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\* Please note:

Waterford Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook of Annual Notifications has been distributed and can also be found online at [www.waterfordschools.org](http://www.waterfordschools.org) Please refer to this document for additional important information.

# DISTRICT AND SCHOOL INFORMATION

## **WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS' MISSION**

The mission of the Waterford Public Schools, a premier educational system within a community that fosters and supports high aspirations, is to ensure that every student acquire the skills and knowledge to become a successful individual and a responsible citizen in an atmosphere of integrity and respect.

### **Belief Statements**

- We believe high expectations and a collaborative effort promote excellence and achievement.
- We believe a quality education ensures the development of skills necessary for lifelong learning.
- We believe in differentiated instruction as a means of meeting the needs of all learners.
- We believe that the analysis of student performance data is essential to optimize learning.
- We believe genuine accomplishment should be recognized and celebrated.
- We believe integrity and respect are values that permeate an effective organization.
- We believe education is the shared responsibility of the individual, family, school system and community.
- We believe appropriate standards of behavior, consistently adhered to, are a necessary condition for education.
- We believe that a safe and orderly environment in all Waterford Schools is essential.
- We believe that student learning is enhanced as a result of teacher collaboration and high quality staff development.

### **Collective Commitment Statements**

- We will prioritize resources to remain focused on student learning.
- We will always expect the highest degree of professionalism and competence from all employees.
- We will not tolerate behavior that interferes with the learning process.
- We will not tolerate behavior that is disrespectful or demeaning.
- We will maintain a safe and orderly environment

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS' PHILOSOPHY**

Each child is unique and brings special life, love and worth to our elementary schools-social institutions guided by principles of fairness and concern for each pupil with clearly defined educational and societal purposes.

Waterford Elementary Schools will encourage and assist students in their intellectual, social, physical, moral, emotional, aesthetic, and patriotic growth; will develop children's academic and social skills to prepare them for further education and to function as responsible, contributing members of society; will instill appreciation for our democratic system of government; and will work to increase understanding of and respect for racial and ethnic similarities and differences.

## **ADMISSION**

### **Kindergarten**

Children entering kindergarten are required to be five years old on or before January 1<sup>st</sup> for the school year in which they are enrolling. School year pre-registration takes place in the spring. Parents must bring birth certificates and immunization records in order to complete the enrollment. Kindergarten students must have a physical examination before starting school.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

### **Regular Day**

#### **Grades 1 – 5**

8:40 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. (includes a 45-minute lunch/recess)

#### **Kindergarten**

AM 8:40 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

PM 12:25 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.

\* Full Day Kindergarten at Quaker Hill (due to new school opening) 8:40 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. (includes a 45-minute lunch/recess)

### **Shortened Day**

#### **Grades 1-5**

8:40 a.m. – 1:10 p.m. (includes a 30-minute lunch)

#### **Kindergarten**

AM 8:40 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

PM 10:25 a.m. – 1:10 p.m.

Kindergarten at Quaker Hill - Same as Grades 1-5

**Child Care** is available during the school year from 7:30 – 8:25 a.m. If there is a delayed opening, child care will not begin at 7:30, but at the time equal to the amount of minutes of the delay. For example, a 90 minute delay means child care will begin at 9:00 a.m.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY AND REGULATIONS (#5113)**

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

All students enrolled in the Waterford Public School System are required to attend school on a regular basis. Regular attendance is essential for schools to be effective and is the legal responsibility of parents or guardians.

Connecticut State Law requires children to start school at age five instead of age seven unless their parents appear in person at the school district office when the child is five and again when he/she is six to sign an option form not to send the child to school until age six or seven. Starting on July 1, 2001, legislation requires students to stay in school until age 18 instead of age 16, unless (1) they graduate from high school or (2) their parents or others having control over them consent to their leaving school at age 16 or 17.

The Waterford Board of Education has established and maintains regulations for all grade levels to guide staff in assisting parents or guardians in meeting their responsibility of ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

### **ATTENDANCE REPORTING**

Each school shall maintain a record of individual unexcused and excused absences for students. For the purpose of attendance reporting, students in attendance for less than four (4) hours shall be marked absent. At the end of each school year, each school shall report to the superintendent the number of students who are habitual truants. The superintendent shall report this information to the State Department of Education annually.

**Please call the school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. if your child is not going to attend on that day. For extended absences, notifying the school office in writing with specific dates and reason for absences will relieve a parent/guardian from calling each day. If we do not hear from you, we will make a reasonable effort to contact you at home or your place of employment.**

### **EXTENDED ABSENCES**

In cases where the child is well enough to do some work at home, but not well enough to return to school, the parents are encouraged to contact the teacher and inform him/her of the illness and request assignments to be sent to the office for pick up. Work will be ready at the end of the day if this call is made before 11:00 a.m.

**ABSENCES OTHER THAN FOR ILLNESSES**

Teachers are not obligated to plan schoolwork for students who travel while school is in session. Teachers will advise parents/guardians on providing good educational experiences for their children and then assign any necessary make-up work when the child returns to school.

**TARDY POLICY**

Any student arriving late must report to the office upon arrival prior to going to their classroom. The student will receive a tardy pass from the secretary and then report to the cafeteria to sign up for lunch. If a student accumulates 5 or more tardies each trimester, a meeting will be scheduled with the school administration and the parent.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS K-8**

In accordance with Waterford Public Schools' Policy #5113 and Connecticut General Statute 10-198a, the following procedures shall be adhered to for monitoring, reporting and intervening with regard to student absences in elementary and middle schools.

Beginning in the 1996-1997 school year, a new attendance procedure went into effect. Highlights include the following:

1. Students must attend for at least four hours a day to be considered present.
2. Any student absent 28 to 44 days must successfully complete the Waterford Public Schools Summer Program to be promoted to the next grade level.
3. Any student absent 45 days or more will not be promoted.
4. Teachers are not obligated to give assignments in advance of a student's absence.
5. It is the student's responsibility to complete all assignments within five school days, or seven calendar days, of his/her return from a school absence.
6. Attendance notification letters will be sent to the parent/guardian when the student has been absent 10 days, then again at 15 days, 25 days, 28 days, 35 days, and 45 days.

**DISMISSALS AND CLOSINGS**

No student may be permitted to leave school at any time during the school day without the approval of the student's parent/guardian. No student will be allowed to leave the school in a manner other than usual unless a parent or guardian notifies the school (in writing) of this change. This note is to be sent to the office the morning that this change will occur. The school must also be notified if someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up the student from school

**UNSCHEDULED DISMISSALS**

On occasion, schools may be dismissed early due to emergencies or inclement weather. When possible, the Superintendent's decision will be made by 11:00 a.m. The radio announcement will be, "Waterford Public Schools will close today at \_\_\_\_\_ (time). Afternoon kindergarten is cancelled" (if applicable). This information will also be posted on the district's website.

**Parents and guardians, please note:** If school must be dismissed early because of hazardous weather or an emergency, please make certain your child knows what to do and where to go if you are not home and that the school has a telephone number where you can be reached during emergencies.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

On days when it is necessary to close schools, cancellations can be heard on the following radio and television stations:

- WRCH 100.5 FM
- WZMX 93.7 FM
- WVVE 102.3 FM
- WBMW 106.5 FM
- WNLC 98.7 FM
- WTDY 100.0 FM
- WICH 1310 AM
- WQGN 980 AM/Q105 FM
- WCTY 97.7 FM
- WTIC 96.5 FM/1080 AM
- WSUB 980 AM

WTNH-TV Channel 8  
WFSB-TV Channel 3  
WVIT-TV Channels 4 and 30

School closings are announced as early as possible. Parents are asked to listen to these stations or visit our Website at [www.waterfordschools.org](http://www.waterfordschools.org) if in doubt about the closing of school. Additionally, we will be using an automated notification system in which you can receive a call.

A school closing announcement means also that there will be no transportation to out-of-town schools and that after-school and evening activities and programs are cancelled.

### **LATE SCHOOL OPENINGS**

If necessary, schools will open late. The procedure for late openings in school is the same as for emergency closings, except that the announcement will be, "Waterford Public Schools will have a 60 or 90 minute delay." A late opening means that all out-of-town transportation schedules also will be run one hour late. Morning and afternoon kindergarten schedules on late opening days will be:

AM: 9:40 – 11:55 a.m.; PM: 12:55 – 3:10 p.m.

No AM Kindergarten will be held when there is a 90-minute delay or a 2-hour delay.

Signs will also be posted on the entrance door so parents dropping students off for before school child care will know that there is a delay and that child care is not available yet.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION INFORMATION**

The Waterford School System has a planned procedure to safeguard your child in the event of a natural disaster or other severe emergency. When there is limited warning, students will be sheltered in those areas of the school buildings deemed most safe, under the direct supervision of staff members. As soon as possible, the Superintendent of Schools will direct the release of students to their homes. (This might cause delay in students returning home.)

When there is adequate warning for evacuation, arrangements will be made for the transportation of all students. Evacuation of the area would result in all students being bused to East Hartford. Do not interfere with such an evacuation. The students can be more safely evacuated by the normal bus transportation method. Families will be reunited in East Hartford.

If only the school building needs to be evacuated, the students would be sent home early. Please consider the following recommendations, which contribute significantly to the success of our emergency plan.

1. Be in your home when your child arrives from school. If personal considerations make this impossible, arrange for a responsible adult to supervise your child when he/she arrives from school.
2. Do not come to the school to pick up your child.
3. Do not attempt to telephone the school or the office of the Superintendent. This will only result in tying up the lines and may result in the delay of the school receiving important information.
4. Listen to the Emergency Radio Broadcast System and follow instructions. If these recommendations are not followed, the effectiveness of the protective action features of our emergency plan will be impaired.

### **EMERGENCY STUDENT DATA INFORMATION**

The emergency information sheet must be filled out on each student, signed, and returned at the beginning of each school year. Each student is required to have the following up-to-date information on file at the school office:

1. Parent'(s) or guardian'(s) name(s)
2. An up-to-date address
3. Home telephone, parent'(s) work telephone numbers, and cell phone numbers.
4. Emergency telephone number of a friend or relative
5. Physician's name and telephone number
6. Medical alert information

**Please notify us of any changes in this information.**

## **SCHOOL / HOME PARTNERSHIP**

### **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

It is important that parents be kept informed of the progress of their children. Parent-teacher conferences and report cards are two of the several means employed to achieve this goal. **Parent-Teacher Conferences** are scheduled in November and in April. Both academic and social progress will be discussed. Plan for Alternative Strategies (PAS) review meetings may also be done at this time. In addition, teachers or parents may schedule additional conferences on an as-needed basis.

**Report cards** are issued three times a year (December, March and June) in grades K-5. Teachers, parents, or guardians may schedule additional conferences on an as-needed basis. Parents are encouraged to provide teachers with feedback regarding any aspect of report cards.

### **OPEN HOUSE**

In the fall, there are Back-to-School Nights (open house). Teachers are present, and displays of students' work are available. The Back-to-School Night is a time to get acquainted with teachers, school policies, educational programs, and the school. Please establish a separate time to talk with the teacher about a child's progress if a conference is desired or needed.

### **SCHOOL NEWSLETTER**

A school newsletter will be available monthly. Various notices are sent home weekly in the Friday Folder throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to review this information. Reasonable efforts are made to keep parents fully informed regarding school activities.

### **VOICE MAIL**

You can leave a voice mail message for a staff member after 4:00 p.m. To do this, just call the school's phone number and listen for instructions.

### **EMAIL**

You can contact any staff member through email. To do this, go to the website [www.waterfordschools.org](http://www.waterfordschools.org). This will link you your child's school site. The school site will link you to any email address. You can also email by first initial last name@waterfordschools.org

### **ASSIGNMENT BOOKS**

The assignment book offers a convenient and handy record on which to log homework assignments for students in grades 3 – 5. By regularly logging all assignments in this book, students will have an effective, up-to-date listing of all work. Parents and guardians can also refer to this for an overview of their child's homework so they, too, can become more involved in the homework process.

### **FRIDAY FOLDERS**

Students in grades K through 5 each have a Friday folder in which the teacher will send home newsletters, corrected work, and parent organization notices. Please empty the contents over the weekend, review it, and send the folder back to school on Monday.

### **STAT (Student Teacher Assistance Team)**

The purpose of the Student Teacher Assistance Team is to make suggestions or recommendations to the classroom teacher ranging from regular education intervention to a more formal PAS (Plan for Alternative Strategy) or PPT (Planning and Placement team). This team of staff members would make recommendations to place a student on a regular education intervention, PAS, or refer the student to special education PPT. Parents are notified when the teacher is bringing the child to STAT.

### **SCHOOL VISITS**

Parents are welcome to visit Waterford elementary schools. In fact, they are encouraged to do so. They are, however, asked to please observe the following visiting guidelines:

- Park in an appropriate parking space.
- Proceed directly to the school office upon entering the building through the main lobby entrance, sign in, and pick up a visitor's badge.
- Do not interrupt the teacher while a lesson is in progress.

Lengthy visits for the purpose of lesson observation/activity must be pre-arranged with the teacher. Parents are respectfully asked to continue to observe this practice. It is important to stop at the office during any visit to help us maintain a minimum of interruption in the learning process. Visitors must follow the building sign-in procedures. **There are security and safety reasons for this strictly enforced Board of Education policy.**

**SPECIALS SCHEDULE**

<b>Elementary School Specials In Minutes Per 6-Day Rotation (A-F)</b>						
<b><i>Specials</i></b>	<b><i>Kind</i></b>	<b><i>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</i></b>	<b><i>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</i></b>	<b><i>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i></b>	<b><i>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</i></b>	<b><i>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</i></b>
<b><i>Art</i></b>	30	40	40	40	40	40/2x
<b><i>Computer Lab</i></b>	20	40	40	40	40	40
<b><i>Library</i></b>	30/2x	30/2x	30	30	30	30
<b><i>Music Recorder Orchestra Band</i></b>	30/2x	30/2x	30/2x	30/2x 30 20/2x	30/2x 20/2x 20/2x	30/2x 20/2x 20/2x
<b><i>P.E.</i></b>	30/2x	30/2x	30/2x	30/3x	30/3x	30/3x
<b><i>Spanish</i></b>		15/2x	30/3x	30/3x	30/3x	30/3x

**MUSIC PROGRAM**

**General Music:** Kindergarten through Grade Five. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 have music class once a week throughout the school year. During general music class, students listen to various types of music, sing, move, dance, play games, and play classroom instruments. The general music curriculum is cumulative, so that by the end of fifth grade, students will have experienced the music and games of many cultures and historical periods while they learn how to read musical notation. Reading music is especially stressed in the third grade, when students have a weekly recorder class in addition to their general music class. Music grades are based on effort.

**Chorus:** Fourth and fifth graders may elect to join chorus. Weekly rehearsals are held. Chorus members will strengthen their musical skills as they prepare selections for a spring concert.

**Orchestra:** Third through fifth graders may opt to take string instrument lessons during school. Lessons are taught during the school day. Students are expected to practice from 10 minutes (beginners) to 30 minutes (advanced) 5 days per week. Parents are encouraged to attend their children’s lessons when possible. When students advance far enough in their lessons, they will enter the orchestra. Weekly orchestra rehearsals will prepare the orchestra for a spring concert.

**Band:** Fourth and fifth graders may opt to take wind instrument lessons during school. In addition to the wind instruments, fifth graders may take percussion lessons. Lessons are taught during the school day. As well as their lessons at school, students should practice at home 15 minutes (beginners) to 30 minutes (advanced) 5 days per week. When students advance far enough in their lessons, they will enter the band. Weekly band rehearsals will prepare the band for a spring concert.

**EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS**

Educational field trips to points of interest are made available upon request of the teachers. When trips are planned, permission slips are sent home to parents for their signatures. All Waterford Public Schools’ field trips are to be by bus, unless approved by the Superintendent of Schools. Parents may be called upon to chaperone these excursions.

In accordance with Waterford Board of Education policy #6153, any student who does not return a signed permission slip will not be able to participate in the field trip.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE AND GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

In accordance with our elementary school's philosophy, disciplinary practices shall be guided by the principles of fairness and concern for each student. To this end, faculty and staff will use procedures consistent with promoting understanding of appropriate behavior, respect for others and acceptable language. Disciplinary procedures involving corporal punishment shall not be employed. Deliberate humiliation, embarrassment and ridicule are prohibited.

Firmness, fairness, and consistency, tempered by the use of learning experiences and consequences, guided by differences in each individual situation shall be the principles which underlie disciplinary procedures. In situations deemed serious or even reasonably serious, parental involvement will be requested. In all instances the health, welfare and safety of all children shall be paramount. All children shall be treated with kindness and compassion in an effort to preserve individual dignity.

In accordance with our school philosophy, all children are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for others, including students and staff members
- Be respectful of school property
- Abide by the rules of the playground
- Walk in the corridors, behaving in a manner so as not to disturb other classes
- Refrain from chewing gum on school grounds or on buses
- Obey general safety rules on buses

The following is a list of behaviors that are not permitted at school:

- Carrying of toys or any electronic games, or other electronic equipment including, but not limited to cell phones, iPods, CD players, etc., to school, except for a specific instructional use and with permission of the teacher or principal
- Fighting or improper physical contact with other students
- Making threats against students or staff
- Exhibiting a disruptive attitude or conduct on school grounds
- Using obscene language or gestures
- Showing disrespect toward any individual or toward a person's racial/ethnic/familial background
- Refusing to obey directives from staff or school rules (insubordination)
- Entering or leaving an assigned area without permission
- Vandalizing the school or another student's property
- Smoking
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Exhibiting sexual harassment
- Bringing pets to school

The following are possible consequences for infraction of these rules. One or more may apply. School administrators have broad discretion in determining whether and how to discipline students. In determining consequential actions, the administration may consider evidence of past disciplinary actions.

- Student conference
- Parent contact
- Conference with parent
- Detention by the teacher or principal during lunch or after school (parents are responsible for transportation)
- Suspension in or out of school, at the discretion of the principal
- Restitution
- Other consequences deemed appropriate

### **DANGEROUS WEAPONS IN THE SCHOOL**

Board of Education Policy #5131.4 expressly prohibits bringing dangerous weapons and instruments to school. A student having in his or her possession, including in his or her desk, a dangerous instrument or anything resembling a dangerous instrument will be subject to both school discipline and/or law enforcement intervention. Use of any dangerous instrument or weapon will result in prosecution. We ask each parent and guardian to please ensure that your child does not inadvertently bring such items as kitchen knives or scouting knives to school. Toys that replicate switch blades and other weapons are prohibited. Laser pointers are also not allowed in school, other than for instructional use by the teacher only.

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE/ABUSE**

The use of illicit drugs or the unlawful possession of alcohol and drugs at school or at school activities is strictly prohibited and likely to result in suspension from school. Law enforcement officials will be notified in cases when individuals are found in possession of drug related paraphernalia or illicit drugs. Please refer to Board of Education policy #5136.6 for further information.

### **SMOKING AT SCHOOL**

Board of Education policy #5131.7 prohibits smoking on school grounds. Students, staff and members of the public are prohibited from using tobacco in any form in school facilities.

### **VANDALISM IN THE SCHOOL**

Vandalism is prohibited in the school or on school property. Parents of students who violate this policy will be held liable for any damage caused by vandalism (Board of Education Policy #5131.5). In cases where it is possible for the student to clean up the damage, he/she will be required to do so. Safety and health procedures will be carefully observed in these situations.

### **BULLYING**

Bullying means any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity where such acts are repeated against the same student over time. Please refer to Board of Education Policy #5131.911 for more information.

### **HAZING**

Hazing means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into, or affiliated with, a student organization, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times. (Board of Education Policy #5131.91)

### **PUPIL BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Parents who wish to invite the entire class to a home birthday party are welcome to do so through the school. Simply send the invitations to the classroom teacher for distribution. Please do not ask for a class list with addresses/telephone numbers or to distribute invitations to selected members of a class. The first item may be considered a breach of confidentiality and the second request involves the school in a process of discrimination by selection.

### **PETS**

Under no circumstances are pets allowed in school.

### **SCHOOL GROUNDS**

The Waterford Recreation and Parks Department maintains school grounds. Parents and citizens are encouraged to use playgrounds on school property after school hours. Use of school playground facilities during the school day by non-student groups, or by individuals not associated with the school, requires the approval of the principal. Group use of fields and special areas are scheduled through the Recreation and Parks Department (444-5881). Walking your animals on school playgrounds is prohibited, as animal droppings present a health and safety hazard to students.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive or contrary to law.

Any school dress which impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g., unclean, malodorous, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption to the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or is libelous or inherently contains unreasonable potential to upset or hurt others is prohibited.

Students should come to school dressed neatly and appropriately so a safe and orderly educational environment is not disrupted. The following are some guidelines:

- Shirts which expose the midriff are prohibited.
- Clothing which exposes undergarments is not permissible. This includes thin-strapped tops and over-sized pants worn low.
- Hats and bandanas are not allowed.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn inside.
- Beach sandals (i.e. "flip flops") are not permitted, as they pose a safety hazard.
- Cologne and perfume should not be overpowering.

Clothing which references drugs, alcohol, tobacco or which contains indecent or inappropriate language or which otherwise promotes and glorifies ideas or behaviors that undermine a positive learning environment is prohibited.

Since, weather permitting, all students have outdoor recess, please be sure your children are properly dressed for the weather.

## **SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

It is the goal of the Waterford Board of Education to establish an appropriate transportation system for qualified school aged children within the guidelines set forth in Board of Education Policy #3541. Highlights of this policy are as follows:

- Maximum walking distance for pupils below 10 years of age or enrolled in the equivalent of grades K-3 is one half mile.
- Normal transportation time shall not exceed one hour.
- Normal transportation is defined as the combination of walking and riding time under good weather conditions.
- Pupils may be suspended or excluded from transportation privileges for serious and/or repeated infractions of rules, laws, or breaches of discipline.

The transportation system is planned and operated in compliance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and all regulations of the State Department of Education and the State Department of Motor Vehicles regarding the safe operation of student transportation vehicles. There is no requirement and therefore no accommodations for parents to view their children from their homes. Many parents have other children to care for in addition to their school aged child(ren); however, we cannot locate bus stops based on these needs.

Waterford students will be transported to and from school only on their assigned bus. They will be picked up and dropped off only at their designated stops. Students who are transported to/from daycare facilities must have a School Bus Transportation Student Change Form on file in the school's office. The form must be completed by their parents/guardians. A notice of two school days is required for approval by the bus company and for implementation. Please note that daycare is defined as a consistent, regularly-scheduled arrangement between parent(s) and provider. A temporary babysitting arrangement is not considered daycare.

Transportation is provided to/from the following licensed daycare facilities and schools:

<b><u>Ballestrini's</u></b>	<b><u>Carelot</u></b>
Oswegatchie	Oswegatchie
Quaker Hill	Quaker Hill
Southwest	Southwest

Phone calls, facsimilies, and electronic mail will be accepted as a transportation note only in an emergency. In the event you need to change your child's designated stop, it will be necessary for you to complete the Bus Stop Change Request form, which is available in each school office. Your request needs to be approved by the Business Office.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY**

The majority of our students are transported to and from school by bus. Please read the following student guidelines carefully. Safety of students and employees is important to everyone.

- Enter the bus in an orderly manner and take a seat promptly.
- Follow the instructions of your school bus driver.
- Remain in your seat except while entering or exiting the bus.
- Keep arms and hands inside the bus at all times.
- Keep aisles clear at all times.
- Remain quiet and orderly.
- Be courteous to your school bus driver and fellow passengers.
- Be alert to traffic when leaving the bus.
- Do not switch buses or bus stops, or engage in visiting arrangements without both written parental approval and authorization by the principal or his designee.
- Do not eat food while riding the school bus.

### **SUSPENSION OF TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES**

Pupils may be suspended or excluded from transportation privileges for serious and/or repeated infractions of rules, laws, or breaches of discipline. All suspensions and exclusions will be in accordance with state statutes and Board of Education Policy #3541.

Guidelines regarding transportation disciplinary actions for violating transportation rules (as defined in Student Handbooks and Regulations) are as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> offense:	Written notice of warning to parents
2 <sup>nd</sup> offense:	One (1) to three (3) days suspension from transportation
3 <sup>rd</sup> offense:	Four (4) to five (5) days suspension from transportation
4 <sup>th</sup> offense:	Up to ten (10) days suspension from transportation

### **BICYCLE SAFETY**

- State law requires children to wear helmets. Students who come to school on a bicycle without a helmet will not be allowed to ride the bicycle home.
- Written parental permission is required for a child to ride a bicycle to or from school.
- Students are expected to keep bicycles in bicycle racks, as the school assumes no responsibility for them.
- Once a bicycle has been parked, it is not to be touched by anyone, including the owner, until it is time to go home.

### **PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

Children should not run or play tag on The Big Toy. Give one another plenty of room for safety. If a student is already using part of The Big Toy, wait your turn and let that student finish. Also, it is always important to ask a group of students who are playing a game if you can join them. Please adhere to the following general playground rules:

- No pushing, fighting, or roughhousing
- No sand, snow, or stone throwing
- No standing on the swings or jumping off swings
- Play away from the building
- Pay immediate attention to those supervising the playground
- Stay within playground boundaries—don't go into the woods

### **FIRE SAFETY**

State Statute indicates each school shall conduct 10 fire drills annually. Each teacher has a designated area to take his/her students.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### **MEDICAL POLICIES**

School personnel are under mandate to handle medications in a very specific manner in compliance with Connecticut General Statute 10-212a as follows:

*The Connecticut State Law and Regulations require a physician's written order and parent or guardian's authorization for a nurse to administer medicinal preparations exclusive of hallucinogens or narcotics, or in the absence of the nurse, the principal or teacher to administer oral medications.*

This law requires the cooperation of parents, educators and others associated with the school. We ask parents not to send any medications to school with a child. Connecticut statute requires a written "Authorization for the Administration of Medicines" form signed by both the physician/dentist and parent or guardian granting permission to school personnel to administer medications to children. This form must also be completed for a child whose parents request the administration of prescription and/or over-the-counter medications.

### **INJURY OR ILLNESS**

In case of injury, a child will be cared for temporarily by the school health personnel or member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the child will be taken to the emergency room at the hospital. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached and the name and telephone number of student's family doctor must be on file at the school.

In case of illness, the student will be sent to the school health room. At that time, the school health personnel will determine whether the student can remain in school or should go home. Parents will be notified and are expected to pick up their child as soon as possible when the student should go home. Children who are ill will not be sent home on the bus to safeguard the child and to prevent the spread of infection.

It is recommended that you keep your child home if you suspect that he/she is contagious. Some of the symptoms that may mean an illness is contagious are: unexplained rash; repeated vomiting and/or diarrhea within the past 24 hours; mucus, pus, or thick crusting from the eye; sore throat, especially if accompanied by fever or swollen neck glands; and unusual fatigue, confusion or irritability.

Children sent to school are expected to participate in all school activities unless excused by a physician.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

The State Department of Health Services and Education requires that all children attending school in the State of Connecticut be properly immunized against various diseases. Before a child enters school, proof of immunization must be presented to school health personnel.

## **SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH THE SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM**

### **VISUAL SCREENING**

Every student is screened annually for visual acuity. If a deficiency is found, the parents are notified and urged to seek professional care.

### **AUDIOMETRIC SCREENING**

Screening is conducted in Kindergarten, grades 1-3 and then grade 5 in order to identify hearing difficulties. Individual tests are given in other grades upon the request of a teacher, parent, administrator, or family physician.

### **POSTURAL SCREENING**

Scoliosis is an insidious spinal abnormality which often appears during the years of rapid growth. Annual postural screening is carried out, beginning in Grade 5, in an attempt to identify spinal curvature early. If detected in its beginning stages, treatment by exercise or brace may be all that is necessary to prevent further complications.

## **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

School insurance is available to children of Waterford Public Schools. Medical benefits are available under two different plans, which will be sent home with students at the beginning of each school year. The Board of Education relies on parent-acquired insurance to cover personal injuries or damage to property that occurs on school grounds.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **HOMEWORK POLICY STATEMENT**

Homework is an integral part of each child's academic career. A developmentally appropriate system of homework, beginning in kindergarten and culminating with graduation from twelfth grade, is imperative to enhance a child's learning. Children learn best when a structured method of reinforcement is in place. Homework provides unique opportunities to practice skills, generalize concepts, and expand knowledge. In addition, homework can serve as a vehicle for teaching responsibility. For homework to have a positive effect on students' learning, the school, the parents, and the student must work cooperatively (Board of Education Policy #6154).

### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS**

The amount of homework assigned normally increases as the student progresses through the grades. The quality of assignments must be developmentally appropriate. Long-term projects, reading logs, and make-up work are not included in the following minimum guidelines:

- Kindergarten 10 minutes daily, four times per week
- Grade one 10 - 20 minutes daily, four times per week
- Grade two 20 - 30 minutes daily, four times per week
- Grade three 30 - 40 minutes daily, four times per week
- Grade four 40 - 50 minutes daily, four times per week
- Grade five 50 - 60 minutes daily, four times per week

### **ATTENDANCE AND HOMEWORK**

In any given day, a teacher must prepare in excess of five lessons and each day requires planning and preparation involving several hours. It seems appropriate to review this so that everyone understands why it may be necessary to limit the amount of teacher prepared lessons given to parents in certain circumstances. For example, it is considered reasonable to request some home assignments for a child who is recuperating for a few days at home, but who is well enough to do a couple of hours of "homework." On the contrary, it is considered unreasonable to request one or two weeks worth of prepared daily assignments in several subjects because a child will be taking a vacation, with his/her parents, while school is in session. We are asking that you join us in committing your children to as many as possible of the 180 days that school is in session. There is no substitute for teacher/student interaction in the learning process. Work missed may be made up when a child returns.

### **HOMEWORK—HOW PARENTS AND GUARDIANS CAN HELP**

The following guidelines, which are intended for parents and guardians, reflect elementary school's philosophy on how homework can be incorporated into home life:

- Homework reviews and reinforces concepts already taught in school.
- Homework should be done on a regular schedule to develop responsibility and solid work habits.
- **Reading is one of the most valuable gifts you can share with your child.** Find time daily to share reading through a variety of sources such as books, newspapers and magazines.
- Homework is only truly effective when parents or guardians support and guide their children and see that assignments are completed.

Here are some things that you can do:

- Provide a study area that has good lighting and space.
- Establish a specific "homework time" each day and stick with it.

- Call the teacher if your child is having difficulty or seems to have too much homework. Try not to complain to your child about the homework, as this may cause the child to lose confidence in the teacher or lose interest in schoolwork.
- Supervise homework to help your child develop his or her own discipline toward it.
- Help get the homework habit by questioning your child when no homework is brought home. If there is little or no formal assignment, spend more time reading.

### **HOMework AND VACATION**

When a student is absent due to a vacation, the following procedures apply:

1. Absences for purposes of a vacation are unexcused.
2. Such absences count toward the total absences for the student.
3. Schoolwork may not be given to a student prior to absence, but can be made up per usual process upon return to school.

## **FOOD SERVICES INFORMATION**

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

Students may purchase a variety of nutritious meals, including sandwiches and salad plates, and a selection of a la carte foods during lunchtime in the school cafeteria. Hot meals are served each school day in the school cafeteria. The main meal featured on the school menu follows the National School Lunch Program meal pattern, offering at least eight ounces of milk, a serving of meat or protein alternate, bread or carbohydrate alternate (eight per week), plus either two vegetables or fruits, or one vegetable and one fruit. Milk, water, juices, fruit, and other healthy snacks are also available separately. Students may make healthy food choices to meet their energy requirements as well as look and feel better now and later in life.

#### Daily Rates

Lunch-\$2.00  
Healthy Snack-\$.50  
Milk / Juice- \$.45

#### Weekly Rates

Lunch- \$10.00  
Healthy Snack- \$2.50  
Milk / Juice- \$2.25

#### Monthly Rate

Check monthly  
newsletter for  
amount

### **CAFETERIA RULES**

- Use courtesy and good manners
- Obey all adults on duty
- Ask to leave your seat
- Clean your area
- Observe silent time during lunch when requested
- Do not bring glass containers into the cafeteria
- Observe the recycling policy

In the cafeteria, students are responsible for the following:

- Depositing all lunch litter in wastebaskets
- Returning all trays and utensils to the dishwashing area
- Leaving the table and floor around their seat in a clean condition



**School Copy (Please complete and return)**

**VIDEOTAPING AND INTERNET  
PERMISSION SLIP  
FOR THE 2008 -2009 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are planning on using the video/digital cameras on certain occasions this year to be shown in school as well on cable. Pictures will be also going on the school website. Student pictures may also be posted on the District website

There is a wide range of activities that include special programs at the school that we would like to show outside of school. Classroom teachers will also be using video tapes as an instructional tool.

We will need your permission to include your child in the above situations.

**I give permission to have my child, \_\_\_\_\_, photographed and videotaped for educational purposes for the following media:  
(Please check off the media you are granting permission for)**

- Videotape for classroom use
- Videotape for public access cable
- Digital picture for school website
- Photo for newspapers
- Photo for District website

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

~~~~~  
**HANDBOOK SIGNATURE FORM  
FOR THE 2008 -2009 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Students, Parents and Guardians,**

**After reading and discussing the previous section in detail with your child, please read and sign this tear-out form. By signing this form, you are simply acknowledging that you have read and understand the elementary student behavior code and general school rules.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

**Please return this entire form to your child's classroom teacher**