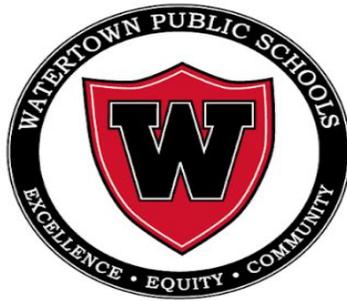


Watertown Public Schools

2019-2020 Elementary School Handbook



Ms. Mena Ciarlone, Principal of the Cunniff Elementary
Mrs. Stacy Pehelan, Principal of the Hosmer Elementary
Ms. Erin Moulton, Principal of the Hosmer Elementary

Please contact your child's school to have this document translated.

Message from the Principals

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

For a school community to fulfill its mission, implement its values and achieve its goals, there must be clear expectations and guidelines for all its members to follow. We hope that this handbook will help familiarize you with the practices and procedures of the Cunniff, Hosmer, and Lowell Elementary Schools.

The protocols in this document are ones that are common to all 3 schools. At the beginning of each school year, you will also receive a document from your child's individual school that outlines school specific protocols that differ between schools due to the uniqueness of each building.

Further information regarding School Committee policies, which comply with federal and state regulations and guide the student handbooks, is available at www.watertown.k12.ma.us under the School Committee top tab or with the following link: Policy Manual. Specific sections of this document are referenced throughout the handbook to assist parents/ guardians seeking more information.

Please refer to this handbook regularly and review the information presented in it with your child(ren). It is important that students, parents/guardians, staff and administration work together to achieve the standards we set for our community of learners.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to the coming school year.

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WPS Mission, Vision and Core Values

MISSION:

WPS prepares all students for life by engaging them in a challenging and meaningful education within an inclusive, diverse community.

VISION:

Inspiring Excellence for All

WPS inspires all to explore and shape the world around them.

CORE VALUES:

Excellence

- We commit to high expectations for each student.
- We invest in a culture of reflection, collaboration, and commitment to continuous improvement.
- We provide a rigorous and nurturing academic environment.
- We foster creativity, resiliency, and confidence.

Equity

- We provide all students with a high-quality education.
- We create conditions necessary for all students to engage in powerful, deep learning.
- We provide resources for academic and social/emotional success for all students.
- We ensure access to a welcoming and safe environment for all students, parents, and families.

Community

- We share accountability for the success of all students.
- We celebrate the contributions of each individual to our inclusive, diverse community.
- We believe partnerships with families and the community are the cornerstone of student success.

- We foster caring and collaborative relationships as the foundation for student engagement.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Watertown School Committee establishes goals, policies, and the budget for the Watertown Public Schools. The School Committee hires the Superintendent and works closely with that individual in developing policies and practices to improve the school system. The School Committee also is responsible for conducting collective bargaining with all employee organizations and has other responsibilities as outlined by Massachusetts General Laws.

The School Committee consists of seven members. Six are elected on a town-wide basis for four-year terms. The Town Council President serves as the seventh member and is elected to a two-year term. In January of each year the School Committee elects a chair, vice-chair, and a secretary from among its members. The School Committee also organizes itself into subcommittees to conduct its business.

School Committee Members:

- John Portz, Chairperson
- Kendra Foley, Vice-Chairperson
- Amy Donohue
- Eileen Hsü-Balzer
- Linday Mosca
- Lily Rayman-Read
- Mark Sideris

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Any child meeting the requirements of the various other policies and agreements of the School Committee concerning the availability of services may enter kindergarten during the academic

year in which he/she reaches the age of five (5) before the first (1st) day of September. A birth certificate, record of immunization and proof of residency (e.g. utility bill, tax bill, letter from landlord or real estate agency) are required before a child shall be registered for the kindergarten program.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL

Please refer to your individual school procedures for specific school arrival procedures.

SCHOOL HOURS

Lowell: Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m. Cunniff: Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m. Hosmer: Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m.

Please notify the office if you will be late, as some children become stressed and upset when they are not picked up on time. Teachers will bring any child who has not been picked up back into the building. We will arrange for the child to be supervised by the after-school program. There is a fee for this service.

BUS TRANSPORTATION (HOSMER STUDENTS ONLY)

Students may take the bus to school only if a parent/guardian has signed up and paid for a bus pass at the Central Office. Only those students who have a bus pass will be permitted to board the bus. For questions about the bus, contact the Central Office at 617-926-7716.

Bus Information: Students will be informed of bus stop pick-up when the bus pass is issued. All disciplinary policies apply to the students riding the bus since the bus is an extension of school. If necessary, the administration may suspend a child from the bus either temporarily or permanently. For additional information regarding student conduct on school buses, please refer to School Committee Policy JICC Policy Manual

LATE ARRIVALS

Parents and guardians are responsible for getting children to school on time each day.

Attendance is taken 5 minutes after the scheduled arrival time at 8:20 am. Students who arrive

to school after 8:30 am must be accompanied by a parent, signed in at the office and receive a tardy slip. In the case of students who live out-of-district, habitual tardiness may be cause for rescinding the out-of- district transfer approval.

DISMISSALS

Please refer to your individual school's procedures for specific school dismissal procedures.

DISMISSAL PLANS

It is very important that we are aware of the plan you have made for your child at dismissal. We want to be sure we have the best information and that you sanction all plans. We know your contact information, but we need the actual plan, i.e. "My child may walk to our home independently." Read and fill out the dismissal form, sign that you are in agreement and return it to school. We will keep this plan on file should questions arise. In the event that your regular plan changes, please fill out a revised form for the file.

On days when your dismissal plan changes, for that day only, please send a signed note or email to your child's teacher. Phone calls are not acceptable. Thanks for your help in this important aspect of ensuring the children's safety.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If you need to have your child released from school early, please send a note to the classroom teacher or call the office. An authorized adult should report to the school office to pick up your child. No child will be allowed to leave the school grounds without the authorization of a parent or legal guardian. The adult responsible for the student must sign the child out in the log at the school office and wait for the child there. Early dismissal will end at 2:20 pm, unless the office was given advanced notice.

Early release days are scheduled on some Wednesdays during the year for staff professional development. Students are released at 12:15 p.m. following lunch. Additional full days of staff Professional development occur during the school year. Children will not attend school on those days. Please consult your school calendar, newsletters, and local newspapers for these important dates.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYED OPENINGS

State law requires 180 days of instruction, and also requires that any snow days be made up before June 30th. Snow days and delayed openings are announced through an automated phone message and listed on the website, www.watertown.k12.ma.us.

No school announcements are also made on the following radio and television stations: WCVB Television (Channel 5) WHDH Television (Channel 7) WBZ Television (Channel 4) and Radio (AM 1030) Cable Television Service - If available, check the local community channel WBUR Web site - part of National Public Broadcasting (Radio - FM 90.9)

Announcements usually begin between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. All parents/guardians and students are urged to refer to the above communication services. PLEASE DO NOT CALL the School Department, Police Department, or Fire Department for school cancellation information. These lines must remain open for emergency situations.

DELAYED OPENINGS

When a delayed school opening is announced, school will open up to two hours after the regularly scheduled time. Lunch will be served at the regular time, and school will close at the regularly scheduled time.

****Please do not call the police, fire, or school departments***

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is a critical component of learning. Research studies show that higher attendance is related to higher achievement. To focus attention on the importance of attendance, the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, specifically mentions this measure of attendance which reflects the increasing awareness that chronic absence is a key indicator for assessing school and student success. Chronic absence differs from truancy in that it tracks both excused and unexcused absences.

Massachusetts state law (M.G.L 76 Sections 2 and 4: School Attendance) requires

parents/guardians to have their children attend school. To support attendance, Watertown Public Schools has a process to monitor and encourage school attendance. The protocol would apply to elementary school students. The Middle School and High School have their own policy.

If a student if a student has missed five (5) or more school days (absence is defined as two or more periods in one day) unexcused in a school year, the school principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of the student to develop action steps for the student's attendance. These action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or his/her designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

Definition of tardy

An elementary student is considered tardy if he or she is not in their classroom 5 minutes after the start of school.

Absences

Your child's safety is very important to us. After attendance is taken in the classroom, an automated phone call will be made to the home of each student who is recorded as absent. If you receive an absence phone message, and your child is home on that day, no further action is necessary. Please call the school immediately and only if you believe that your child is in school and has been reported as absent.

It is very important that we have accurate emergency contact information for every child. Please update any changes in emergency contact information immediately. For additional information regarding school absences, please refer to School Committee Policy JH.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

School Medical Services are designated to protect the student's health and to enable each student to reach and maintain the highest possible state of well-being for effective learning. A school nurse is assigned to each elementary school.

School Health Records - Physical Examinations, including proof of immunizations, are required

for students entering kindergarten, fourth grade, and new students entering the school. The physical must be dated within 6 months of entry to the grade or within the six months following entry.

Medication Policy - the nurse will administer medications to students as indicated during school hours according to the following procedures. 1. All prescription medication must be delivered to the school nurse by a parent or guardian. 2. Medications are in the original bottle with a prescription label showing the student's name, medication, doctor's name and instructions. 3. The parent or guardian must provide written permission from parent and doctor, in order for the nurse to give the medication to the student. 4. Parent permission is needed for the nurse to administer over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Advil or Tums.

All orders or permission for medications must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. For additional information regarding the District's medication policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JLCD Policy Manual.

Emergency Illness or Injury protocol - In case of an accident or illness during school hours, a parent or guardian will be notified. When indicated, the student will be dismissed to the Parents/guardians or another adult designated by the parent. The school is responsible for providing appropriate care to the student until the parent arrives.

If emergency medical attention is needed, the school will contact you and an emergency response team.

For your child's protection, it is essential for the school to maintain accurate emergency contact information. Please notify the office immediately when emergency contact information is changed. For information regarding procedures for emergency illness or injury at school, please refer to School Committee Policy JLC Policy Manual.

When to keep your child home from school Please keep your child home from school if he or she has:

Fever – Fevers are generally signs of infection. Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or above must stay home from school. No child should be sent to school with a fever. Do not treat fever

with medication and then send your child to school. If your child gets a fever at school of 100o F or higher, they will be sent home from school.

Cold, Sore Throat, Cough – Children average 6-8 colds per year. If your child has a cold and cough with a fever or they do not seem to get better, call your doctor. A sore throat, along with a fever and swollen glands, may be signs of strep throat. Children diagnosed with strep throat are still contagious the first 24 hours on antibiotics and must remain home.

Stomachache, Vomiting, Diarrhea – A child with vomiting and/or diarrhea should be kept home until symptoms have resolved for approximately 24 hours and the child is able to keep down liquids and food. Consult your doctor if fever and stomach pains do not go away or your child is not eating well and appears dehydrated (dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, urinates less than 4 times in 24 hours).

Pain – Earaches – Consult your doctor. If there is no fever with an ear infection they may attend school.

Headache – A child should be kept at home if headache is severe and is not relieved with medication. Call your doctor if the headache continues.

Red Eyes – When the white part of the eye looks red and there is a yellow or green discharge, call your doctor. Your child may have conjunctivitis, a common but troublesome condition that may be a contagious infection. Your child may need an antibiotic eye ointment. Children are still contagious the first 24 hours on antibiotic ointment and must remain at home.

Rash – A rash is usually a sign of an illness. It also may be a reaction to a medication or chemical (plants, detergents). If your child has an unusual rash, contact your doctor. Do not send your child to school with a rash. Consult your doctor for clearance to attend school.

Head Lice/ Nits – Children may not return to school until all hair has been treated and all eggs/nits have been removed. If your child has head lice please contact the school nurse so that she can check classmates.

Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent illness.

Watertown Concussion Procedures Watertown Concussion Procedures have been developed in

accordance with Watertown Policy and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) regulation 105 CMR 201.000 Head Injuries and Concussions in extracurricular Athletic Activities, mandated by Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Relative to the Safety Regulations for School Athletes. For information regarding the District's concussion policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JJIF Policy Manual.

FOOD SERVICES

Breakfast Program Breakfast may be purchased between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. in the school cafeteria.

Lunch Children may purchase a full school lunch daily. Milk and fruit juices are available to supplement a bag lunch. Upon entering the Watertown Public Schools, each student is given a personal identification number (PIN) to use for prepaid purchases in the school cafeteria only. Parents/guardians are encouraged to pre-pay for lunches, milk, or snack to limit the need for students to carry money to school. If a student does not have money they will be served lunch and payment collected the next day.

Monthly lunch menus are posted in the local newspaper and online. Prices are published at the beginning of each school year.

Free or reduced meals Parents/guardians need to complete a free and reduced meal form yearly. Forms are reviewed by the administration to determine eligibility.

Snack. You may send a mid-morning snack with your child each day. Healthy snack options are encouraged.

VISITORS

For the safety of all children, the school doors are locked 5 minutes after designated arrival time.

- Visitors may use the intercom at the front door to speak to the main office and gain admittance.
- All visitors, including parents/guardians and volunteers, must sign in at the reception desk or main office during school hours.

- All visitors, including parents/guardians and volunteers, must agree not to disclose information they might learn of a confidential nature
- Visitors are given a visitor badge at the sign in location and are asked to wear a visitor badge throughout their visit.
- All visitors are required to sign out when they leave the school building.

The principal or his/her designee district reserves the right to deny any visitors entry to the school buildings when there is reason to believe that such an individual's presence would be detrimental to the operation of the school and its learning environment, and/ or may infringe on the privacy rights of any individual. These procedures are in effect for the safety of the children, staff and visitors. It is imperative that the front office be aware of all persons in the building should an emergency situation arise. For additional information regarding procedures for classroom observations, please refer to School Committee Policy KI Policy Manual.

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (POWERSCHOOL)

It is imperative that the school has the most up to date contact and emergency information for every student. At the beginning of the school year you will receive your child's data sheet with the current contact information the school has on file. Please return this to your child's teacher making any changes that are necessary. If no changes are needed, please return the form indicating that the information is accurate. Please remember to contact the main office, in writing, of any changes in the contact information that occur throughout the school year. Watch for notices regarding ways for parents/guardians to sign up to access our new student information system, PowerSchool.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of a child's educational program. There are a number of different goals and purposes for assigning homework, including the following:

- Provide a link between home and school
- Help children take personal responsibility for their learning
- Foster confidence and self-discipline

- Promote the understanding that learning happens outside of school.
- Expand and/or enrich classroom work
- Reinforce learning by providing additional practice
- Help teachers monitor student understanding
- Promote high expectations for students

The Watertown Public Schools recommends that parents/guardians provide an environment conducive to studying and working independently. They may help students organize time, space and materials so children can complete their homework effectively. Parents/guardians are encouraged to help clarify directions and ask questions that may help students to organize their thinking and recall information from class lessons. Because teachers carefully select assignments, parents/guardians should encourage their children to work independently.

Teachers assign homework to support student learning. Assignments reflect ongoing studies and provide a review of previously learned materials. In some cases, assignments may be long term. Homework will vary in intensity and degree at different grade levels. While we recognize that students work at different paces and have different learning styles, general guidelines established by School Committee policy indicate that first grade students receive 10 minutes of homework per night, and then 10 additional minutes are to be assigned each successive year.

Since homework supports daily classroom instruction, we do not assign specific homework to be completed while a student is absent from school due to a family vacation. We do suggest that students read daily and write in a journal during their vacation. As previously indicated, we always encourage families to schedule vacations in accordance with the district school vacation calendar to avoid disruption in the educational process.

*Please refer to individual school and classroom procedure documents for more information regarding homework guidelines.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

In addition to formative and summative assessments in the classroom, students participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) designed by the Massachusetts

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). At the elementary level MCAS assessments are administered in grades three, four and five. Parents/guardians will receive individual results and town wide results are published. The school also gives other diagnostic instruments to students as needed to inform instruction, set goals, and guide curriculum planning.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

504 Accommodation Plans – The 504 Accommodation plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the American Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in education. A 504 Accommodation Plan is designed to articulate and implement a program of instructional services, including general classroom modifications, to assist students with significant disabilities. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and is a regular education entitlement. In order for a student to qualify for a 504 Accommodation Plan he or she must meet certain federal requirements. They include the following: Referral, Non-discriminatory Evaluation, Eligibility, Placement Procedures, Procedural Safeguards (Due Process), and the writing of the Individual Accommodation Plan.

The Watertown Public School District acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504 to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practices in the school district.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 covers qualified students with disabilities who attend schools receiving Federal financial assistance. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such impairment.

A physical or mental impairment is defined as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems:

neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. This list is not exhaustive.

Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. This list is not exhaustive. In the ADA Amendments Act 2008 Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Congress also provided a non-exhaustive list of examples of "major bodily functions" that are major life activities, such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. An impairment that is episodic or in remission, is also considered a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

Under Section 504, the school district has the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. Any questions concerning the implementation of policy and procedures may be directed to the Principal.

For further information, contact your child's guidance counselor or the Special Education Coordinator.

Special Education Services - The Watertown Public Schools provides special education and related services for eligible students in accordance with state and federal law. Under Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972, the Massachusetts Special Education Law (603 CMR 28.00), if a student has one or more of the disabilities specified in the statute and, of, as a result of the disability(ies) is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the

provision of one or more related services, then the IEP Team shall determine that the student is eligible and develop an individualized education program (IEP).

Students who are found, after evaluation, to be eligible for special education services will receive an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by the Special Education Team, which includes parents/guardians, teachers and specialists, involved with the child. If you believe your child may be in need of special education services please contact the Principal, Special Education Coordinator or counselor to assist you with the process. State regulations governing the Chapter 766 process and the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure are available in all schools for review. For more information about special education please feel free to contact the Director of Student Services at Central Office.

Inclusion/Academic Resource Classes: Those students who have been identified within their IEP as needing additional academic support will meet with a special education teacher and possibly additional support staff such as a speech/language therapist. There they will receive specialized instruction to support the regular education instruction given to them in inclusion classes. The programming within these classes is regulated and prescribed by the IEP team to meet the individual needs of the student.

English as a Second Language: We can provide language-based instruction and services to those students who have been identified as having a language based learning disability or whose IEP specifies alternative instruction. In English, math, and reading, students sometimes will be in small structured classes that deliver modified instruction using a variety of teaching strategies designed to meet the student where they are and create successful academic experiences. At other times, students may be included in co-taught classes and receive instruction in a whole-class setting. In addition to the classes, students may participate in group counseling to work on communication and social skills. For each eligible student, all necessary services are determined by the IEP Team.

Learning Support Classroom: The Learning Support classroom is designated for those students who have been identified through the IEP process as needing a small, highly structured and individualized learning environment. With a special education teacher and instructional

assistants, students will receive specialized instruction prescribed by the IEP team to meet the educational needs of the student. The curriculum content and pace is individualized so that the student will have access to the curriculum in the most appropriate setting. Instruction in content areas such as Math, History, English, etc. will be modified to meet the student's needs. Other services such as physical, occupational and speech therapy may be delivered within these classes as determined by the IEP team. For each eligible student, all necessary services are determined by the IEP Team.

Integrated Emotional Support Services: As students and families navigate through middle school life and adolescent development, emotional challenges may arise preventing students from meeting academic expectations. In addition, our Watertown families may also be going through turbulence on occasion, affecting the stability of their child's academic success. We recognize the need to provide a range of supportive services to help struggling students recapture academic engagement and motivation for learning. In response, we have developed the Watertown Middle School Integrated

Emotional Support Services. Here students can receive a spectrum of services depending on need. Services may include:

- Short-term respite programming
- Counseling services
- Evaluation services
- Case management for families
- Classroom integration consultation
- Behavior modification
- Small therapeutic class instruction
- Emergency consultation services

Connections Program: The Connections Program is a structured, behavior-based, self-contained/sub-separate program. Using Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and sensory

integration strategies, students are taught independent life skills, social pragmatic skills and academic skills. Students may also receive related services through counseling, speech and language, occupational therapy and/or physical therapy.

Students' programs are individually designed around each student's needs. As students develop skills, opportunities for inclusion in the general education classes are available. Typically, students in the Connections Program participate in the MCAS Alternative Assessment or participate in the MCAS assessment with accommodations.

The Connections Leadership Council is made up of Watertown faculty and administrators who meet on a monthly basis to ensure that services for students with autism and related disorders are consistent, using an evidence-based teaching approach, throughout grades K-12.

Alternative Education: Home and Hospital Instruction - The Watertown Public Schools provides home and hospital tutoring to students who "in the judgment of their physician, should remain at home or in the hospital on day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for a period of at least fourteen school days in any school year." Before a student can receive these services, a licensed physician must complete a state-required form for review and approval by the District. Forms are available at your child's school or through the Office of Student Services.

Students who have chronic illnesses or diseases may be eligible for Section 504 Plans, and in those instances, the 14-day requirement will be waived. With the exception of those students who have chronic, debilitating diseases or conditions, home or hospital tutoring is considered short-term (no longer than 60 days) and is not a replacement for regular attendance at school. Home and hospital instruction is not considered a special education service.

English as a Second Language (ESL) - Watertown Public Schools' policy to provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance.

The Watertown Public Schools district provides students who are English learners with sheltered English immersion instruction in English language classrooms, unless a waiver has been granted in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71A, § 5, in which case the English learner will be

placed in a bilingual education program. Student needs will be assessed and determined according to the student's English ability.

ESL support provides instruction in speaking, reading, and writing as well as course content support. The six largest ESL groups at Watertown Middle School are Armenian, Portuguese, Spanish (from Central and South America), Haitian Creole, Russian, and Urdu (from Pakistan).

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Caring School Community Program is implemented at the Cunniff, Hosmer and Lowell Elementary schools to promote a school community where everyone is respectful, responsible, fair and helpful.

Each elementary school has established a clear code of conduct to foster a respectful and safe learning environment to ensure that all students can be successful.

Please refer to your individual school procedures for specific information regarding your school's guidelines.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The Watertown School Committee policy and procedures are compliant with MGL c 71, Section 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, which was enacted May 3, 2010.

All forms of bullying and cyberbullying by Watertown Public Schools students or staff members are hereby prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying or cyber-bullying in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline. This policy is in effect while students are on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned and/or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct creates a hostile environment or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of the school. Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources provided by the Watertown Public Schools by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be

monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes at any time throughout the calendar year.

All schools under the direction of the principal and the guidance department, provide ongoing professional development and training to the staff throughout the school year. Additionally, faculty meetings and other professional time will be devoted to ensure that our schools are bully free zones and that they optimize learning in a safe and caring environment.

A quick response and investigation of any alleged bullying incident will be conducted. This will include notification, resolution, consequences and other necessary steps depending on the exact nature of the situation. It is important that our children and staff work to create a school where all children are respected, cared for and encouraged, and capable of achieving their fullest potential.

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

Definition of Cyber-bullying: Cyber-bullying is defined as “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 (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v),

inclusive, of the definition of bullying. 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 clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) 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 a school district or school, if the bullying 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. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

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. Making false allegations, providing discriminatory statements, and making defamatory statements is prohibited and engaging in such activity will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Teachers and staff are required by law to report incidences of bullying to the principal in their building. The principal will establish a procedure which will include the following steps:

Completion of an Incident Report Form; An interview with the target of alleged bullying ; An interview with the child accused of bullying , An interview of witnesses as appropriate. Determination by the Principal or his/her designee that bullying occurred; Plan for intervention and notification of parent(s) or guardian(s).

Students, parents/guardians or others who wish to report bullying or other activities that concern them to school administrators and School Police may do so using the Bullying

Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form which may be found at www.watertown.k2.ma.us. It is not necessary for this form to be filled out, but it is helpful. An anonymous bullying report may also be submitted on the website at www.watertown.k12.ma.us.

Whenever an incident of bullying is determined to have taken place, the parents/guardians of all students involved will be notified of the incident and of the actions being taken by the school to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

A Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be developed to help both the target and aggressor. These will be individualized to the students with the goal of preventing further bullying and to restore a sense of safety and support for all involved. For additional information regarding the District's Student to Student Harassment/Bullying policy, please refer to School Committee Policy JBA Policy Manual.

Educational programs will be offered to parents/guardians about MGL c. 71, Section 370, "An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools" during the school year. Information on these programs will be posted on the district's website and in school newsletters.

The complete text of the Watertown Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan may be found on the District's website at <https://sites.google.com/a/watertown.k12.ma.us/watertown-k12-ma-us/>.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To better protect students from misuse of handheld devices the following guidelines have been established:

1. In the school building, personal electronic devices (PED) should be off, unless specified otherwise by the teacher. PEDs may be used during school hours under the supervision of the teacher only.
2. Any use of these PEDs outside of teacher supervision is strictly prohibited.

Faculty/staff have the right to confiscate a PED and turn it into the principal's office. The student may pick up the device at the office at the end of the school day. Repeated offenses

may require the parent to pick up the device.

3. Urgent messages between parents/guardians and students must be communicated via the main office.

4. The school is not responsible for the maintenance, loss, theft or damage of any personal electronic device.

5. All use of personal electronic devices is commensurate with the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

FIELD TRIPS

Students are invited on field trips throughout the year. In order to participate on a field trip, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior and citizenship during school and at school-sponsored events. Students not meeting these expectations may be excluded at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee. The school will provide an alternate learning experience at school on the day of the field trip.

Fees may be charged for participation in field trips. Should a field trip fees pose a financial challenge to the family, parents/ guardians are encouraged to connect with building administration.

All field trips will be staffed by school personnel and by invited parent chaperones who have satisfied school volunteer requirements, including CORI and fingerprint-based CHRI checks as appropriate. Classroom teachers will notify those parents/guardians who will be accompanying the trip as chaperones. For safety reasons, as well as space needs on some trips, we will not be able to accommodate additional adults on field trips.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to attend school appropriately dressed and properly groomed. Low-cut pants, low necklines, shirts exposing midriffs, short skirts or short shorts are not appropriate for school. No head coverings shall be worn except in the case of religious or health reasons. In addition, clothing cannot discriminate, demean or be derogatory towards any group or individual. Apparel that contains statements or symbols that make negative statements about

race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, stereotypes or that has sexual connotations or sexual innuendo is not permitted at school. We will call parents if a change of clothing is needed.

Student clothing should also present a healthy, clean and safe atmosphere for students. Flip-flops, beach shoes and slippers are not permitted as they pose a safety risk on stairs, at recess and in the event of an emergency. Shoes with wheels are not to be worn to school.

NON-VIOLENT PHYSICAL CRISIS INTERVENTION/PHYSICAL RESTRAINT:

All schools and programs within the Watertown Public Schools strive to maintain safe learning environments for all students and staff. As part of a comprehensive approach to safety, all schools have a physical restraint policy in place with procedures, which follow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations (766 Reg. 603 CMR 46.00 et seq.). If a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent harm, he/she may be restrained until calm in accordance with these regulations. Qualified, trained staff carries out specific procedures and parents/guardians are notified. For further information, contact your child's school.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING PROHIBITED

No motor vehicle idling shall be allowed on school grounds at any time.

Watertown Public Schools appreciates your help and cooperation.