



HANDBOOK



2018

2019

Student Rights, Responsibilities
& Code of Conduct

www.worcesterk12.org

SCHOOL DELAYS, EARLY DISMISSALS & CLOSINGS INFORMATION

DECISION MAKING - Inclement Weather

The WCPS Transportation Department continuously evaluates the weather conditions to ensure that roads to and from school are safe for transporting students. Based on information provided by law enforcement, emergency services, on-road evaluations, and weather forecasts, a decision may be made to delay the opening of schools, to close schools early, or to keep schools closed for an entire day.

Every effort will be made to post delay and/or closing information to the notification channels below by 5:30 a.m. Please keep in mind that sometimes the decision must be made later, due to rapidly changing conditions. Delay and/or closing information should be posted no later than 6:30 a.m.

NOTIFICATION CHANNELS

Worcester County Public Schools has established the below means of distributing information in the event of a school delay, early dismissal or closing.

SchoolMessenger Notification

WCPS utilizes SchoolMessenger, an automated calling and text messaging system, to send registered parents notifications. If you are not registered for SchoolMessenger, or need to update your contact preferences, please contact the main office of your child's school.

Social Media

Follow WCPS on the following social media channels to receive notifications:

Facebook: [fb.me/WorcesterSystem](https://www.facebook.com/WorcesterSystem)

Twitter: [@WorcesterSystem](https://twitter.com/WorcesterSystem)

Website

Notifications will be posted to the county website, www.worcesterk12.org, on the homepage.

Emergency Hotline

A recorded message detailing notification information will be available by calling (410) 632-5399, extension 6600.

Local Television Stations

The following television stations will run WCPS notification announcements on the air and will post to their websites:

WBOC - 16, www.wboc.com

WMDT - 47, www.wmdt.com

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POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

A policy is a statement that both reflects the Board of Education's vision for Worcester County Public Schools and creates a framework within which the Superintendent and staff can carry out their assigned duties. Policies are adopted by the Board of Education during general meetings.

Procedures are written by the Superintendent or designee. Procedures delineate the specifics about how policies are implemented on a day-to-day basis.

The online Policy & Procedure Manual is divided into seven main sections:

- I. Organization
- II. Instruction
- III. Personnel
- IV. Students
- V. Business and Transportation
- VI. Physical Facilities
- VII. General Administration

Some of the information in this handbook is a summary of, or excerpt from, policies and/or procedures. In any dispute, the official language of the policy in effect at the time of the incident will supersede the language in this document.

Worcester County Public Schools policies can be accessed through the website at www.worcesterk12.org. For more information, contact the Board of Education Office at 410-632-5000.

ATTENDANCE & ADMISSION

Age of Attendance - Policy IV-A-3

Each child who resides in the state of Maryland and is five years old on or before September 1 of the current school year and through age 18 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age or the child is exempted under Maryland State Board of Education regulations.

Early Admission – Policy IV-A-1

According to the Maryland State Department of Education policy and guidelines, students entering pre-kindergarten must be four years old by September 1, 2018, students entering kindergarten must be five years old by September 1, 2018, and students entering first grade must be six years old by September 1, 2018. Parents may request an exemption to this policy by submitting a written request for consideration to the Chief Academic Officer. For more information, you may contact the Board of Education office at 410-632-5000.

Kindergarten Waiver

All children in the state of Maryland who will be five years old by September 1, 2018, are required to attend kindergarten. This state mandate does, however, permit alternatives to attendance at a regular public or private school kindergarten. If you do not wish to have your child attend kindergarten during the next school year, you may request a waiver for one of the following reasons:

- You are providing home instruction (home schooling) for the child;
- You believe a delay in school attendance is in the best interest of the child (Send a letter requesting a level of maturity waiver to the Superintendent of Schools.); or
- You are enrolling your five year old in an alternative program such as licensed child care center, full-time registered family day care or part-time Head Start five-year-old program.

To request a kindergarten waiver, please send a written request to the Chief Academic Officer at the Board of Education office.

Residency Requirements/Registration - Policies IV-A-6 through IV-A-10

Any school-age child will be accepted for enrollment in the school of his/her attendance area if he/she:

- Lives with his/her custodial parent or legal guardian;
- Lives with a relative who is providing informal kinship care and the relative is a resident of Worcester County; or
- Is considered homeless according to the McKinney-Vento Act of 2001.

At the time of enrollment, new residents to Worcester County will be asked to show proof of residency. Proof may include, but is not limited to:

- Home ownership papers (deed, mortgage coupon within the last three (3) months with the parent's/legal custodian's name and physical address);
- Incorporated lease (lease agreement from realty company); or
- Non-incorporated lease agreement (landlord provides a signed, notarized lease agreement verifying that the parent/legal custodian resides at that address); or
- Utility bill that clearly displays the residential address as the service address; a billing address is not sufficient proof of residency.

A Student Services Specialist (SSS) may request additional documentation of the physical address. Only a SSS may, after an investigation, accept other forms of proof of residency. If a student changes his/her residence, a new proof of residence is required.

Students whose parents do not reside in Worcester County will not be enrolled tuition-free. Parents/legal custodian of a nonresident student applicant may request a specific school; however WCPS reserves the right to determine the school of enrollment.

Registration Requirements

At the time of registration, parents or legal custodians must provide immunization records, emergency information, residence information and information from the previous school. The Maryland Transfer record (SR7 Card) is required for students transferring within the state. A birth certificate and social security card are required for all students entering school for the first time.

Legal Custodian

In order to be recognized as a child's legal custodian, an adult must have a court order signed by a judge. A notarized statement does not satisfy the legal custody requirement. For more information, contact the Department of Student Services at 410-632-5089.

Homeless/Students in Transition - Policy IV-A-13

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Section 725) defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up);
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - Abandoned in hospitals; or
 - Awaiting foster care placement.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This legislation ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have full and equal access to an appropriate public education and that they experience success in school. For more information and/or questions, please contact the Department of Student Services at 410-632-5089.

Student Attendance - Policy IV-A-4

The Worcester County Board of Education is committed to ensuring that a quality education is provided for each student enrolled in the school system. Students are required to be in school or be attending a school-related activity each day school is in session. There is a strong correlation among regular attendance, academic achievement, and the completion of school. Regular attendance leads to academic success, the completion of school and the development of students as productive members of society. For these reasons, the Worcester County Board of Education believes it is very important to insist on good attendance.

The following reasons are listed by the Maryland State Department of Education as "Lawful Cause of Absence".

1. Death in immediate family. The local school system shall determine what relationship constitutes the immediate family.
2. Illness of a student. The principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parent or guardians of a student reported continuously absent for illness.
3. Court summons
4. Hazardous weather conditions which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school.
5. Work approved or sponsored by the school, the local school system or the State Department of Education, accepted by the local Superintendent of Schools or the school principal, or their designee as reason for excusing the students.
6. Observance of a religious holiday
7. State emergency
8. Suspension
9. Lack of authorized transportation. This shall not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons.
10. Other emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

The principal or assistant principal will consult with the student and the student's parents or guardian when determining whether or not a student's absence shall be lawful or unlawful in view of the reasons listed.

Parents may certify up to ten (10) student absences due to illness. All absences for student illness beyond the ten (10) must be certified with a physician's certificate. All absences for illness, including those with physician's certificate, are included in the total lawful absences for the school year. Absences beyond the ten (10) that are not certified with a physician's certificate will be unlawful.

Classroom make-up work for lawful absences must be submitted to the teacher within five (5) school days following the student's return to class and receipt of assignments from the teacher. The principal or assistant principal may accept other make-up plans for long-term absence due to unusual circumstances.

Shopwork, laboratory exercises, and participation in class discussion or group work that cannot be made up should not be held against the student unless the student has been absent so often that a meaningful and effective learning experience has not occurred.

High school students, with authorization by the principal, may make up time missed from class. Make-up time for each class period is 90 minutes for semester-long classes and 45 minutes for year-long courses.

Students missing class due to school-sponsored trips authorized by the principal such as field trips, band, athletic, Career Technology Education (CTE), etc., shall be considered present. Students must assume the responsibility for making up missed work. If requested, teachers may require students to complete and/or submit assignments online.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & SERVICES

Adult Education

Adult Education Programs offer a variety of instructional opportunities for adult learners. Classes are offered in the morning, afternoon, evening, and are also available through distance learning. For more information, please call 410-632-5071.

Afterschool Programs

Through funding provided locally and by the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program Grants, expanded educational opportunities for students to participate in academic intervention and enrichment activities are provided in all Worcester County Public Schools. Through these opportunities, students experience remediation and enrichment structured around the Project Based Learning Model. These are experiences above and beyond regular classroom instruction that are exciting and beneficial for both students and parents. Other goals of the program include rigorous academic support, homework assistance, character education, service learning, and technology enhanced instruction. For more detailed program information, please contact the main office of your child's school.

Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood is defined as birth to age eight; these years are pivotal for setting children on a positive learning trajectory. All of our elementary schools provide Pre-kindergarten, early intervention, and a recipe of ingredients for success.

Judy Center

The Judy Center at Snow Hill and Pocomoke Elementary Schools is a grant-funded, school-linked center to assure school readiness for all Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students. Our goal is to enhance existing early childhood education services in Snow Hill and Pocomoke by creating a network of education, health, and social services. For more information, please call 410-632-5224.

Frog Street Early Childhood Program

Frog Street's Love & Learn Home-Based curriculum is specifically designed to capitalize on the learning opportunities in the home environment. It effectively guides Home Visitors to empower parents, so they can provide high-quality learning experiences to enhance their child's growth and development.

The Frog Street early childhood programs are built on four key cornerstones: early brain development research, intentional instruction, developmental learning domains, and social and emotional development emphasis. The Judy Center offers the Frog Street Program for two through four year olds.

Home & Hospital Instruction

Home and hospital instruction provides a continuity of instruction to students who are unable to participate in their enrollment due to a physical or emotional condition during the school year. A request for the application of these services shall be made to the student's counseling

department at the child's home school. Completed applications and a verification form from a physician must meet all requirements.

Reporting Student Progress & Grading

The school year is divided into four marking terms. At the end of each term, your child will receive a report card. The purpose of the report is to provide progress information and guidance between the school, the student, and the home.

Report cards are issued for each of the four marking terms. Please consult the Worcester County Public Schools current school year calendar for dates specified for report card release.

Students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade 1 will receive a report that provides information on developmental growth and progress.

The progress reports for grades 2 through 5 reflect the county curriculum and standards for elementary grades. The progress reports will reflect students' academic achievements and progress. The letter grades translate as follows:

- A Significantly Above Average
- B Above Average
- C Average
- D Below Average
- F Significantly Below Average

Students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades earn letter grades in the academic subjects based upon a percentage assessment. These letter grades are assigned as follows:

90-100%	A	Excellent achievement
80-89%	B	Good achievement
70-79%	C	Satisfactory achievement
60-69%	D	Unsatisfactory achievement
59% or less	F	Unacceptable

High school students earn grades in the academic subjects based upon a percentage assessment. These percentages translate as follows:

90-100%	A	Superior achievement
80-89%	B	Good achievement
70-79%	C	Average achievement
60-69%	D	Poor achievement
59% or less	F	Failing work

Your child will also receive feedback on how well your child is working in accordance with his/her ability. Each report card contains teacher comments and attendance information. The elementary and middle school report card envelope is signed by the parent after each term and is returned to your child's teacher or homeroom. The envelope also includes a section where the teacher and/or the parent may request a conference.

Scholastic Recognition

Each school offers recognition to students demonstrating excellence in academic achievement.

Honor Roll will be based on a student's grade point average (GPA) in all quarterly course work. To be eligible for honor roll, a student may not have a grade of "D" or "F" in any subject.

A *Three-Tiered Senior Recognition Program* will be based on the cumulative, weighted

grade point average in English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and World Language, including all Advanced Placement/college level courses in Worcester County Public Schools' academic programs. The tier for which a senior may qualify will be determined at the end of the third marking period.

The honor tiers are as follows:

- Summa Cum Laude 5.05 GPA and above
- Magna Cum Laude 4.90 to 5.04 GPA
- Cum Laude 4.80 to 4.89 GPA

GPA calculations will be carried out to three decimals (or thousandths) and rounded to two decimals (or hundredths). For example, a GPA of 5.045 will be rounded to 5.05. If a senior qualifies for one of the honor tiers, the designation will be noted on the student's transcript.

WeXL Scholastic Recognition Program

Worcester County Public Schools recognizes scholastic achievement in order to:

1. Recognize and reward students who excel in scholastic achievement;
2. Instill pride in outstanding scholastic achievement;
3. Focus attention on the academics and the worth and value of scholarship;
4. Provide an incentive to stimulate students to excel in scholastic areas; and
5. Promote school and community awareness and pride in outstanding scholastic achievement.

WeXL Scholastic Recognition Banquet

A recognition banquet will be held in the late spring of every school year for all high school students who qualify. Each school will form a committee to verify which students have qualified. The following are explanations and requirements of each recognition available to students. Letters, pins, and certificates will be presented at the banquet.

Scholastic School Letter

- To earn a scholastic letter, a student must maintain a 3.5 Quarter Weighted GPA, with no D's or F's in any course, for a range of four consecutive marking periods. This achievement equates to an Honor Roll status or higher.
- Consecutive marking periods can be in the same school year (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4), or they can occur consecutively from one year to the next (Q3 and Q4 in Semester 2 of a school year, and Q1 and Q2 in Semester 1 of the very next school year).
- If a student does not earn a 3.5 Quarter Weighted GPA in the marking period immediately prior to the banquet, after having earned four consecutive marking periods not yet recognized, that student will still be invited to the banquet.
- To qualify, a student must be enrolled in at least two major courses (English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, World Language, Technology/Business, or Computer Science or are enrolled in core courses for a program of study at Worcester Technical High School at a Level II or higher.
- *Exception 1:* All students who have earned a 3.5 Quarter Weighted GPA for three consecutive marking periods in their ninth grade year, will qualify for the banquet in the late spring of their ninth grade year.
- *Exception 2:* Students new to Worcester County Public Schools in grades 10 - 12 who qualify for three consecutive marking periods immediately after enrollment will earn a scholastic school letter.

Note: Students who transfer from one Worcester County Public School high school to another will "carry" their consecutive marking periods with them and will have the number of eligible marking periods applied to their new school in our system.

Scholastic Bar Pin:

- The second time a student earns a 3.5 Quarter Weighted GPA, with no D's or F's in any course, for a range of four consecutive marking periods, the student will be presented with a bar pin to be added to the student's letter.
- A student will continue to earn bars for achieving this standard.

Scholastic Star Pin:

- To earn a scholastic star pin, a student must maintain a 4.5 Quarter Weighted GPA, with no grade below a B in any course, for a range of four consecutive marking periods. This achievement equates to a Distinguished Honor Roll status.
- A student will continue to earn stars for achieving this standard.

Consecutive A's Certificate:

- The *same marking periods* used to qualify for the Scholastic Recognition Banquet will be used to qualify a student for the Consecutive A's recognition.
- Consecutive marking period grades are used in this recognition, not end-of-course or semester grades.

WeXL Honor Card Program

The WeXL Honor Card Program is a student incentive program that is sponsored by the Berlin, Ocean City, Ocean Pines, Snow Hill, and Pocomoke Chambers of Commerce. Earning the Honor Card entitles students in grades 6 - 12 within the Worcester County Public School System to earn discounts towards purchases of merchandise or services from participating businesses. The purpose of this program is to:

1. Provide an incentive for students to strive for academic excellence, outstanding attendance, and positive behavior;
2. Reward students for excelling in school; and
3. Promote school and community partnerships in educational excellence.

Below are the requirements which must be met in order to qualify for the WeXL Honor Card. A student must:

- Earn grades of C or higher, with a Quarter Weighted GPA of 2.5 or higher (at the high school level) or with a Simple GPA of 2.5 or higher (at the middle school level);
- Have no unlawful absences; and
- Have no office referrals during the marking period. Worcester Technical High School recognizes outstanding academic achievement through the National Technical Honor Society.

WeXL Honor Card eligible students receive a student identification card that will contain the name of the school and student, the student's photograph, and the student's signature. The card may only be activated by displaying a sticker for the current marking period. This sticker will be displayed on the back of the card. Marking period stickers will be distributed to qualifying students after the end of the marking period and are non-transferable.

School Counseling

Elementary

Counseling services in the elementary school are available to every child. Each school has a certified counselor who has been trained to assist the elementary school-aged child in the areas of: personal, social/emotional, academic and career counseling. The duties of the counselor may include assisting a new student to adjust to new friends and instructional programs. The counselor is also available to parents wishing assistance or insights into the physical and social growth of their child.

Middle School

Each middle school has two certified counselors who have been trained to assist the middle school-aged child. This assistance may vary from discussing issues about which the child may be concerned, to planning their ninth grade schedule and a career plan of study. Each spring, the counseling department also helps orient students who will be entering the middle school in September, as well as assisting the high school counselors with rising ninth graders. This is done to ensure a smoother transition from one school to the next. In addition, counselors are responsible for college and career readiness education, permanent record-keeping, 504 case management, and the registration of new students. Counselors also facilitate the usage of Naviance by students in grades 6 to 8.

High School

A variety of counseling services are provided in the high school. The need for assistance with the many issues and concerns of the high school student are met by the certified counselors at each Worcester County high school. The assistance may vary from discussing the selection of classes to providing assistance in the application process for work or college. In addition to sharing the same responsibilities as the middle school counselor, high school counselors help orient new ninth grade students. Counselors also facilitate the usage of Naviance by students in grades 9 to 12.

Confidential Communications In Counseling Relationships

Employees of Worcester County Public Schools who work with students in counseling relationships encounter the areas of confidentiality and privileged communications. The student's welfare and rights are of primary importance and the integrity of the student shall be respected at all times. Professionals who work with students in counseling relationships shall inform students of the limits of confidential communications. When the student's right to confidentiality is outweighed by the need to reveal certain information, the employee will secure the student's consent to disclose whenever possible. Information which indicates any behavior or threat of behavior that is potentially harmful or dangerous to students, others, or the community shall be shared with the student's parents according to county guidelines.

School Psychologist

There is a certified psychologist available for each of the Worcester County Public Schools. The school psychologists are available to evaluate a student's needs on an individual basis. Following the evaluation, the school psychologist will meet with the parents and teachers to explain the results and offer recommendations for a program of instruction that will assist the student in improving academic performance. Counseling is also provided by the school psychologist as needed.

Special Education

Worcester County Public Schools provides special education services for children ages birth through 21 who are identified as having educational or developmental disabilities. Disabilities can include the following: (1) physical handicaps such as vision, hearing or motor impairment; (2) speech and language impairments; and (3) cognitive disabilities, such as learning disabilities or intellectual disabilities. Services are provided depending on the needs of the students as determined by the IEP (Individualized Education Program) Team. The extent of the services depends on the needs of the individual student as specified in the student's IEP.

Students with disabilities are guaranteed a free, appropriate public education. Under certain circumstances, extended school year services are available for students with disabilities, who are found to be eligible for them. Parents of students or pre-school children whom they suspect may have an educational disability should contact the child's school or the Child Find Facilitator at the Board of Education office.

Children under the age of three who are experiencing a delay in development or who have a di-

agnosed condition that has a high probability of delay, may be eligible for early intervention services through the Worcester County Infants and Toddlers Program. Early intervention services are provided at no cost to families through a coordinated effort by Worcester County Public Schools, Worcester County's Health Department, the Department of Social Services, and other public and private agencies. For eligible children (from age three to the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday), families may choose to receive services through the Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) or the IEP option with school enrollment. Referrals can be made by contacting the Child Find Facilitator at the Board of Education.

Title I Programs

Currently, Worcester County Public Schools has three school-wide Title I schools - Buckingham Elementary School, Pocomoke Elementary School and Snow Hill Elementary School - and one targeted assistance school - Pocomoke Middle School. Designation as a Title I school is based on the economics of the surrounding area. Title I schools receive financial assistance from the federal government to support high-quality instruction and the achievement of students in core academic subjects. Title I funds are used to provide professional development, highly qualified instructional staff, supplemental learning opportunities, instructional materials and activities that promote parent involvement.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Worcester County Public Schools participates in the National School Lunch, Breakfast and Afterschool Programs and offers nutritious meals every school day. Both breakfast and lunch service are available at all school locations. School meals offer a variety of food choices and meet nutrition standards established by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act and the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Free and/or Reduced Price Meal Eligibility

Some students may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Eligibility is typically determined by household size and income. Household Meal Benefit Applications are sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year and are available on the school system website. Parents need only submit one application per household if they believe their children qualify for free or reduced-price meals. If you need help completing a Household Meal Benefit Application, have a question about a menu item, or have any other questions regarding the school meal program, please contact the Food Services office at 410-632-5027.

Student Meal Accounts

Each school cafeteria has a computerized debit system which allows parents to deposit money on their child's very own cafeteria account. Students enter their assigned pin number at the cashier's station where meals and à la carte purchases are then subtracted from the student's account. Cash is always accepted, although parents may also make deposits online utilizing the mySchoolBucks.com website. This site allows you to view your child's account balance, monitor purchases and set up low balance notifications free of charge. However, please note that there is a fee assessed when using this service to deposit funds on to an account.

School Meal Pricing

2018-2019 school meal prices are as follows: Breakfast \$1.40; Elementary & Middle School Lunch \$2.45; High School Lunch \$2.85; Adult Lunch \$4.35; Student Milk \$0.55. Menus, nutrition information, meal prices and à la carte prices are also posted at www.worcesterk12.org.

HEALTH PROGRAM

The School Health Program provides services for students that promote optimum health for academic success. The program promotes the health and safety of students through identification, assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of the health needs of the school community. Program emphasis is directed toward prevention of disease and promotion of

health using health services, health counseling, and health identification.

School Nurses

School nurses provide for the upkeep of student health records, implementation of state-mandated immunization programs, periodic hearing and vision screening, and day-to-day services to students who experience health problems during the school day. The school nurses also perform a liaison service with the Health Department and consult with parents, teachers, and administrators regarding actual or potential student health problems.

Immunization: It's the Law

According to COMAR 10.06.04 and Maryland DHMH School Health Services Regulations, a school administrator may not knowingly admit or retain a student without proper documentation of age-appropriate immunity against vaccine preventable diseases, or evidence of an appointment, within 20 calendar days, to obtain the required vaccines.

Students will not be allowed to attend schools effective (Day One) Tuesday, September 4, if the required documentation (vaccination record or proof of appointment) is not provided. Proof of upcoming appointment must be provided to the school nurse within the first 5 days of the school year. All appointments for vaccines must occur within the first 20 days of the school year, and a completed vaccination record should be provided to the school nurse immediately following the appointment.

Please see Immunization Chart on the next page.

Medication for Student During School Day - Policy IV-B-1

Administration of medication during school hours is discouraged. We recognize, however, that there are some students who have medical needs that require prescribed medication during the school day. In this circumstance, school personnel may administer medication to students according to the following guidelines:

- The school must have complete written directions on the appropriate form from prescribing physician.
- All medication must be in the original prescription container, clearly labeled with student's name, time and amount of medication to be taken.

Please direct your inquiries regarding medication administration to your child's principal or school nurse.

Medical Authorization

Each year, schools ask parents to update the emergency information for their children. Please report changes or updates to your child's school at the beginning of the school year and as they occur throughout the year.

The emergency form that is distributed by schools includes a provision for parents to authorize schools to contact the child's physician when efforts to contact the parents are unsuccessful. Confidential information for health room personnel is also requested. Please be sure to list all medications and/or medical concerns or problems so that the school staff may be able to promptly and properly assist your child. Parents are encouraged to sign the authorization statement at the bottom of the form and return it to the child's school. In the event of an emergency, this form will be copied and sent to the hospital with your child.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

A student's dress and grooming are the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. It is hoped that students and their parents will exercise discretion and good taste in selecting school apparel. School personnel may counsel with those who display extreme styles of dress



Vaccine Requirements For Children
Enrolled in Preschool Programs and in Schools — Per DHMH COMAR 10.06.04.03
Maryland School Year 2018 - 2019 (Valid 9/1/18 - 8/31/19)

Required cumulative number of doses for each vaccine for PRESCHOOL aged children enrolled in educational programs							
Vaccine	DTaP/DTP/DT ¹	Polio ²	Hib ³	Measles, ^{2,4} Mumps, Rubella	Varicella ^{2,4,5} (Chickenpox)	Hepatitis B ²	PCV ³ (Prenar TM)
Current Age of Child							
Less than 2 months	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2 - 3 months	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
4 - 5 months	2	2	2	0	0	2	2
6 - 11 months	3	3	2	0	0	3	2
12 - 14 months	3	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	2
15 - 23 months	4	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	2
24 - 59 months	4	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	1
60 - 71 months	4	3	0	2	1	3	0

Required cumulative number of doses for each vaccine for children enrolled in KINDERGARTEN - 12 th grade							
Grade Level (Ungraded)	DTaP/DTP/DTap/ DT/Td ^{1,6}	Polio ²	Tdap ⁶	Measles, ^{2,4} Mumps, Rubella	Varicella ^{2,4,5} (Chickenpox)	Hepatitis B ²	Meningococcal
Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3 & 4 (5 -9 yrs)	4 or 3	3	0	2	2	3	0
Grades 5 - 6 (9 - 11 yrs)	3	3	0	2	1 or 2	3	0
Grade 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 (11 - 17 yrs)	3	3	1	2	1 or 2	3	1
Grades 12 (17 - 18+ yrs)	3	3	0	2	1 or 2	3	0

* See footnotes on back for 2018-19 school immunization requirements.

**Vaccine Requirements For Children
Enrolled in Preschool Programs and in Schools
Maryland School Year 2018 - 2019 (Valid 9/1/18 - 8/31/19)**

FOOTNOTES

Requirements for the 2018-19 school year are:

- 2 doses of Varicella vaccine for entry into Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd 3rd AND 4th grades
- 1 dose of Tdap vaccine for entry into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th AND 11th grades
- 1 dose of Meningococcal vaccine for entry into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th AND 11th grades

Instructions: On the chart locate the student's age or grade and read from left to right on the chart to determine the NUMBER of required vaccinations by age or grade. Dosing or spacing intervals should not be considered when determining if the requirement is met, only count the number of doses needed. MMR and Varicella vaccination dates should be evaluated (See footnote #4).

1. If DT vaccine is given in place of DTP or DTaP, a physician documented medical contraindication is required.
2. Proof of immunity by positive blood test is acceptable in lieu of vaccine history for hepatitis B, polio and measles, mumps, rubella and varicella, **but revaccination may be more expedient.**
3. Hib and PCV(Prevnar™) are not required for children older than 59 months (5 years) of age.
4. All doses of measles, mumps, rubella and varicella vaccines should be given on or after the first birthday. However, upon record review for students in preschool through 12th grade, a preschool or school may count as valid vaccine doses administered less than or equal to four (4) days before the first birthday.
5. One dose of varicella (chickenpox) is required for a student younger than 13 years of age. Two doses of varicella vaccine are required for students entering Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades and for previously unvaccinated students 13 years of age or older. Medical diagnosis of varicella disease is acceptable in lieu of vaccination. Medical diagnosis is documented history of disease provided by a health care provider. Documentation must include month and year.
6. Four (4) doses of DTP/DTaP are required for children less than 7 years old. Three (3) doses of tetanus and diphtheria containing vaccine (any combination of the following — DTP, DTaP, Tdap, DT or Td) are required for children 7 years of age and older. One dose of Tdap vaccine received prior to entering 7th grade is acceptable and should be counted as a dose that fulfills the Tdap requirement.
7. Polio vaccine is not required for persons 18 years of age and older.

or grooming.

The school reserves the right to exclude items of apparel or accessories which prove to be harmful or detrimental to the health, safety, or physical well-being of students, damaging to physical facilities, or disruptive to normal school activities.

Statements on clothing not appropriate for school wear are listed below. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive but should provide an understanding of appropriate school dress.

- Student clothing should be clean, neat, and fit properly.
- Clothing should be worn appropriately and not reveal undergarments.
- Clothing and personal adornments that are prohibited include those that contain profanity, or offensive content, promote the use of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs or illegal activities and clothing that creates a distraction or interferes with normal school activities.
- Clothing and personal adornments that cause damage to floors, furnishings and school property are prohibited.
- Flip flops, slippers or shoes worn with laces untied and other clothes that are a safety hazard are prohibited.
- Inappropriate clothing includes halter, tube or tank tops, excessively tight clothing, clothing that exposes the midriff, and shorts and skirts which do not cover the leg to the mid thigh.
- Hats, visors, caps or sunglasses must be removed when in the building.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student Records/Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Student records may be sent to other schools or institutions without parental permission if and/or when students transfer into or out of our school system. The student records regulations set forth in COMAR (Code of Maryland Regulations) states that local school systems or educational institutions may disclose personally identifiable information from student records without the written consent of the parent or legal custodian of the student or the eligible student if the disclosure is to other school officials who have been determined by the system or institution to have legitimate educational interests.

The primary rights of a parent under FERPA are:

- The right to inspect and review education records;
- The right to seek to amend education records;
- The right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the education records. If a parent wishes to inspect, review or amend a student's record(s), the parent must make an appointment to meet with the school principal and/or his/her designee.

Parents/Legal Custodian Rights Under FERPA

Parents/legal custodians have a right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) in the U.S. Department of Education at www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpcoco or 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202 regarding non-compliance with the above requirements.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

School Bus Transportation

The Board of Education provides safe bus transportation for all elementary, middle, and high school students who live more than one mile from their school or for those students who face hazardous walking conditions. School bus drivers undergo a thorough initial training program and continue with inservice training each school year. In addition, bus drivers are required to meet health and driving record standards. Each bus is thoroughly safety tested and inspected according to guidelines set by Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration.

Digital Video Recorders on School Buses

All school buses have been equipped with state-of-the-art digital video recorders (DVRs). The DVRs provide our bus drivers and school administrators with monitoring enhancements to ensure the safe transportation of all students. The digital monitoring system is able to record at night, provides expanded visibility, is temperature resistant, and records in color.

The DVR equipment is not intended to circumvent the responsibility of the bus driver to manage student behavior and maintain a safe atmosphere on the bus. The digital recordings will provide additional information to school administrators:

1. to resolve situations that the bus driver does not witness;
2. to resolve accusations against a bus driver made by a student or parent;
3. to clarify events that the bus driver did not witness in their entirety; or
4. to provide information to support the investigation of an accident involving a school bus.

The conditions regarding the persons who may view the taped information, the specific segments of a tape that may be viewed, and procedures for viewing taped information are determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

Parent Responsibilities

Students should stand in a safe location away from traffic but within 100 feet of the designated bus stop. Parents should discuss bus rules and appropriate behavior with their child. When necessary, parents should monitor behavior at stops.

School Bus Rules

1. Always follow directions given by the driver who is responsible for your safety. If a street must be crossed, stand 10 feet in front of the bus and wait until the driver indicates by P.A. System that it is safe to cross!! Students must not cross divided highways!
2. Please be at your bus stop five (5) minutes early. The bus cannot and will not wait for late students.
3. All riders will be assigned a bus. Stops are designated by the Manager of Transportation.
4. Riders must get on/off at their assigned stop. If you wish to get on/off at any other stop, a written request must be approved by a school administrator.
5. During bus evacuation drills or emergency evacuations, follow directions given by the driver and student helpers.
6. Do not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
7. Remain seated at all times. Do not extend arms and/or heads from the windows.
8. For your safety, eating or drinking is not allowed on the bus. Food and drinks should be kept in a lunchbox and/or brown bag. Pencils, crayons and any pointed objects, needed for school, must be kept in book bags or notebooks.
9. Large items, such as band instruments, cannot be put in aisles or under seats. They must be held.
10. All riders will be assigned a seat by the bus driver. Students will be responsible for maintaining the assigned seat. Students who intentionally damage the bus will be subject to disciplinary action and will be required to pay for any and all damages.
11. If the use of electronic devices, including cellular phones, become disruptive to the safe and orderly operation of the school bus, their use may be prohibited by the school bus driver.
12. The privilege of riding the school bus will be denied to those whose behavior jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus or infringes on the rights of other students on the bus.

Student Drivers

The Board of Education of Worcester County recognizes that there are some students in the high schools who may need to drive or ride in an automobile to school on a full-time or part-time basis. In the interest of conservation and safety, the Board strongly discourages students driving to school; however, they will be permitted to drive if a Student Driver Application is completed by the student, parent, and principal.

Student Driver Applications, listing procedures and rules for student drivers, may be obtained at any Worcester County high school. It should be understood that the privilege to drive to school may be denied if the procedures and rules are violated.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Use of Buildings - Policy VI-B-1

The public school facilities in Worcester County shall be devoted primarily to curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular programs. However, the use of public school facilities for community purposes shall be encouraged provided they are open to the public and when such use will not interfere with regular school sessions or bona fide school activities.

The following groups may apply for use of school facilities:

- Nonprofit organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)(3) organizations or similar organizations, or
- Profit-making organizations

The Worcester County Board of Education reserves the right to determine what constitutes a profit-making organization and a nonprofit organization.

A reasonable fee for the use of WCPS facilities may be charged. The person who applies for the use of the facility will be held responsible for all damage to the property, other than normal wear and tear. Once approved, commitments will not be canceled for an activity of higher priority except as determined by the principal or the Superintendent of Schools.

Application forms are available in each school's main office.

AHERA ACT OF 1986

The Asbestos Hazard and Emergency Response Act of 1986 requires a notification of "Asbestos Management Plans" in all schools (whether they contain asbestos or not). Our Asbestos Management Plans for each school comply with all federal and state regulations. The plan for each school includes re-inspections every three years, as well as the surveillance of all schools every six months in order to monitor the conditions of known or assumed asbestos-containing building materials.

The inspections continue to show that all our facilities are in compliance with all regulations. As schools are renovated, asbestos-containing building materials are removed completely and no asbestos is used in the construction of new schools. Ensuring a healthy and safe learning and working environment continues to be a top priority for our school system.

A copy of any school's Asbestos Management Plan is available to individuals by writing to Galen Anderson: Worcester County Board of Education; 6270 Worcester Highway; Newark, MD 21841.

Integrated Pest Management

Worcester County Public Schools is committed to providing young people with a safe school environment. In an effort to protect the health and safety of all students, an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program is used to control insects and other pests in and around school buildings. The goal of the IPM program is to eliminate the use of chemical pesticides by conducting frequent inspections to identify conditions conducive to pest invasion, to ensure early detection of pest presence and to monitor infestation levels. As a first step in pest control, the IPM approach employs a number of preventative strategies and alternatives to pesticide application, such as: employee education, source reduction, inspection and identification of potential problem areas and improved sanitation. Chemical pesticides are used only as a last

resort.

Plant growth in cracks and along edge areas in sidewalks and driveways around schools are controlled by manual or mechanical weeding and filling cracks to prevent future growth. When these efforts are not successful, areas are sprayed by a licensed pesticide applicator using Roundup Pro at times when students and staff are not in the school.

In the event it is necessary to use a chemical pesticide, all students, parents and staff in the school where an application is made will be notified in writing at least twenty-four hours before the pesticide is applied. If a chemical pesticide must be applied in an emergency situation as defined by Maryland law to be "... a sudden need to mitigate or eliminate a pest which threatens the health or safety of a student or staff member," written notification will be sent to all students, parents and staff of the school within 24 hours of the emergency application.

The following pesticides and bait stations, by common name, may be used by the IPM contractor whenever it becomes necessary to chemically control pests inside of and around school buildings: deltamethrin; abamectin; pyrethrins; fipronil; polybutylenes; and cypermethrin.

Any questions regarding the Worcester County Public Schools' Integrated Pest Management program should be directed to: Galen Anderson, Maintenance and Operations Manager at the Worcester County Board of Education; 6270 Worcester Highway; Newark, MD 21841. You may also call 410-632-5010.

A description of the Integrated Pest Management program is maintained in each school and includes a pest inspection schedule, results of past inspections and actions taken to control pests. Material Safety Data Sheets and product labels for each pesticide and bait station used in or around any school will be maintained in the Maintenance Manager's office at the Board of Education complex. Persons wishing to review this information should contact, Galen Anderson at 410-632-5010 to arrange an appointment.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Student Discipline

The Worcester County Board of Education strives to establish and maintain a safe environment conducive to learning and to keep students enrolled and attending school so that they may graduate. This Code applies to all students while on school property, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or involved in or attending school-related activities, including school-sponsored events, field trips, athletic functions, or any other activity where school employees have authority over students.

A student who engages in disruptive behavior or commits delinquent acts or who poses an imminent threat of harm to other students or staff may be suspended or expelled depending upon the seriousness of the behavior or potential harm. A principal may suspend a student for less than 11 days and direct whether the suspension may be served in school. The Superintendent or designee may expel a student or suspend a student for more than 10 days if the Superintendent/designee has determined that the student poses an imminent threat of serious harm to others. A student who is expelled, or receives an out-of-school suspension, is not permitted to be on any school property or to attend any activity on school property. A suspended student who violates this policy may be charged with trespassing.

This section of the handbook outlines infractions requiring disciplinary action and the range of consequences for such infractions.

Expectations for Students

Students should:

1. Be proactive in promoting and working toward making school a positive, supportive, safe, and welcoming place for all students and staff.
2. Be respectful and courteous to fellow students, parents/guardians, and school staff.
3. Be knowledgeable about discipline policies, regulations, and rules.
4. Follow school rules and policies, and contribute to a positive school climate by behaving appropriately, even when not specifically asked to do so.
5. Make every reasonable effort to participate actively in any conferences, activities, interventions, or programs recommended appropriately by school staff.
6. Recognize how their conduct affects other students and staff, and make every reasonable effort to restore relationships affected by their conduct.
7. Seek access to and complete make-up work while they are out of school for disciplinary reasons, so that they do not fall behind.
8. Share ideas and strategies for improving school climate and school discipline practices.

Consequences for Violation of Behavior and Discipline Policies

The professional staff at a school has the responsibility for taking appropriate actions when a student is involved in a situation which disrupts the learning environment of a school. When determining the consequences, the administrators should take the following into consideration:

- The severity of the incident
- A student's previous violations and/or consequences for the same or a related offense
- If the offense interfered with the responsibility, rights, or property of others
- If the offense posed a threat to the health or safety of others
- If the student has an Individualized Education Plan or a 504 Plan
- The logical relationship between the offense and the consequence
- The age-appropriateness of the consequence
- Any specific consequences articulated in the Board of Education Policy

Interventions for Violation of Behavior and Discipline

Policies Interventions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Classroom-based responses
- Restorative Practices (Classroom-based, Specialist-based, etc.)
- Peer Mediation
- School-Based Conflict Resolution
- Conferencing
- Parent Outreach
- Referral to Appropriate Substance Abuse Education and/or Counseling as appropriate
- Student Services Program
- Informal and/or Preventative School-based Mentoring
- Referral to Health/Mental Health Services
- Check-in with School Counselor/Resource Specialist
- Behavioral Contract
- Community Service
- Outside Facilitated Conflict Resolution
- Referral to Community-based Organization
- Community Conferencing
- Detention
- Removal from Curricular Activities
- Temporary Removal from Class
- Mentoring
- Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan
- Referral to Student Support Team
- Informal/Preventative/Formal Mentoring

INFRACTIONS & RANGE OF CONSEQUENCE(S)

Note: Consequences will be applied in a graduating fashion when appropriate.

Infractions Requiring Recommendation of Exclusion

Range of Consequences: Confiscation, Police Notification, Out-of-School Suspension, Exclusion

1. Assault of school employee or any adult on school property
2. Use of weapon, or an instrument used as such, on any person
3. Sale or distribution, or attempts to sell or distribute, alcohol or illegal drugs
4. Possession of a firearm
5. Terroristic Threats

Infractions Against Another Person

Range of Consequences: Student Warning/Conference, Parent Notification/Conference, Exclusion from Class (Time-Out), Detention, In-School Suspension, Saturday/Night School, Out-of-School Suspension, Police Notification, Program Modification, Exclusion

1. Assault
2. Battery
3. Disrespect, profanity or abusive language directed at another person
4. Defamation
5. Fighting
6. Indecent exposure
7. Continuous disruptive behavior
8. Hazing
9. Extortion
10. Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation to include but not limited to sexual, racial, religious, bullying, hazing, teasing, and cyber bullying
11. Open and/or persistent defiance of a teacher or administrator
12. Verbal or physical threat to students, teachers, staff or others
13. Gang-related activities
14. Sexual Attack

Infractions Against Property

Range of Consequences: Student Warning/Conference, Parent Notification/Conference, Exclusion from Class (Time-Out), Detention, In-School Suspension, Saturday/Night School, Out-of-School Suspension, Police Notification, Program Modification, Restitution

1. Theft
2. Trespassing on school property
3. Maliciously cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging school or personal property

Infractions with Weapons

Range of Consequences: Confiscation, Police Notification, Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, Exclusion

1. Possession of dangerous weapons or any object intended as such, including any object which is a look-alike

Infractions with Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco

Range of Consequences: Confiscation, Parent Notification/Conference, Police Notification, Saturday School (Health Dept.), Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, Excluded from Extracurricular Participation for 90 days, Excluded from Graduation Exercises (Seniors), Expulsion

1. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, look-alike substances, paraphernalia, or misuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications
2. Possession and/or use of tobacco products

Infractions Concerning Public Safety

Range of Consequences: Fire Marshal or Police Notification, Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, Expulsion

1. Arson
2. Possession, sale, distribution or detonation of explosive devices
3. False alarms/Bomb threats
4. Possession or use of mace or pepper spray

Infractions with School Attendance

Range of Consequences: Student Warning/Conference, Parent Notification/Conference, Exclusion from Class (Time-Out), Detention, In-School Suspension, Saturday/Night School, Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, Referral to Juvenile Justice, Referral to Truancy Court

1. Truancy
2. Leaving school without permission
3. Failure to attend assigned classes or habitual tardiness

Infractions that Disrupt Operation of School

Range of Consequences: Confiscation, Student Warning/Conference, Parent Notification/Conference, Exclusion from Class (Time-Out), Detention, In-School Suspension, Saturday School (Health Dept.), Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification

1. Inciting other students to create a disturbance
2. Gambling
3. Pornographic Materials
4. Conduct which is determined to be detrimental or disruptive to the efficient operation of the school
5. Dress Code violation
6. Unauthorized sale, possession or distribution of items not otherwise specified
7. Inappropriate use of electronic devices
8. Sexual Activity

Infractions of Dishonesty

Range of Consequences: Exclusion from Class (Time-Out), Detention, In-School Suspension, Saturday/Night School, Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, No Credit on Assignment

1. Forgery
2. Cheating
3. Plagiarism

Infractions that Violate the Communication Device Policy

Range of Consequences: Confiscation, In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, Program Modification, Student Warning/Conference, Parent Notification/Conference, Detention, Exclusion from Class (Time-Out)

1. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of a cellular telephone, pager or other communications device during the school day or school activity, including use of devices on school buses
2. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of social media, which includes the various online technology applications that enable people to communicate easily over the Internet to share information and resources (Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communications)

BULLYING, HARASSMENT & INTIMIDATION (POLICY IV-C-11)

Policy Statement

All students in Worcester County Public Schools have a right to an educational environment that is safe, promotes optimal academic achievement and is free from any form of harassment. The

Board of Education is committed to providing a nurturing, respectful educational environment, where the worth and dignity of individuals are valued and their safety and rights are protected. Behaviors that compromise this environment, interfere with school operations or are otherwise contrary to the basic mission of public schools will not be tolerated. This policy is intended to apply to the harassment of students by Board of Education employees or other students, in compliance with Education Article §7-424.1, of the Maryland Annotated Code.

Definition

Harassment exists when there is a sufficiently severe action or persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements, directed at an identifiable individual or group. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation is defined as intentional conduct that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being and is:

- motivated by actual or perceived personal characteristics including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, family status or physical or mental disability; or threatening or seriously intimidating; and,
- occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Cyberbullying means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device and includes the use of social media sites. Cyberbullying shall include any future applications that fall under "electronic communication".

Forms of Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

Forms of harassment may include but are not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment, such as derogatory or offensive comments, jokes, slurs, intimidation or gossip; and
- Physical harassment, such as inappropriate or offensive touching, impeding or blocking movement; and
- Visual harassment, such as derogatory or offensive writing, posters, pictures, objects, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, gestures, or prolonged staring/leering; and
- Other forms of harassment which may include hazing, bullying, teasing, or cyberbullying by electronic communication. Electronic communication means a device, such as but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, PDA, or pager.

Complaint/Reporting Procedures

Students who believe that they have been subject to bullying, harassment, or intimidation or who have knowledge of employees or students who may be engaging in bullying, harassment, or intimidation shall request, complete and submit a Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation reporting form to the school counselor or school administrator. Students employed by the Board of Education will report bullying, harassment, or intimidation in writing to their immediate supervisor or to the office of the Superintendent.

Retaliation against a student making a complaint in good faith is prohibited. Any complaint that cannot be resolved at the building level should be forwarded in writing to the Superintendent or designee.

Investigation

The principal or designee, upon receipt of a written report or complaint alleging bullying, harassment, or intimidation will immediately conduct an investigation. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the principal or designee should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the con-

text in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts surrounding the circumstances. The principal or designee will determine whether the allegations have been substantiated and the complainant informed of the findings.

Disciplinary Action

The principal or designee will investigate all allegations. Any student who is found to have violated this policy (IV-C-11) will be subject to disciplinary action. The action may include, but is not limited to, counseling, parent conferences, awareness training, referral to mental health services, alternative education placement, or suspension.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. The identity of the complainant, the subject, and witnesses will be protected to the extent possible; though it is recognized that confidentiality can not always be assured.

Notification & Awareness

Students will be informed of the policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, or intimidation. All schools will provide age-appropriate bullying, harassment, or intimidation awareness at the beginning of each school year. Student orientation will also include this awareness.

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES - POLICY IV-C-7

Student Expression

Students have the right to express opinion, to take stands, and to support causes either publicly or privately in an orderly manner not to infringe upon the rights of others. Students have the right to seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly manner by utilizing those acceptable channels provided for this purpose.

Each student must upon request, identify himself to proper school authorities in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored events. Students at school-sponsored, off-campus events shall be governed by school rules and regulations and are subject to the authority of school officials. Students attending school-sponsored activities shall be governed by rules and regulations of the sponsoring school. Students attending school-sponsored events which are partially supervised by law enforcement officers or school deputies are subject to the authority and directions of those officers.

Speech

A student's right to free speech, verbal or symbolic, shall not infringe upon the rights of others. As an intellectual being, every student has a right to search vigorously for truth by examining opposing ideas and to espouse and express in any orderly manner whatever views commend the assent of his mind. Where soundness of his position can neither be proved nor disproved with documentation, he shall in no way be penalized academically for holding those views.

A student's responsibility must include personal concern for the effect of the spoken word or symbolic expression on the personal reputation of others, and a student has the right to have his own personal reputation protected accordingly. Consequently, personal attacks and obscenities are prohibited. *Note:* Conduct by a student in class or out of it, which materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others is not protected by the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech.

Petition

Students have the right to present petitions utilizing those channels provided for this purpose. However, the collecting of signatures on petitions shall not disrupt classroom procedures nor interfere with the educational process. Students shall not be subjected to disciplinary measures for initiating or signing a petition providing that the petition is free from obscenities, libelous

statements, and personal attack.

Press

School-Sponsored Publications

In a school community, students involved in student publications shall convey information with accuracy and insight in such a manner that truth shall remain predominant. Such publication shall have qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high publication standards. Only materials alleged to contain the following should be withheld from the press:

- Libelous materials as defined to the right
- Obscenity as defined to the right
- Materials which should reasonably lead the principal to forecast substantial disruption of a material interference with school activities

The responsibility and authority for decisions based on the standards mentioned above are vested with the principal.

Non-School-Sponsored Publications

Literature may be distributed and posted by students of the school in designated areas on school property with prior approval of the principal.

Definitions

Libel or Libelous Materials

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States protects the right of free expression by an individual, either in writing or in speech, on all matters of public or general concern about a person, without regard to whether such person is famous or anonymous, in whom the community and press have a legitimate and substantial interest because of who he is or what he has done. However, a written or oral statement about such a person which is made with "actual malice," that is, with knowledge that it was false, or with reckless disregard of whether it was false, or which was made with a high degree of awareness of its probable falsity, is subject to sanction and is not protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

A statement is libelous and not protected by the First Amendment if it is made with "actual malice" and if it tends to expose one to public hatred, shame, obloquy, contumely, odium, contempt, ridicule, aversion, ostracism, degradation, or disgrace, or if it induces an evil opinion of one in the minds of right thinking persons, or if it causes one to be shunned and avoided in society.

Obscene or Obscenity

The average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that it, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest. It depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct currently defined by Maryland law. Taken as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

Distribution

This means dissemination of literature in any form which is made generally available to students. This includes the posting of literature in areas of a school which are generally frequented by students. The principal will require submission of literature for prior review when there is to be a substantial distribution of literature: 1) so that it can be reasonably anticipated that in a significant number of instances there would be a likelihood that the distribution would disrupt school operations, or 2) in order to determine whether such material is libelous or obscene as defined in this policy.

Assemblage

Students have the right to assemble peacefully. This right must not be abridged unless it can be viewed as a violation of the rights of others, or a clear violation of statute and legal policies. There is an appropriate time and place for the expression of opinions and beliefs. Conducting and/or participating in demonstrations which interfere with the operation of the school, class-

room or basic rights of others is inappropriate and prohibited.

All student meetings in school buildings or on school grounds may function only as a part of the formal education process or as cooperatively established and approved by the principal of the school.

Dress

Student dress and grooming are the responsibility of the student and his parents, unless some standard of dress and grooming is a reasonable requirement of the school to carry out the educational function. The school has the responsibility to counsel with those who affect extreme styles of dress and grooming.

Privacy

Student Records

Individual student records are to be confidential in nature and access to those records may be granted by the Board of Education or its duly appointed representative only for the purpose of serving legitimate and recognized ends. Records of a student shall be available to that student's parents or legal guardian in conference with appropriate (professional) school personnel.

Access to records by colleges, prospective employers, and other legitimate and recognized agencies shall be made available upon written permission by the parents of the student provided he/she is of legal age. (The Board of Education will comply with court orders relative to student records.) The transfer of information from one school to another or from one department to another within the same school system without permission does not violate the principle of confidentiality.

Counseling

When a student shall seek information for the purpose of overcoming any form of drug abuse from a teacher, counselor, principal or other professional educator employed by an approved educational institution, no statement, whether oral or written, made by the student and no observation or conclusion derived shall be admissible against the student in any proceeding.

Search and Seizures

Police officers, upon the authority of a search warrant, may make a search of that part of the school premises described in the search warrant, and school officials should cooperate in performing such services. Investigative searches of school premises by police officers shall only be permitted upon the authority of a search warrant or in any case where the search is essential to prevent imminent danger to the safety or welfare of the student or other persons or school property. Such search shall not include a student's assigned locker unless specified in the search warrant.

Every effort shall be made to conduct searches in a manner which will minimize a disruption of the normal school routine and minimize embarrassment to students affected. In no case may a police officer search the person of a pupil not under arrest, unless the police officer has a reasonable suspicion that such pupil is concealing a weapon which poses a danger to others, but under no circumstances shall a school official conduct such a search of the person at the request of a police officer. Authorized school officials may at any time conduct such searches as are essential to the security, discipline, and sound administration of the particular school, but are limited as stated above whenever the search is in connection with a police investigation.

Arrests

When possible and appropriate, arrest by police should be made during non-school hours and away from the school premises. When an arrest on school premises during the school hours is necessary, the responsible school official shall ascertain such facts from the arresting officer as will enable him to fully advise the parent or guardian and other school officials of the nature of the charge, the identity of the arresting officer, and location of the student.

When an arrest has taken place on school premises or during school hours, every effort shall be made by the school officials to inform the parent or guardian immediately and thereafter promptly to advise the Superintendent's office. Arrest on school premises during school hours shall be effectuated in such a manner as to avoid both embarrassment to the student being arrested and jeopardizing the safety and welfare of other pupils.

Questioning on School Premises

School officials shall not permit the questioning of a student under arrest on the school premises and shall request the arresting officer to remove the student from the premises as soon as practical after the arrest is made. Police investigations involving the questioning of students shall not be permitted on school premises unless in connection with a crime committed on the premises or in connection with an investigation which if not immediately permitted would compromise the success of that investigation or endanger the lives or safety of the students or other persons, provided however, that a school official should be present throughout that questioning.

Whenever investigative questioning of students is permitted on the premises, the school official should promptly advise the parent or guardian and the Superintendent's office of the nature of the investigation and such other details as may be required. In the absence of an arrest, school officials shall not authorize the removal of a student from school for the purpose of investigative questioning without the consent of the parent or guardian.

Non-Discriminating Practices

Membership and participation in school-sponsored activities must be open to all students. In no instances may there be any restrictions based on race, creed, color, sex or economic condition. No student may be denied participation in any activity for any reason other than those established by State and/or County eligibility requirements and those requirements legitimately related to the purpose of the activity.

Student Grievances

Each student has the right to appeal any decision which impinges upon any right outlined in this document, to the next in line school official, representing the Board of Education. (Prior to presenting his grievance to the Board of Education, however, all appeals to local school, administrative and/or supervisory authorities should have been exhausted.) In the event that further appeal is necessary, said appeal may be directed to the State Board of Education.

Patriotic and Religious Exercises

It is the responsibility of the school to protect the students' religious and political freedoms.

Patriotic

The school shall provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate his patriotism by such expressions as the flag salute and other patriotic exercises. Students who can demonstrate that participation in patriotic exercises is objectionable to the religious order to which they subscribe, shall stand, but not be required to actively participate in the patriotic exercises. Students who do not actively participate in patriotic exercises shall not, by word or symbolic gesture violate the rights of those participating in these exercises.

Religious

Each student has the right to practice his own religious belief so long as he does not violate either the constitutional rights of others or the Supreme Court's prohibition of a school's extending the mantle of public sanction or support to any particular religion. Each student shall have the right to investigate, study, discuss, and analyze religious ideas, beliefs, and customs in the same manner as any other subject in the curriculum.

A moment of silence is observed each morning for meditation in all schools.

The previously stated rights in no way should be construed as approving acts of disrespect or interfering with participation by others.

Student Governance & Extra-Curricular Activities

Each student has the responsibility and the right to participate in student government organizations in order to provide all students with a voice in school affairs and an open channel of communication with the faculty and the school administration. Recommendations made to the administration by the student government shall receive a response within a reasonable period, giving specific reasons in case the recommendations are not adopted or are substantially modified.

Qualifications for holding office shall be determined by the student government in accordance with prescribed eligibility requirements.

Students shall be encouraged to form and participate in a variety of extra class organizations as a means of broadening their educational experiences. Pupil organizations that conduct activities on school premises must be authorized to do so by the principal and must have approved adult supervision.

School clubs and/or organizations shall not be permitted to use the school name or participate in activities outside the normal realm of the school community unless prior permission has been granted by the appropriate school authorities.

SCHOOL, FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A child's education is a responsibility shared by the school, family, and the community. In Worcester County, parents, community persons, businesses and civic organizations are encouraged to become involved in the schools. Our schools will only reach educational excellence when there is a joint effort of citizens, organizations, parents, and businesses working together. The following are some of the many ways our schools, families and communities work together to educate our children.

School Improvement Advisory Committee

Each year, a group of parents and community members is selected to serve on a School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) for the school. Together, this committee and the school staff work to develop school goals, promote the school and its educational activities, and develop community participation within the school. The committee will place special emphasis on multi-cultural activities and promote the school and its educational activities within the community. The committee listens to parents and teachers in order to make recommendations for equipment, materials of instruction, and other concerns that will further develop the educational quality of that school.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

Parent-Teacher Associations are a vital part of the schools in Worcester County. This group meets in each school to discuss progress and the needs of their individual school. The PTA provides more than a dialogue between school and community. It is a support group for staff and students. Members work hard to raise funds which provide many of the "extras" Worcester County students enjoy. Teachers, too, reap the benefits of this group on such occasions as "Teacher Appreciation Day." Following business meetings of the PTA, parents may meet with teachers to discuss the progress of their child.

School Improvement Team

Each school has a School Improvement Team (SIT). Members of the team include school administrators, teachers, a Central Office liaison, parents and community persons. The role of the School Improvement Team is to:

1. review test data, needs assessments, and related information from the SIAC

- to analyze school needs;
2. develop an annual school plan for improvement;
 3. recommend staff development activities and school-based procedures that support the improvement plan; and
 4. annually monitor and evaluate the school improvement plan.

Volunteer Program

The schools of Worcester County believe that community members offer a valuable resource to students. Therefore, each year these schools are reaching out into the community to find those persons dedicated to volunteering their time and talents to help. At times, this help is in the classroom, providing additional reinforcement of a skill. Some volunteers bring unique experiences and/or artifacts to share with the students. Whatever the volunteer brings, however, it enriches the lives of Worcester County students. For more information on volunteering in our schools, please contact the main office of the school in which you would like to volunteer.

Other School - Community Organizations

Each school in the county also has various organizations and committees which help to meet the unique needs of the school. Some of these include: Classroom Parents, Athletic Boosters, Band Boosters, Prom Committee, After Prom Committee, Craft Committees, and Art Committee. The schools and school system have partnerships with Worcester County businesses and civic/community organizations.

RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

***211 Maryland**

Need help? Get Connected. Get Answers. *2-1-1 Maryland connects you to health and human service resources in your community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in over 180 languages.

Worcester County Health Department

P. O. Box 249 | Snow Hill, MD 21863
p: 410-632-0056 | f: 410-632-0080 | w: www.worcesterhealth.org

Worcester County Department of Social Services

P. O. Box 39 | 299 Commerce Street | Snow Hill, MD 21863
p: 410-632-677-6800 | f: 410-677-6810 | w: www.dhr.state.md.us

Department of Juvenile Services

301C Commerce Street | Snow Hill, MD 21863
p: 410-632-0206 | f: 410-632-1527 | w: www.djs.state.md.us

Local Management Board

P. O. Box 129 | Snow Hill, MD 21863
p: 410-632-3648

Crisis Hotlines

Crisis Intervention Center: 410-289-0454

Life Crisis Center: 410-641-4357

Maryland Youth Crisis Hotline: 800-422-0009

National Youth Crisis Hotline: 800-488-4663

Worcester County Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention Coalition: 410-632-1100

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Buckingham Elementary	100 Buckingham Road Berlin, MD 21811	Ms. Karen Marx	410-632-5300
Ocean City Elementary	12828 Center Drive Ocean City, MD 21842	Ms. Dawn Rogers	410-632-5370
Pocomoke Elementary	2119 Pocomoke Beltway Pocomoke, MD 21851	Dr. Michael Browne	410-632-5130
Showell Elementary	11318 Showell School Road Berlin, MD 21811	Ms. Diane Shorts	410-632-5350
Snow Hill Elementary	515 Coulbourne Lane Snow Hill, MD 21863	Dr. Mary Anne Cooper	410-632-5210
Cedar Chapel Special	510 Coulbourne Lane Snow Hill, MD 21863	Ms. Belinda Gulyas	410-632-5230
Berlin Intermediate	309 Franklin Avenue Berlin, MD 21811	Mr. Ryan Cowder	410-632-5320
Pocomoke Middle	800 Eighth Street Pocomoke, MD 21851	Mr. Matthew Record	410-632-5150
Snow Hill Middle	522 Coulbourne Lane Snow Hill, MD 21863	Dr. Christina Welch	410-632-5240
Stephen Decatur Middle	9815 Seahawk Road Berlin, MD 21811	Ms. Lynne Barton	410-632-3400
Pocomoke High	1817 Old Virginia Road Pocomoke, MD 21851	Ms. Jenifer Rayne	410-632-5180
Snow Hill High	305 S. Church Street Snow Hill, MD 21863	Dr. Kimberly Purvis	410-632-5270
Stephen Decatur High	9913 Seahawk Road Belin, MD 21811	Mr. Thomas Sites	410-641-2171
Worcester Technical High	6290 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841	Mr. Thomas Zimmer	410-632-5050
Worcester County Public Schools	6270 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841	Mr. Louis H. Taylor Superintendent of Schools	410-632-5000

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Worcester County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, ancestry or national origin, familial status, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, or genetic information or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Mr. Dwayne Abt, Supervisor of Human Resources
410-632-5000

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit the Office of Civil Rights Complaint Assessment System at: <http://ocrcas.ed.gov> or call 1-800-421-3481.



WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6270 Worcester Highway | Newark, MD 21841

(410) 632-5000

www.worcesterk12.org