

# **Waterford Street School 2011 - 2012 Handbook**

**62 Waterford Street  
Gardner, MA 01440**

*“Every living creature will grow up,  
be beautiful, and unfold its talents.”*

*- Eric Carle*

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**Non-discrimination policy** (*The Gardner Public Schools, in accordance with federal and state laws, prohibits discrimination in its operations. This policy, providing equal employment and educational opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, will apply to all persons affiliated with the school system.*)

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*“If you think you can or you think  
you can’t, you will.”*

*- Henry Ford*

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August 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This Handbook has been compiled to answer the many questions you may have about the Curriculum, Policies and Procedures at Waterford Street School. Please take the time to read it carefully and to go over it with your student. There is a signature page for you both to sign at the back of the Handbook.

You will find Daily Schedules, General Laws of the Commonwealth relevant to public school and ways you can become involved in the life of the school. We value our partnership with you as we work to bring out the very best in your child. Please know you are always welcome and we look forward to your presence.

Consistent attendance is an important part of your child’s success at school. We understand the occasional illness but we need your child here daily to move forward with the curriculum. Checking your child’s homework will help you to understand the areas of knowledge that they are acquiring. Each day is quite full and getting to school on time is important.

Again, welcome to Waterford Street School, we look forward to a new year. The faculty, staff and I personally are excited about joining you in this important mission of educating your child.

Sincerely,

F. Daniel Hill

Principal  
**Waterford Street School Calendar**  
 2011-2012

August 25	<i>Faculty Returns – Professional Development</i>
August 29	First Day of School all first and second grade students
August 30	First Day of School for Kindergarten Students <b>Last Name A – L</b> / dismissal 11:15
August 31	<b>First Day for Kindergarten Students Last Name M – Z</b> / dismissal 11:15
September 1	All Kindergarten Students report to school for full day, First Day of Preschool AM and PM Sessions
<b>September 5</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Labor Day
September 7	First PTO Meeting – 6:00 PM WSS Cafeteria
September 15	Waterford Street School – Open House 6 – 7 PM
October 6-7	<i>School Photos / Thursday, Oct. 6/ Pre-K and K; Friday, Oct. 7 / Grades 1 &amp; 2</i>
<b>October 10</b>	Columbus Day – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>October 25</b>	<b>Half Day, Professional Development Dismissal 11:15 – NO Preschool</b>
October 21	Elementary Progress Reports
October 26	Horribles Parade – starting at 5:30
<b>November 8</b>	Professional Development <b>NO SCHOOL ALL DAY</b>
<b>November 11</b>	<i>Veterans’ Day – NO SCHOOL</i>
November 16	Elementary Grades Close
<b>November 21</b>	<b>Night time - Teacher Conferences /5-8:00 PM – Dismissal at 11:15 – NO Preschool</b>
<b>November 22</b>	<b>Day time -Teacher Conferences / 12-3:00 PM – Dismissal at 11:15 – NO Preschool</b>
<b>November 23</b>	Thanksgiving Vacation Begins – <b>Dismissal at 11:15</b>
<b>November 24-25</b>	Thanksgiving Holiday – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>December 2</b>	Elementary Report Cards Issued / Pre-K Progress Reports Issued
<b>December 26 – January 2</b>	<b>December Holiday Begins – NO SCHOOL</b>
January 3	Classes Resume
<b>January 16</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>January 20</b>	Half Day, Professional Development Dismissal 11:15 – NO Preschool
January 27	<i>Elementary Progress Reports sent home / Preschool Report Cards Issued</i>
<b>February 20 -24</b>	Presidents’ Day / Winter Vacation – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
February 27	<i>Classes Resume</i>
March 2	<i>Elementary Grades Close</i>
<b>March 9</b>	Elementary Report Cards Issued / Preschool Progress Reports
March 20	Issued <b>Full Day</b> Professional Development – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>April 18 - 22</b>	Patriot’s Day / Spring Vacation – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
April 25	Classes Resume
<b>May 2</b>	<b>Professional Development NO SCHOOL ALL DAY</b>
May 11	Elementary Progress Reports Issued
<b>May 28</b>	Memorial Day – <b>NO SCHOOL</b>
TBA	Kindergarten Show
TBA	<b>Preschool Show</b>
June 12	<b>180<sup>th</sup> Day – End of the Year Report Cards issued</b>
June 19	<i>Plus 5 Snow Days</i>

# Waterford Street School

## *Telephone Extensions*

Principal: Dan Hill - 5100      Asst. Principal: Ashley Kopley - 5200

Guidance: Mrs. Burnham - 5500      Ms. McDonald - 5501

Secretary: Mrs. Pelletier – 5400      Mrs. Kelley - 5300

Mrs. Bastien	5222	Mrs. Triolo / Mrs. Anderson	5220
Mrs. Boatwright / Mrs. Palmieri	5106	Mrs. Tucker – Music	5108
Mrs. Bourgeois / Mrs. Korhonen	5102	Mrs. Yarborough	5108
Mrs. Boutwell / <b>NURSE</b>	5600	Mrs. Whitcomb / Mrs. Anderson	5228
<b>Mrs. Burpee / Mrs. Wallgren</b>	5105	Mrs. Whitney / Mrs. Piascik	5110
<b>Mrs. Butler / Mrs. Zollo</b>	5112	Cafeteria	5700
Ms. Caouette / Miss Morgan	5103	<b>Computer Lab</b>	5225
Mrs. Doherty / Mrs. Wahl	5117	Teachers Room	5119
Mrs. Elwell	5229	<b>Library</b>	5127
Mrs. Gastonguay / Mrs. LeBlanc	5111	<b>PT / Mrs. Waterhouse</b>	5130
Mrs. S. Goguen / Gym	5122	OT / Mrs. Rice / Mrs. Pierce	5125
<b>Mrs. Hallinan</b>	5224	<b>Title One Room</b>	5120
<b>Mrs. Henderson / Mrs. Spain</b>	5104	<b>Mrs. LaFerriere / Title One</b>	5230
Ms. Istvan / Mrs. Quick -	5118	Mrs. Nugent / Title One	5230
Mrs. Janhunnen / Mrs. Casey	5226	<b>Mrs. Stanko/ Title One</b>	5230
Mrs. Jepson	5227	Mrs. Belitsky – ELL	5109
<b>Ms. B. Johnson</b> /Nurse Coordinator	5650	Kristen Bastarache - Speech	5131
Mrs. Klash – Speech	5124	Julie Pera - Speech	5002
Ms. Marcinkewicz / Mrs. Piascik	5115	Mrs. Hermanson	5107
Mr. McGann - Music	5129	Mrs. Wood-Klash	5106
Mrs. Miranda	5011	<b>Mrs. D. LeBlanc</b>	5111
Mrs. Melanson / Mrs. Wahl	5116	Mrs. Sass	5111
Mrs. Murphy ***	5107	Mrs. P. Flynn 1 on 1	5107
<b>Mr. Muse / Ms. Vienneau</b>	5113	Mrs. DiNardo - 1-on-1	5117
<b>Mr. Pianka</b>	5114	<b>Mrs. Janikas - 1-on-1</b>	5221
<b>Miss Riley</b>	5223	Ms. Mitchell - 1- on 1	5106
Mrs. Suyenaga – Art	5129	<b>Ms. Loescher</b>	5113
<b>Mrs. Thomas / Mrs. Korhonen</b>	5101	Mrs. Gugino 1 on 1	5104
<b>Mrs. Thompson</b>	5221		

## Daily Schedule

### School Hours for Kindergarten, First and Second Grade

8:45 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

It is very important, due to safety reasons, children not arrive at school until 8:15 A.M.

Adult supervision on the playground begins at 8:15 A.M.

### School Hours for AM and PM Preschool Sessions

The hours for preschool AM-Session are 8:45 –11:22 AM and the hours for the preschool PM session are 12:23-3:00 PM. For drop off we ask that Preschool parents supervise their children on the playground.

### Early Dismissals

All dismissals will be made from the office. A parent or guardian wishing to pick up a child for early dismissal must sign the child out in the Dismissal Log located in the office. The child will be paged and dismissed from the office.

On the first day, let us know how your child is to be dismissed. For the safety of all our children as we pass them back to your care, we ask you review these brief notes:

**Bus children** – Bus Students will line-up in the Gym and board their buses at the front of the building. If your child has a change in a bus/pick up plan for a specific day, please send us that information in writing (addressed to the classroom teacher) and follow-up with a phone call to the school office.

**Pick-ups** – Pick-up Students will report to cafeteria and sit at assigned K tables, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade tables, and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Parents will gather outside on the First and Second grade playground next to the school cafeteria by the red doors. The door will be opened at 3:00 PM and parents will report to their child's assigned table to sign out their child. It is *very crowded* in the cafeteria and if this is your choice for the end of the day, follow the direction of the Faculty members on duty and be aware, first, of the passage and safety of children. Please go into the designated area to pick-up the children. Again, please understand that we are moving a large number of children and we need to work together to make this a safe and orderly process.

In general, we remind you to 1) have children exit and enter your car from the passenger side; 2) park only in designated parking spaces; 3) Use crosswalks and 4) not use dismissal time as an occasion for a conversation with faculty or staff who need to be supervising children.

***We extend our sincere thanks to everyone for your anticipated cooperation. Our only concern at this point in the year is to make sure the transition home is designed with safety first. Please call the office directly if you have concerns or problem specific to your child. Again, our thanks.***



## **Prek and Kindergarten Lunch and Recess Times**

Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Bourgeois, Mrs. Whitcomb, Mrs. Triolo

### **Lunch**

11:15 – 11:40 Rooms 1,2,20,28

Mrs. Boatwright, Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Whitney, Mrs. Miranda, Ms. Marcinkewicz, Mrs. Melanson, Mrs. Doherty

### **Recess**

1:40 – 12:05

### **Lunch**

11:40 – 12:05 Rooms 10,11B,15,16,17, Prek

### **Recess**

11:15 – 11:40

## **RISE, Options, First and Second Grade Lunch and Recess Times**

Mr. Pianka, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Bastien, Mrs. Elwell

### **Lunch**

12:10 – 12:35 Rooms 14, 21, 22, 27, 29

Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Yarborough, Mrs. Butler, Ms. Riley, Mrs. Hallinan, Mrs. Janhunen, Mrs. Jepson

### **Recess**

12:35 – 1:00

### **Lunch**

12:35 – 1:00 Rooms 7, 8, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27

### **Recess**

12:10 – 12:35

Teaching assistants are on duty monitoring the cafeteria and monitoring the playground during recess. We welcome parent volunteers to be assistants for playground duty!

## **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM:**

Dear Gardner Public School District Students, Parents, and School Community:

The beginning of the school year is approaching, and we want to extend a warm welcome to let you know that **Chartwells School Dining Services** has exciting plans for your school meal programs. Our mission is to serve nutritious, well-balanced meals that appeal to our students and school community! We understand that although change is good, it is not without challenges - we will do our best to address any questions and concerns that may arise. Here is some general information that will be helpful to begin the new school year:

### **Meal Prices:**

	Breakfast	Lunch
Paid	\$1.25	\$2.35 Elementary \$2.35 Middle School \$2.35 High School
Reduced	\$0.30	\$0.40
Adult	N/A Sold as Ala Carte pricing	\$3.25
Milk Only	\$0.40	\$0.40
Snack Milk	\$0.40	\$0.40

### **New Online System:**

View child's account balance, transactions & low balance email alerts for free! We are excited to provide parents a convenient easy and secure online prepayment service. All you will need is your child's name, student ID number and school ZIP code. For student ID number you may contact your child's school cafeteria or contacting my office @ (978)-632-1600 X1700.

This service also provides parents the ability to view your child's account balance through a web site called MyNutrikids.com. By having money in each child's account prior to entering the cafeteria, we find the lunch lines move much faster so your child has more time to eat and be with friends. Also, parents will have the ability to print out a copy of their child's eating history report. This history report will show you all dates and times that your child has purchased a breakfast and or lunch within the past thirty days. You may also set up low balance email alerts.

However, if you choose not to utilize the online prepayment service, you may continue to make advance payments by check or cash. We encourage you to prepay. You can prepay by the week, month or more. You may still view your child's eating history or check account balance at no cost. When sending in payments by check or cash, please send in a sealed envelope. Please write your Child's full name and Teacher's name on both the check and envelope (make checks payable to the Gardner School Lunch Program).

**Lunch PIN Number:**

Every Student at Gardner Public School will be assigned a unique Lunch PIN number. This PIN number will allow your child to access funds in his/her lunch account. This PIN number will stay with the student until he/she graduates. It is important that students memorize their PIN numbers; however if a student forgets his/her number, we can access it through every register. The PIN number should never be shared with other students. Please work with your child to understand the value of the PIN number; we will strive to ensure that only your child is using his/her lunch account.

**Note: Waterford Street School is using a cashier touch screen procedure in place of student lunch PIN numbers. At meal service times they will simply pick up their meal and then tell the cashier his/her name along with his/her teachers name.**

**Free and Reduced Meal Applications:**

Applications for free and reduced-priced meals will be provided to all students at the beginning of the school year and are always available at the school. We encourage everyone to complete the application and have your child return it promptly. You may apply for free and reduced-priced meal benefits at anytime during the school year. All current applications on file will expire on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Fill out your application today! Students that do not have an approved completed application will have to pay full price for their meals until a new application is approved.

**Menus:**

You will see gradual changes with the menu, choices, and food presentation at all schools. We will be working with administrators, students, and parents to gain insight on how we can enhance our services. On our web site you will find nutrition information about Chartwells School Dining Program as well as the monthly school lunch menus. You will have the opportunity to print current and future menus for posting at home. This web site will include many nutrition resources and activities for all ages, parents and teachers. The activities include recipes, classroom and home nutrition activities, 10-minute nutrition lessons, and much more. We hope you enjoy this web site and check back often for more updates! [www.chartwellsschooldining.com/gps](http://www.chartwellsschooldining.com/gps).

**Elementary Meal Programs:**

For the elementary students, we will be following an adventure of fun and nutrition education with the help of Theodore Eat, Sydney Learn and Ava Live – our nutrition characters who encourage students to eat healthy and be physically active. Watch for these characters on menus and signs throughout the cafeterias - they are our nutrition ambassadors! Be sure to check menus for special promotions, giveaways and nutrition information!

**Middle and High School Meal Programs:**

We understand that older students have a more sophisticated pallet, so we've planned appropriate enhancements to meet their needs. Here are a few highlights:

- Our food stations in September will include: Origins, incredible, Trattoria, Fresh Grille, Outtakes and Sandwich Central – see your school menus for details!
- Local Produce Promotion – Celebrate Local Produce week September 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. Sample Local Flavors during Our Locally Grown Produce Promotion Week. Go Healthy Eating!

**Balanced Choices:**

Our goal is to *nourish* our students. With this in mind, we have developed *Balanced Choices*®, our signature comprehensive wellness program that identifies healthier meals, snacks and beverage choices. These will be identified by our Balanced Choices logo on menus and at points of service throughout the cafeterias.

**Other Information:**

To learn more about Chartwells, visit our website at [www.eatlearnlive.com](http://www.eatlearnlive.com). We're excited about our partnership with Gardner Public Schools and hope to provide a great program while becoming part of the Gardner community.

Please feel free to contact us at any time at [duboisk@gardnerk12.org](mailto:duboisk@gardnerk12.org) or [unit13742@compass-usa.com](mailto:unit13742@compass-usa.com).

Sincerely,  
Keri A DuBois-Gould, DTR  
Director of Dining Services  
Gardner Public Schools

## School Policies and Procedures

**\* We need your child here, on time, every day! Here is the Policy of the Gardner School Committee.**

### STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine.
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family.
3. Observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school administrator.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of justifiable absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

Any student in the Gardner Public Schools who is absent five consecutive days, due to illness, will be required to present a physician's statement to the school nurse upon return to school.

(Adopted: June 8, 1998)  
(Revised: October 2000)  
(Revised: April 2003)

Source: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.

**Notes:** Please send a note to school with your child when any of the following situations occur:

1. Change in dismissal information (see “Student Destinations at End of School Day”)
2. Change of address or telephone number, both home and work place.
3. Change of emergency contact telephone number.
4. Absence
5. Each time your child stays for an after school activity.
6. Unusual circumstances, i.e. parents are out of town, illness in the family, new baby or other significant event.

**Family Vacations** – We urge all families to arrange their vacation and travel plans according to the school vacation schedules. The instructional experiences children miss when they are away are not easily replicated when the children return. Because of variations in units and topics of study and the ongoing nature of classroom planning, it is not always possible to accommodate requests for teachers to provide work in advance of planned absences. The amount of work that can be provided in advance is at the discretion of the teacher.

**Phone calls to and from school** – Phone calls to the school can be made between 7:45 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. The school number is 978-632-1605. During class time teachers are not available to take calls, but a message can be left for them. They will return your call as soon as possible.

**Lost and Found** – A lost and found area is located in the basement. Children who lose items should look for them there. Items such as watches, jewelry, etc. are usually turned into the office. Periodically, articles remaining in the lost and found will be donated to a local charitable organization.

**Personal Items from Home** – Students must assume full responsibility for any items brought to school. Although children enjoy sharing their personal belongings at recess with classmates, there is always a potential for them to be lost or taken. We do not encourage students to bring personal items to school. Please do not allow your children to bring toys to school other than balls or jump ropes.

**Electronic Devices/Valuables** – Items of “no reasonable use” in school are not allowed. These include but are not limited to radios, tape players, walkman-type headphones, cell phones, electronic hand held games, trading cards, toys, skates, or skateboards. These items will be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian.

**Waterford Street School Dress Code** – Students are expected to be neat, clean, and age appropriate in their appearance. We make every attempt to go outside for recess every day, and students are expected to wear appropriate clothing. In the winter, coats, hats, mittens/gloves, and boots are necessary. If your child wants to play in the snow they must have snow pants and boots. In warmer weather shorts are permissible but open backed sandals and flip-flops are not allowed. Hats are not allowed to be worn in school. Wheeled shoes, platform shoes, and chains that hang from clothing are not allowed. Silly bracelets are not allowed at school. Students will be asked to remove them and put in their backpacks.

**Birthday Party Invitations** – When birthday party invitations are passed out in school or children are picked up after school to go to a party, those not attending do feel excluded. To help avoid these situations, please arrange for parties from your home. Again, we ask you do not have your child distribute in school! If you do not have addresses for students you may send in a

stamped envelope with the students name and we will address it for you. Be sure to plan for this in advance of the party.

**Student Illness** – If for any reason your child will not be attending school, please call the school secretary in the morning and notify the office of his/her absence. If your child will be out for an extended period of time due to illness or other personal reason, please notify the office and classroom teacher. If we do not hear from you the school secretary will call to check on the whereabouts of your child for their safety. We may be asking symptoms to keep track of illnesses at school.

**Nurse's Hours** – Our fulltime school nurse is Rebecca Boutwell. Mrs. Boutwell can be reached at 978-632-4158.

**Note on Meds** – If after examination, the nurse feels that a student should be dismissed, the nurse will contact the child's parents to pick up their child. In a serious emergency, the decision to call an ambulance will be made by the school and any possible payments assumed by the family.

All public health requirements must be met by each student. Immunization records for each student are part of the school health record and are required for entrance to all schools. Mass. Public Health Law requires that students without acceptable health records be withdrawn from school after a 5-day grace period.

**Guidelines for reentry and keeping your child home**

1. Chicken Pox: 5 days after onset or when all lesions are dry.
2. Head Lice: May return after treatment and having head checked by school nurse.
3. Hepatitis A: May return 1 week after onset of virus, when jaundice resolves, and/or immune globulin has been given to school contacts.
4. Impetigo: 24 hours after starting treatment.
5. Pertussis: 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.
6. Pink Eye: 24 hours after initiating treatment.
7. Rash with fever: After a physician has determined it is not contagious.
8. Ringworm: Once treatment has begun.
9. Scabies: After treatment completed.
10. Strep Throat: 24 hours after treatment begins/24 hours without fever.

Please contact the nurse for the medication administration policies and forms, if your child needs to be medicated during school. All medications must be ordered by a licensed prescriber and delivered by a responsible adult in a pharmacy or manufacturers labeled container. The medication dose required to send on field trips needs to be sent in at least 2 days prior in a separate pharmacy labeled container. **All medications must be kept in the school nurse's office. Students may not medicate themselves! Students are not allowed to carry any medication without the nurse's consent. If special circumstances exist, the parent/guardian must make arrangements with the school nurse.**

Height and weight are measured and recorded and vision and hearing tests are done annually to all students.

Teachers will be apprised of health problems that may affect their student's educational progress or require special health monitoring or services in school. If you do not wish to have your child's medical information shared with the teaching staff, please contact the nurse.

**Please keep your child's emergency card up-to-date. Advise us of any changes in address, phone number, or emergency contact as soon as possible.**

**General Laws of Massachusetts  
Chapter 71: Public Schools**

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at a school sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a knife, or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises, or at a school-sponsored or school related event, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.
- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling the student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.
- f) All students attending Gardner Public Schools are prohibited from having in their possession matches, lighters or other incendiary devices while on school property. This prohibition is not limited to school hours but anytime a student attends a function held on school property.
- g) Often the media/press requests information regarding student awards, honors, scholarships and sports or club memberships. Throughout the year, the local cable TV channel, newspaper and school department newsletters will take pictures or write about school activities and students. It is the policy of Gardner Public Schools to make this information routinely available unless parents have requested, in writing, that they do not wish to have this information published. We will be happy to comply with parents' written requests. If we do not receive a written request, we will proceed with the publication of student information as described above.

**MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS ANNOTATED  
PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT  
TITLE XII. EDUCATION  
CHAPTER 71. PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## SCHOOL COMMITTEES

*Current through Ch. 71 of the 2003 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Sess.*

### **37L. Notification to school personnel of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect; reports of student possessing or using dangerous weapons on school premises; transferred students' school records.**

The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect as specified in sections fifty-one A to fifty-one F, inclusive, of chapter one hundred and nineteen.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of social services, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of social services, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set for the by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

## Gardner School District ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY -- TECHNOLOGY

### **Overview**

The Internet is an electronic communications network that provides vast, diverse and unique resources. Our goal in providing this service to teachers, staff and students, is to promote educational excellence in the Gardner School District by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

The Gardner Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the system/network, including access to external networks for appropriate educational purposes. *Educational purposes* shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be used to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

### **Availability**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

Access to the system/network, including external networks, shall be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

Access to the system/network is a **privilege, not a right**. All users, parents and or legal guardians, shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures.

Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Gardner Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Gardner Public Schools.

### **Acceptable Use**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Gardner Public Schools as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

### **Monitored Use**

Electronic mail transmissions, internet site usage and use of other electronic resources by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

### **Liability**

The Gardner Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources, violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Gardner Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

[Adoption date: May 11, 1998]

[Revised: June 2002]

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY -- TECHNOLOGY Administrative Procedures for Implementation**

### **Definition and Purpose**

The Internet is an electronic communications network that provides vast, diverse and unique resources. Our goal in providing this service to teachers, staff and students, is to promote educational excellence in the Gardner School District by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

The Gardner Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the system/network, including access to external networks for appropriate educational purposes. *Educational purposes* shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parents, and students), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be used to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

## Guidelines

The operation of the Internet relies heavily on the proper conduct of the users, who must adhere to strict guidelines. **The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right**, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of this privilege. The district staff has the right and obligation to monitor student Internet activities. Each student or teacher who receives an account will receive instruction from a designated school staff member pertaining to the proper use of the network. **The building principal and network administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is FINAL.** Also, the network administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of the Gardner public schools may request the network administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

The following guidelines are provided to make users aware of the responsibilities they are about to acquire. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources.

### 1. Acceptable Use

- System/Network use must be in support of education and research consistent with curriculum.
- System/Network use must be consistent with the rules appropriate to any network being used/accessed.
- All users must sign an Acceptable Use Consent and Waiver Form

### 2. Unacceptable Use

- Intentionally disrupting information, network traffic, or crashing the network and connected systems is prohibited.
- Degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance is prohibited.
- Stealing data, equipment, or intellectual property is prohibited.
- Gaining unauthorized access to the files of others (students, teachers, network administrator), or vandalizing the data or files of another user is prohibited.
- Forging electronic mail messages, or using an account owned by another user is prohibited.
- Invading the privacy of individuals is prohibited.
- Posting anonymous messages is prohibited.
- Possessing any data, which might be, considered a violation of these rules in paper, magnetic (disk), or any other form is prohibited.
- Using the system/network for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes is prohibited.
- Unauthorized use of copyrighted material is prohibited.
- Using the system/network for unauthorized commercial purposes is prohibited.
- Logging on as another user is prohibited.
- Tying up the system/network with idle activities is prohibited.
- Playing Internet games on the system is prohibited.
- Loading unauthorized software onto the network or any workstation is prohibited.
- Plagiarizing is prohibited.
- Using non-Gardner public schools computers on the network is prohibited.

### 3. Network Etiquette

- Be polite.
- Use appropriate language. Do not use vulgar or obscene language.
- Do not reveal your own home address, telephone number, or telephone number(s) of others.
- Use caution when revealing your school address or e-mail address (or those of others).
- Assume electronic mail is public.
- Abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

#### 4. Security

- If you identify a security problem, notify a teacher or administrator immediately.
- Do not reveal your account password or allow another person to use your account.
- Do not use another individual's account.
- Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.
- The student user must use school accounts on school grounds.
- It is illegal to hack or gain illegal entry into other computers/networks.
- For security purposes, machine usage may be remotely monitored.

#### 5. Vandalism/Harassment

- Vandalism and/or harassment will result in the cancellation of privileges.
- *Vandalism* is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet or other networks. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and/or uploading computer viruses. *Harassment* is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user or the interference in another user's work. This includes, but is not limited to, the sending of unwanted e-mail.

#### 6. Penalties

- Any user violating these provisions, applicable state and federal laws or posted classroom and district rules is subject to loss of privileges and any other district disciplinary options, including criminal prosecution.
- The building principal and network administrators will make the determination as to what constitutes unacceptable use and the appropriate sanctions for misuse.

#### 7. Liability

- The Gardner Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources, violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Gardner Public Schools cannot control the information available on other networks, and as a result, shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.
- All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to all users of the Internet. These provisions reflect an agreement of the parties and shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the state of Massachusetts and the United States of America.

These procedures will be reviewed each academic year.

#### SCHOOL AND DISTRICT WEB PAGES

**The Gardner Public School District realizes the limitless potential for information and communication provided by the World Wide Web. It is a tool to enhance learning. The availability of this communication vehicle provides an opportunity for students and staff to access and contribute to the world of information related to curriculum, instruction, school, district, and school community related activities. Therefore, the Gardner Public School District will use the Internet as an effective, efficient and timely source of information, method of communication and vehicle for resource collection. In order to**

**take advantage of the opportunities the Internet provides, the Committee authorizes the creation of school and/or district web pages on the Internet.**

Only those web pages maintained in accordance with Committee policy and established procedures shall be recognized as official representations of the district or individual schools. All information on a school or district web page must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and district. The web pages must have a purpose that falls within at least one of two categories:

1. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools and district to students, staff, parents, community, and the world at large.
2. Support of curriculum and instruction – intended to provide resources for students, parents and staff in the district.

The superintendent shall designate an individual(s) to be responsible to maintaining the official district web page and monitoring all district web page activity. A building principal shall make such designation for an individual school. Schools or departments that wish to publish a web page must identify an appropriately qualified publisher and/or author.

As with any instructional materials or publication used by or representing the school or district, the building principal or superintendent, respectively, is ultimately responsible for accuracy and appropriateness of the information made available at the web site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the building principal or to the superintendent's office when related to the district web site.

Web sites developed under contract for the Gardner Public School District or within the scope of employment by Gardner Public School District employees are the property of the Gardner Public School District.

Due to the dynamic nature of the World Wide Web, this policy is to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

[Adoption date: 10/26/98][Revised: June 2002]

## WEB SITE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL

Unlike the Internet itself, schools and the district can control the type of information placed on Web pages. Documents created for the Web and linked to district Web pages shall meet the criteria for use as public information or an instructional resource. The following considerations should be considered when determining the information to include on a school or district Web page: Copyright/trademark issues; applicability to the curriculum or communication goals of the school or district; privacy issues; and related school committee policies. Links to other Web pages should be carefully selected based on the above issues.

### **Defined Purpose**

A Web page must have a clearly defined purpose that is published on the Web page. Included in the purpose, the target audience must be specified and defined; however, all Web site users are reminded that their audience includes the worldwide community.

### **Content Standards**

All subject matter on Web pages should relate to curriculum, instruction, general information supporting student safety, growth, and learning, and district authorized information. Therefore, neither staff nor students may publish on the district server personal pages or pages for individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the district. Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class

project, course, or other school-related activity. Parent groups, partnerships, and municipal or educational cooperatives are considered affiliates of the district. No confidential information is to be published on the district website.

### **Quality Standards**

All Web page work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Documents may not contain objectionable material or link directly to objectionable materials. (Objectionable material is addressed in more detail in the school committee policy for instructional material selection and reconsideration.) Authors and publishers are reminded that a Web page is a virtual doorway to a school. Schools will be judged by web pages, ease for the user, the design, and the content. It is strongly recommended that a school form a page design committee of interested individuals including staff, administrators, parents, students, and community members for the development of a Web page. Thoughtful consideration should go into decisions regarding purpose, usefulness, and appearance of each item on a Web page. As the district represents itself to the world through this medium, assurances should be provided that students are the focus of the Gardner Public School District. Written student and parent consent must be secured for publication of student work.

### **Consistency Standards**

Each existing school or department Web site shall have a link to the district Web site. For consistency, all school district Web page(s) must contain certain elements:

- All WebPages must include: the author's or publisher's name; the publisher's or school's e-mail address; appropriate copyright citations.
- On each page there must be a link to the home page.
- At the bottom of the Web page, there must be an indication of the date of the last update to that page and the name or initials of the person(s) responsible for page update. It shall be the owner of the Web page's responsibility to keep the information current. Repeated failure to do so may result in revocation of approval. It is strongly recommended that a building set up a system of checks and balances for the Web page(s) (for example: all incoming e-mail is blind copied to the principal or department head(s)).
- All Web pages must display the name of the Gardner Public School District.
- All Web pages must be clearly identified by the building, department or source.
- Links to student e-mail accounts are not allowed.
- Student information is prohibited from publication, except for the first name and grade level of a student in relation to a student's work.
- Web pages may not contain links to other Web pages not yet completed. If additional pages are anticipated, but not yet developed, the text that will provide such a link should be included. However, the actual link to said page(s) may not be made until the final page is actually in place.
- Authors must exhibit care when creating Web pages with extensive background, large graphics, applets, animation, and audio or video clips. Files should be limited to a reasonable size.

Adoption date: 10/26/98

[Revised: September 2002]

### **504-Information Section**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, is civil rights legislation that protects the rights of persons with disabilities. There are two primary requirements to Section 504 that impact school-age children who have been determined eligible for protection and services under the statute. These include nondiscrimination and the provision of a free appropriate public education. In addition to these two requirements, schools must provide procedural safeguards to

children and their families while providing services and protections. For information on Section 504, please contact the Guidance Office at (phone number).

**Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states, “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual, shall solely by reason of their handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Funds”.**

### **Discipline under Section 504**

Students identified as eligible for protection under Section 504 may not be removed from their educational placement for more than ten school days unless the team of knowledgeable persons first determines that the behavior which resulted in the disciplinary infraction was not linked to the student's disability or to an inappropriate placement. This decision is called a "manifestation determination." The prohibition against removals of more than ten school days also applies to shorter removals which cumulatively total ten (10) school days within a school year and reflect a pattern of exclusion.

An exception to the prohibition against removing students whose behavior is linked to their disability is when the offense concerns drugs or alcohol. If a student with a disability commits an infraction involving illegal drugs or alcohol, he or she may be disciplined by the school to the same extent that a student without disabilities would be disciplined for the same infraction without considering whether the alcohol or drug use is linked to the student's disability or an inappropriate placement.

### **Civil Rights Assurances**

Gardner Public Schools takes an active role in assuring that all educational programs, activities and employment practices are free of civil rights violations. All school programs and practices affirm our non-tolerance of harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or discrimination on those same bases. Disciplinary measures that may be imposed if harassment or discrimination have occurred are contained in our school discipline codes in this handbook.

The following coordinators may be contacted regarding accepting, investigating, and resolving complaints alleging discrimination and harassment:

- ❑ **Title VI: Michael Hurd**—Equal rights and opportunities for all individuals within all school programs.
- ❑ **Title IX: Michael Hurd**—Equal rights and opportunities for all regardless of gender.
- ❑ **Section 504/ADA Coordinator: Michael Hurd**—Equal rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- ❑ **McKinney-Vento Coordinator: John Salovardos**—Education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- ❑ **Title I: Susan Hui**—Ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **School Advisory Council**

The Advisory School Council consists of teachers, staff, parents and a community member. Each year, the number of openings is announced to the school community. The Council serves a vital role in goal setting and produces an annual School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plan is written by the Council, with Faculty input, each year. The full plan is available in the front office. All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome.

### **Waterford Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

The Waterford Street School has always been fortunate to have an active PTO. Annual events sponsored by the P.T.O. include: Waterford School Father and Daughter Dance, The Mother and Son Fun Night, Waterford Book Fair, Shop Til You Drop, and more. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend meetings beginning in the fall. If you are unable to make evening meetings, but would still like to be involved, please contact the office.

### **School Visitors and Volunteers**

Visitors and volunteers are always welcome! Please check-in at the office before going to your child's classroom. Parents who volunteer are required to go through a CORI check.

### **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines have been established to provide a smooth transition for parent volunteers:

- Please stop at the office when you arrive at school. You will need to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.
- Please know that if the teacher is teaching or working with small groups she will speak with you as soon as possible.
- Please be familiar with all classroom policies and procedures. If you have any questions, please ask the teacher or paraprofessional. It will be difficult for the children if a volunteer has a different set of rules than the classroom teacher.
- Please provide assistance to children when needed. You should not be doing the work for them, however helping them with strategies and suggestions.
- Please keep the lines of communication open. If you have questions or concerns, please speak directly with the classroom teacher.
- Please remember that we all need to use positive reinforcement when dealing with children.
- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Please remember to keep children's progress and behavior confidential.

<h3><b>SPECIFIC CURRICULUM NOTES</b></h3>
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#### **Language Arts**

Reading, writing and speaking are all stimulated, fostered and developed at Waterford School. The staff uses a variety of materials in order to better address all learning styles and more successfully meet the needs of all children. Fiction and non-fiction literature is used throughout the school and is integrated into all curricular studies. Phonics instruction is provided through specific instruction. A wide variety of writing process experiences and shared language experiences offer students many opportunities for creative expression.

#### **Writing**

Writing is taught with an emphasis on process and this year with the addition of the LINKS program. Editing, spelling and handwriting are emphasized when a first draft is taken further for development and crafting. Computers are used in different ways across the grades to support the

development of students' writing and engage children in the excitement and rewards of a published piece of work.

### **Reading**

The program is driven by standards of the Commonwealth. Scope and sequence of skills and strategies are consistent across the grades. The Reading Series, Harcourt, is supplemented with both fiction and non-fiction supplemental materials. Students participate in reading groups that are grouped flexibly, utilizing heterogeneous and homogeneous groups.

### **Spelling**

Spelling is a developmental process. It comes more naturally to some because it is directly linked to visual memory and learning styles. Standardized spelling is a tool for communication to an audience; thus children, in due time, need to develop strategies to learn to use standardized spelling. Spelling is taught through direct instruction and through the writing process. Students demonstrate proficiency in spelling when they use standardized spelling consistently in their writing. Standardized spelling is achieved through a variety of methods, which include the editing process, dictionary use, computer spell checks, phonetic rules, peer editing and teacher feedback.

### **Mathematics**

Math is more than just arithmetic. Students need to be encouraged to apply math skills to meaningful real life activities. Understanding and articulating the process for solving math problems is as important as being able to solve them. The staff provides many varied hands-on experiences for children that support and stress the mathematics skills outlined in the NCTM math standards. (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) Many classroom math experiences involve real-life, relevant interactions that are the foundation for all math study.

### **Technology**

The Waterford School Computer Lab and classroom computers provide staff and students with the opportunity to become proficient with technology. The Lab and classroom computers provide many varied computer experiences. All children learn how to use word-processing programs to support their writing experiences. ClarisWorks, HyperStudio, CD ROM, multi-media presentation tools and graphics software are just some of the programs available to staff and students. There are computers in each of the classrooms. Students also utilize Computer Curriculum Corporation (SuccessMaker) for reading and math as well as an extensive Accelerated Reader Program for all grade levels. Lexia Early Reading and Lexia Primary Reading computer programs are used by identified students. English In A Flash is utilized by students who speak English as a second language.

### **Science and Social Studies**

Units of study in Science and Social Studies are integrated into other areas of the curriculum. Teachers at each grade level have worked and are implementing the topics that correlate with their grade levels.

### **Library**

The library provides rich resources to support our curriculum and is at the heart of the school. As our library continues to grow, we aim to have it be an even more powerful resource for staff and students.

## **Homework**

Teachers may give students homework for a variety of reasons. Their homework decisions are influenced by each particular group of children and grade level, curricular reasons and their own teaching style. Waterford teachers are committed to informing families about curriculum and will provide tools to help families remain involved with their children's continued academic growth.

Homework when given may serve any of these processes:

1. fosters a partnership between school and families
2. provides opportunities for application of skills and knowledge in contexts beyond the school
3. extends school experiences and learning
4. completes work and projects begun at school
5. reinforces concepts and skills learned at school

Parents have a responsibility to support their children in successfully completing homework by establishing a homework routine and allowing for a quiet environment during homework time. If children are experiencing stresses or having particular issues around homework, parents are responsible to contact the classroom teacher so that parents and teachers can collaborate on strategies to assist children.

## **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

The school expects all students to act in accordance with the following as appropriate for their individual age and experience:

- All members of the Waterford School community will demonstrate respect for themselves and others.
- All members of the Waterford School community will be able to take thoughtful and appropriate academic and social risks, and accept responsibility for their decisions.
- All members of the Waterford School community will demonstrate initiative and persistence in learning with a positive outlook.

The school expects all adults in the Waterford Community to model these values in their own behavior and interactions within the school. Everyone in the school community is expected to support and remind children of their responsibility to uphold these values.

### **General Prohibitions**

Students are not permitted to:

1. Leave school property without permission.
2. Bring weapons or other potentially dangerous objects to school.
3. Throw snowballs, stones and other objects, other than balls.

### **Expectations for Student Behavior in the Cafeteria**

- use polite language such as, "please," "thank you," "excuse me," etc.
- sit while eating
- use quiet voices
- clean up properly
- wait patiently for dismissal

### **Expectations for Lunch Recess Behavior**

- share areas and equipment
- remain in specified playground area
- use fair play with all games
- respect the rights of all students
- put equipment away when finished
- use playground equipment safely – especially swings and bars

### **Expectations for Behavior in Common Areas**

- walk at a casual pace
- speak softly
- hold doors open for others
- walk up and down the stairs quietly

### **School Bus Behavior**

Many children are on buses at the same time. The bus driver must concentrate on driving the bus in order to keep children safe. Children are expected to behave in an orderly manner while riding the bus and while getting on and off. The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and passengers at all times and is expected to insure the safety and well being of the children who ride the bus. Children are expected to observe the following rules and safety procedures written by Robert Millen, Safety Officer of the Weston Police Department and Philip Johnson, Transportation Coordinator of the Weston Public Schools:

1. Remain seated. Do not change seats. Do not stand in the aisle.
2. Keep the noise down as much as possible. Loud talking or hollering distracts the driver.
3. When crossing railroad tracks keep quiet. The driver has to listen for trains. This is the law.
4. Keep the aisles clear. Do not put objects in the aisle.
5. Keep your legs in front of you. Do not block the aisle for others.
6. Do not eat food or drink beverages on the bus. Never throw anything out the windows.

The expectations the teachers and staff have for student behavior are founded in part on the strong belief that if adults expect responsible, appropriate behavior, children will act accordingly. The teachers and staff also believe that their expectations for student behavior will promote these school goals:

1. Foster a positive self-image on the part of all students.
2. Encourage sensitivity to others, curiosity, responsibility, creativity and self-discipline in all students.
3. Endeavor to have school be a satisfying and enriching experience for all students.
4. Encourage students, parents and staff to work together as interdependent members of one community.

### **School Playground** – Students play on the playground.

All students are monitored by lunch and/or classroom assistants while on the playground. Recess is a time when students' activities are less structured than during other times during the school day. Therefore, it is imperative that the following recess guidelines are understood and adhered to by all members of the Waterford Community:

- Students are respectful of everyone on the playground.

- If students encounter difficulties on the playground they can speak with the adult on duty or their classroom teacher after the recess period is over.
- Students must work out any difficulties in a respectful manner and must ask for assistance if necessary.
- Any student who initiates or takes part in a physical fight with intent to injure will be sent to the office, their parents will be called and the student(s) will leave school for the remainder of that school day. A meeting between the principal, student(s) and their parents will take place the following morning.

### Winter Recess

During the winter months we engage in outdoor recess when temperature is 25 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Students should be prepared with boots, snow pants, mittens/gloves and hats. Students who wear snow pants and boots will be allowed to play in the snow.

#### No School Signals

6:00 A.M. School cancellations broadcast regularly over the following stations:

Radio	WBZ (1030 AM) Boston	TV	Channel 4
	WHDH (850 AM) Boston		Channel 5
	WEIM (1280 AM) Fitchburg		Channel 7

Parents are urged not to call the Gardner police or fire departments to determine whether or not schools have been canceled.

## STUDENT SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Students may be suspended from attendance at school on authority of the building principal or the superintendent. In the judgment of the administration, expulsions shall be imposed only for instances of serious misbehavior that warrants a severe punishment.

There are two levels of disciplinary infractions that could result in school expulsion. One level would be “repeated disciplinary problems.” A secondary level would be the occurrence of a “major disciplinary infraction.”

### Level 1 – Repeated Disciplinary Infractions

1. A school principal has the authority to hold a student expulsion hearing and recommend that a student be expelled from school. The results of a principal’s expulsion hearing may be appealed to the school superintendent upon request.
2. Upon the third or subsequent suspension from school, the principal will report in writing the status of a student’s disciplinary situation to the school superintendent. Included in this report is a recommendation that a superintendent’s level hearing must be held immediately or will be held upon the fourth disciplinary infraction.
3. With the written consent of parents, all parties can waive the principal’s hearing level and proceed directly to the school superintendent’s level.

4. When either a principal's or superintendent's level hearing is held, the Gardner School Committee will be apprised that an expulsion hearing is convened as well as the final results of the hearing.
5. At the conclusion of the hearing, a student will be deemed to either:
  - a. Permanently expelled from school.
  - b. Found to be acceptable for regular school attendance.
  - c. Allowed to continue in school with carefully delineated written requirements.
6. The superintendent's level disciplinary hearing is considered the terminal point of the student appeal process.

**Level 2 – Major Disciplinary Infraction**

1. Students previously expelled from another school system seeking admission to Gardner Public Schools will not be accepted for local admission.
2. “Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94c, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
3. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, dean, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.” (source: MGL, Chapter 71, Section 37h)
4. All of the procedural steps in Level 1 infractions will apply to the major disciplinary infraction policy.

[Adopted: 4/10/00]

[Revised: October 2003]

Legal References: M.G.L. 71:84; 71:85, 76:16; 76:17, 71:37H

**SPECIAL EDUCATION DISCIPLINE**

All students are expected to meet the standards of behavior required by the district and the individual schools within the district. There are, however, some specific considerations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. In general, if a special education student has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove a student from his or her current educational placement for a period not to exceed ten cumulative school days in any school year. If a student is suspended for more than ten cumulative days in a school year, some special education services will be provided.

If a special education student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school sponsored event, carries a weapon to school or school function, or inflicts serious bodily injury on any student or staff member, the school district may place a special education student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 calendar days. If a special education student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 days. Thereafter, the special education student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless either a hearing officer orders another placement or the parent(s) agrees to another placement.

If a special education student is removed from his or her current educational placement for more than ten consecutive days in any school year, or for more than ten cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring, this constitutes a “change of placement.” A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These protections include the following:

Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement an IEP Team meeting must be convened to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing s behavior intervention plan. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team shall review its implementation and modify the plan as necessary. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, a full statement of procedural rights will be sent to the parent(s). The parent(s) will be informed that the Team will consider whether the behavior that forms the basis for removal is related to the student’s disability. This consideration is called the “manifestation determination” decision. The parent has the right to be part of this Team and the decision-making process.

The Team will consider evaluation and observation information as well as the student’s IEP and placement in order to determine whether the behavior prompting disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student’s disability. The Team will consider if the student understood the impact and consequences of the behavior and if the student’s disability impaired his or her ability to control the behavior in question.

If the Team determines that the *behavior in question was related to the student’s disability* then the student will not be removed from his or her current educational placement (except in the case of a weapon, inflicting serious bodily harm, or drug possession or use) until the Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement with parental consent. If the Team determines that the *behavior was not related to the student’s disability* then the student might be suspended or otherwise disciplined according to the district and school’s code of conduct. For any period of removal exceeding ten days, however, the special education student must continue to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). The Team must determine the educational services necessary for FAPE and for the manner and location of these services.

All students are expected to abide by the code of conduct described in this handbook. Should a student with a disability require modification of this code because the student’s behavior was determined by the TEAM to be a manifestation of the disability, the modification(s) will be clearly described in the student’s Individual Education Plan.

If a parent(s) disagrees with the Team’s decision of manifestation determination or with a placement of a student in an interim alternative educational setting or any other disciplinary action, the parent(s) has the right to request an expedited hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

## ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Parents have the right to review their children’s records and may come into the school to do so. Under federal and state law, divorced or separated parents, too, have access to their students’ records. Please call the office for the procedure to be followed. Note, that when a non-custodial parent requests records, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent of the receipt of the request.

**Amendment to the Student Handbook 2004-2005**  
**ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT: STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES**

**General Statement**

The Gardner Public School district is committed to protecting the rights of all individuals within the school district to work and learn in an environment that is free of harassment.

Harassment on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability in any form will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures, physical contact and the display or circulation of written materials or pictures which are derogatory to either gender, or are derogatory to racial, ethnic or religious groups, or are derogatory to an individual's age, sexual orientation or disability.

**Definitions of Harassment**

*Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students that:*

1. is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or an employee's ability to undertake his/her job responsibilities, or creates an intimidating, hostile, threatening or abusive educational or work environment; or,
2. interferes with a student's academic performance or learning opportunities; or interferes with an employee's work, continued employment or advancement opportunities.

Harassment of any kind, including bullying and teasing, will not be tolerated.

*Bullying.* In light of ever expanding means of electronic communications by cell phone and the use of the Internet (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, My Space), on April 13, 2010, Governor Patrick signed legislation, Chapter 74 of the Acts of 2010, which added instant and text messages, email and other electronic communications to the existing criminal law that prohibits sending obscene and harmful materials to minors. See MGL Chapter 272 Section 28 and Section 29. The bill addressed a loophole in the current statutory scheme and broadens the definition of what type of communications may be deemed obscene or harmful to minors whether it be sent by an adult or another student.

Furthermore, the issue of bullying and cyberbullying in *all* forms is an expanding area of liability, based on the bullying legislation recently signed by Governor Patrick on May 3, 2010, which will take effect at the beginning of the next school year.

The definition of bullying is: the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that (1) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (2) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (3) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (4) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (5) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The legislation also defines “cyberbullying” as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (1) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (2) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation created any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (1) to (5), inclusive of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on a electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (1) to (5), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

*Examples:*

- Teasing that humiliates or hurts another
- Intimidation, either physical or psychological
- Threats of any kind, stated or implied
- Assaults on students, including those that are verbal, physical, psychological, or emotional
- Attacks on students’ belongings

*Sexual Harassment.* "Sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and/or other verbal conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment can occur adult to student, student to adult, adult-to-adult, student-to-student, male to female, female to male, female-to-female, and/or male-to-male. Sexual harassment can be based on gender or sexual orientation.

*Examples*

- Telling sexual jokes or stories
- Making sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or appearance
- Repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested
- Telling lies, spreading rumors, or gossiping about any person's sexual life
- Whistling, catcalls, making kissing sounds, smacking lips
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving sex, gender or sexual orientation
- Following a person or blocking a person's path
- Drawing or displaying sexually explicit or suggestive posters, cartoons, pictures, calendars, designs on clothing, or other similar materials
- Staring or leering with sexual overtones, making sexual gestures with hands or body movements
- Giving unwanted gifts of a personal or suggestive nature
- Unwanted touching of people, their hair, or their clothing
- Unwanted hugging, kissing, pinching, patting, or stroking
- Assault, attempted rape, or rape

Teen dating violence. Teen dating violence is actual or threatened psychological, physical, sexual, or economic abuse of an individual by someone with whom s/he is on a date, or with whom s/he has, or has had, an intimate relationship. The specific behaviors covered by this definition range from verbal and emotional abuse, to physical assault, to rape and murder.

Any sexually harassing behaviors that occur within the context of a dating or intimate relationship context are examples of teen dating violence. In addition, the following behaviors are also examples of teen dating violence:

Verbal/Nonverbal/Written:

- Use of put-downs, insults, name-calling, swearing, or offensive language
- Screaming or yelling at another
- Making threats, being intimidating or getting friends to threaten or scare another

Physical:

- Hitting, punching, pinching, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, kicking, choking, pulling hair, biting, throwing things, arm-twisting
- Intimidation, blocking exits, punching walls, knocking things around
- Damaging or destroying another's property
- Restraining, pinning someone to the wall, blocking someone's movements
- Stalking of an individual by someone who maintains unwanted physical proximity, though not necessarily visible, causing that individual emotional and/or physical discomfort

Harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion or disability. Harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion or disability is unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct relating to the characteristics of a person's race, color, national origin, religion, or disability that:

- a. unreasonably interferes with an individual's educational or work performance; or
- b. creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

*Examples of harassment based on race or color:*

- Using nicknames that emphasize racial stereotypes
- Graffiti containing racially offensive language
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving race or color
- Racial slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's race or color
- Written or graphic material containing racial comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading members of specific racial or ethnic groups
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, race or color

*Examples of harassment based on national origin or religion*

- Comments on a manner of speaking or proficiency with the English language
- Negative comments regarding surnames, customs, and/or language

- Graffiti containing offensive language which is derogatory to others because of their national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving national origin or religion
- Threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Jokes or rumors based upon an individual's national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Written or graphic material containing comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading individuals or members of specific ethnic or religious groups
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, national origin, ethnicity, or religion

*Examples of harassment based on disability*

Disability harassment includes harassment based on a person's disabling mental and/or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition.

Imitating manner of speech or movement:

- Interfering with necessary equipment
- Bullying
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving physical and/or mental disability
- Threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's physical and/or mental disability
- Jokes or rumors based on an individual's physical and/or mental disability
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, an individual's physical and/or mental disability
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by an individual's physical and/or mental disability

The above referenced descriptions of inappropriate conduct represent examples, and are not intended to serve as an all-inclusive list.

If you are unsure as to whether you have been a victim of any form of harassment, or if you have knowledge of an incident of harassment, you must contact your school principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, or other appropriate school staff member with any questions that you may have.<sup>1</sup>

Because what may be acceptable behavior to one individual may not be acceptable to others, all employees and other members of the school community should aspire to the highest standards of respectful, appropriate and professional behavior. For example, ethnic or racial jokes and remarks or sexually oriented gestures or pictures are often offensive to others, and thus should not occur within the Gardner Public Schools. The members of the school community include the School Committee, School Councils,

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1. adapted from Revere Public Schools

Administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, volunteers and authorized visitors, contractors or vendors while they are engaged in school-related activities.

## **Responsibilities and Procedures (harassment)**

Individuals who believe they have been harassed should bring the matter to the attention of an administrator so that appropriate action may be taken at once. *(The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible handling all complaints by students alleging harassment. From School Committee Policy Manual)*

### **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints**

#### **A. Reporting Complaints**

Any member of the school community who believes that s/he has been the victim of harassment (as defined above) by an administrator, teacher, pupil, visitor, or other personnel of the Gardner Public Schools, or who has knowledge of any of the above, must report the alleged acts as soon as possible.

A harassment complaint may be made to the principal, Assistant Principal, or his/her designee. If the complaint involves a staff member, the complainant should file their report with either the building principal; the superintendent of schools (978-632-1000); or the Title IX/Chapter 622 coordinator, (978-632-1000), at 70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA.

Upon receiving a complaint, whoever receives it, will immediately notify the building principal, who will oversee an investigation and who will serve as the complaint hearing officer. The building principal or designee will address the concern in a timely manner. Within ten (10) working days, the principal will forward all formal complaints to the Title IX/Chapter 622 Coordinator and, if warranted, the superintendent of schools.

#### **B. Investigation**

The principal or designee will consider every report of harassment seriously and will investigate all reports in a timely manner. The Title IX/Chapter 622 Coordinator and other staff will assist the school hearing officer, as needed, in the investigative procedures and identification and delivery of all necessary services to concerned individuals.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the alleged harasser, and any other individuals who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the principal or designee should consider the surrounding circumstances, any relevant documents, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the relationships between the parties involved. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances. Special care will be taken to make sure that the person(s) accused of harassment has full and fair opportunity to explain his/her side of the story.

In the event that students are involved in allegations as victim, perpetrator, or witnesses, the principal will notify the parents and/or guardians of the allegations in a timely manner using appropriate discretion in the notification.

Whenever possible, the principal will complete the investigation and report within ten (10) school days after the complaint has been filed indicating whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual or not. There will be no reprisal against the person filing the complaint whether or not the complaint is sustained. **If the allegations are sustained, the principal, or in a case against an employee, the Superintendent (or designee) must take immediate corrective and/or disciplinary action to resolve the situation.** Such action may include, but is not limited to, requiring an apology, direction to stop the offensive behavior, counseling or education, warning, suspension, exclusion, transfer, expulsion, or discharge.

As soon as the investigation is completed, all formal records of harassment will be forwarded to the Title IX/Chapter 622 coordinator. Access to these records will be limited to the superintendent and the Title IX/Chapter 622 coordinator. Anyone who is disciplined under this procedure will have the right to appeal to the superintendent of schools within ten (10) working days of receipt of the concluding report.

Alleged abuse by a parent, guardian, school staff, or other caretaker will be reported to the Department of Social Services according to school policy and procedure. If allegations warrant, the local law enforcement agency will be notified.

#### C. Confidentiality

The Gardner Public Schools recognizes that both the complainant and the alleged harasser have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and all witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate.

#### IV. **Provision against retaliation**

**Retaliation against a complainant or witnesses will not be tolerated.** The Gardner Public Schools will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school community member who retaliates against:

- any person who reports alleged harassment
- any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of harassment
- any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing related to an allegation of harassment

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

#### V. **Dissemination of procedure**

This procedure will be included in all handbooks (faculty and student) and will be made available in all main offices. Faculty members, parents and students will be informed of this procedure annually. Faculty members will be trained in the identification and prevention of all of the types of harassment discussed in this document. Students will receive age-appropriate anti-harassment training.

## **DUE PROCESS/STUDENT APPEAL**

In *Goss v Lopez*, the United States Supreme Court held that before a student receives a disciplinary penalty, he/she has the constitutional right to receive:

1. oral or written notice of the charges against them;
2. an explanation of the evidence against them and
3. the opportunity to present their side of the story.

In the case of a violation requiring suspension from school, notice of the suspension and the hearing must occur before the student may be asked to leave school, except when students present an immediate threat to school officials, other students, or themselves, or clearly endanger the school environment. In this case, the hearing may be delayed, but must be held within a reasonable period of time. Copies of reports of any disciplinary action(s) taken are maintained until student graduation.

Gardner Public Schools Harassment Form  
Student/Staff Complaint

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is responsible for the harassment? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the harassment. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

Date(s), time(s), and place (places) the harassment occurred.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were there other individuals involved in the harassment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did anyone witness the harassment? Y N If so, name the witnesses. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe any prior incidents with the same student(s). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Staff member reported to: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff member referral: Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, Principal (circle)

Reason for the referral: \_\_\_\_\_

# Signature Page

We have read and discussed the Waterford Street School Handbook with our child/children.

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Child's Signature

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Parent Signature

Please have your child return this page to his/her classroom teacher as soon as possible.