that they both understand that various definitions of cyber-bullying.
4. If you are being cyber-bullied, tell an adult right away.
5. If you know another student is being cyber-bullied, tell your teacher, principal, parents, or another adult right away.
6. Review and follow our [anti-bullying policy](#) (it includes cyber-bullying).
7. If you engage in cyber-bullying, you will be disciplined, up to and including long-term suspension from school.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

As required by Massachusetts law, General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37, 37H, and 37H 1/2, Winchester Public Schools has adopted a comprehensive policy regarding student discipline, including procedures and including

provisions regarding discipline of students on an IEP or a 504 plan and including hazing.

Set out below is a Code of Behavior which will help students avoid behavior which could result in discipline.

### **Harassment**

The Winchester Public School system 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 color, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, physical characteristics, gender identity, 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.

Please see the full School Committee policy and procedures on [harassment \(including sexual harassment\)](#) and other forms of illegal discrimination.

### **Hazing**

1. Do not make your classmates do anything harmful or humiliating in order for them to be able to join a team, group, or club.
2. Seek to include others in activities whenever possible without asking them to first pass a "test" or perform a task.
3. If you are being hazed, or know that another student is being hazed, tell an adult right away.

### **Vandalism**

1. Take care of your property and that of others.
2. Be certain that you do not mark or deface property.
3. Notify teachers, supervisors, or the Principal when you see someone destroying or defacing property.
4. Do not bring knives or sharp objects that could cut or mark desks or clothing.
5. Do not write on walls or on any surface of the building.

## Smoking

In accordance with School Committee policy JICG and JICH, smoking is prohibited in all schools on school grounds, and at all school-sponsored activities whether held on or off school property.

## 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 ten (10) 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.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

The Winchester Public Schools, the Winchester Police Department, and the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office agree to coordinate their response to violent, delinquent, or criminal acts by students and to alcohol and other drug abuse, which occur on school premises or at school-related events. To ensure a safe educational environment, this collaborative effort between school administration and law enforcement supports "zero tolerance" for drugs, alcohol, weapons, and violence. Non-students involved in such acts on school premises or at school events are to be reported as students are. The full agreement is available in the principal's office.

## STUDENT RECORDS

Winchester Public Schools has adopted a [student records policy](#) which implements the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 23.00. That policy, including non-custodial parents' rights, should be considered an important part of this Handbook.

## STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Winchester Public Schools has adopted an [Acceptable Use Policy](#) for students should be considered an important part of this Handbook. A summary is set out below.

### 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.