

# Hinsdale School

## Parent Student Handbook

### 2009 to 2010

*Hinsdale students strive to be TRUSTWORTHY, RESPONSIBLE,  
RESPECTFUL, FAIR, CARING, and GOOD CITIZENS!*



**Mr. Matthew O'Connell, Principal**  
15 Hinsdale Avenue  
Winsted, Connecticut 06098  
860-379-5956

## **FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome to Hinsdale School for the 2009-2010 school year. I look forward to a wonderful year working with everyone in our school community. This parent and student handbook contains important policies, rules, and procedures that relate to all aspects of school. I ask you to take the time to read this material as it is important that you understand how it pertains to the day to day events here at school.

Please call me at any time should you wish to discuss anything that you read below. Overall, please remember that these policies are designed to support the work and mission of our staff here. We commit to partnering with you to work positively with your child to attain educational excellence.

I wish you and your family a successful and productive school year and look forward to our work together.

Sincerely,  
Mr. O'Connell

## PREFACE

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superceded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice.

A copy of the Winchester Board of Education Policies may be obtained by contacting Mr. Blaise Salerno, Superintendent of Schools at 201 Pratt Street, Winsted, Connecticut 06098. The phone number is 860-379-0706.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as “you” but rather as “the student,” “students,” or “children.” *Likewise, the term “the student’s parent” may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student.* Both students and parents need to be familiar with the District’s Student Code of Conduct which is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Any changes in policy that affect portions of this handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

**WINCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY REGARDING  
NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The District shall promote nondiscrimination and an environment free of harassment based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status or age or because of the race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status or age of any other persons with whom the individual associates.

In keeping with requirements of federal and state law, the District strives to remove any vestige of discrimination in employment, assignment and promotion of personnel; in educational opportunities and services offered to students; in student assignment to schools and classes; in student discipline; in location and use of facilities; in educational offerings and materials; and in accommodating the public at public meetings.

The Board encourages staff to improve human relationships within the schools and to establish channels through which citizens can communicate their concerns to the administration and the Board.

The Superintendent shall appoint and make known the individuals to contact on issues concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX and other civil rights or discrimination issues. The Board will adopt and the District will publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints.

Federal civil rights laws prohibit discrimination against an individual because he/she has opposed any discrimination act or practice or because that person has filed a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing. ADA further prohibits anyone from coercing, intimidating, threatening or interfering with an individual for exercising the rights guaranteed under the Act.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR SECTION 504, TITLE IX, AND TITLE VII REGULATIONS RE: NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Board of Education does not knowingly condone discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, or age in admission or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs or activities.

Inquiries regarding compliance, including receipt and investigation of any complaint alleging noncompliance may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, or in the Superintendent's absence, the Supervisor of Special Services.

### **APPLICATION OF POLICY GUIDELINES**

The Board of Education recognizes that matters addressed in these Policy Guidelines may also be covered in collective bargaining agreements or other contracts entered into by the Board of Education. If a matter that might otherwise come within these Policy Guidelines is in fact subject to a collective bargaining agreement or other contract then the provisions of that agreement or that contract, including but not limited to the Grievance Procedures contained therein, shall control over any provision contained herein.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- A "grievance" is a complaint by an employee, or group of employees, or a student or group of students based upon an alleged violation of the provisions of Section 504, Title IX, or Title VII.
- The term "employee" is considered to apply to any employee of the Winchester Board of Education.
- The term "student" is considered to apply to any student enrolled in the Winchester Public Schools.
- The term "teacher" is considered to apply to any teacher employed by the Winchester Board of Education.  
*NOTE: The "teacher", "employee", or "student" may include a group of teachers or a group of employees or a group of students who are similarly affected by a grievance.*
- An "aggrieved person" is the person or persons making the claim. The term "days", when used in this article, shall, except when otherwise indicated, mean working days.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to the problems which may arise under the provisions of Section 504, Title IX, or Title VII.

The parties agree that these proceedings shall be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure.

Nothing herein contained shall be construed as limiting the right of the complainant having a problem to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the administration.

Any complainant shall have the right at any time to present any grievance to such persons and through such channels as are designated for that purpose in this article.

### **TIME LIMITS**

Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered as a maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The time limits specified may, however, be extended by mutual agreement in writing.

If a complainant does not file a grievance in writing as provided herein within 30 days after the aggrieved person knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based, then the grievance shall be considered waived.

## **INFORMAL PROCEDURE**

Any student, employee or applicant to a program who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or handicap shall contact the building Principal/supervisor within 30 days of the alleged occurrence to discuss the nature of the complaint.

The Principal/supervisor shall maintain a written record which shall contain the following:

1. Full name and address of complainant.
2. Full name and position of person(s) who allegedly discriminated against the complainant.
3. A concise statement of the facts constituting the alleged discrimination.

## **DATES OF THE ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION**

At the time the alleged discrimination complaint is filed, Principal/supervisor shall review and explain the grievance procedures with the complainant and answer any questions. An investigation of the complaint shall begin as soon as practical, but in no case, more than ten (10) working days from the time the complaint was received. Within this time limit, the Principal/supervisor shall meet informally with the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged and shall provide confidential counseling where advisable and shall finally seek an informal agreement between the parties concerned. Every attempt shall be made to seek a solution and resolve the alleged discrimination complaint at this level.

If the complainant is not satisfied with these initial informal procedures, within twenty (20) school days from the date of the original discussion with the principal/supervisor, more formal procedures may be initiated by the complainant to further explore and resolve the problem.

## **FORMAL PROCEDURE**

### **1. Level One - School Principal**

- If a complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of the problem through informal procedures, he/she may submit his/her claim as a formal grievance in writing to the Principal.
- The Principal shall within five (5) days render a decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant, with a copy to the Superintendent of Schools.

### **2. Level Two - Superintendent of Schools**

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance at Level One, or if no decision has been rendered within five (5) days after presentation of the grievance in writing, the complainant may file a written appeal for a hearing by the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) days.
- The Superintendent of Schools shall represent the administration at Level Two of the grievance procedure. Within ten (10) days after receipt of the written appeal for a hearing by the Superintendent, the Superintendent shall meet with the complainant for the purpose of resolving the grievance. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall within three (3) days of the hearing render the decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant.

### **3. Level Three - Board of Education**

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, or if no decision has been rendered within three (3) days after first meeting with the Superintendent, the person may file the grievance again with the Board of Education within five (5) days.
- Within fifteen (15) days after receiving the written appeal, the Board shall meet with the complainant for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The decision of the Board shall be rendered in writing within three (3) days.

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- Decisions rendered at all levels of the formal grievance shall be in writing setting forth the decision and the reasons therefore.
- All documents, communications, and records dealing with the processing of a grievance shall be filed separately from the existing files of the participants.
- Any person may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., at the same time he/she files the grievance during or after use of the grievance process, or without using the grievance process at all. If a complaint is filed with the Office for Civil Rights, it must be filed in writing no later than 180 days after the occurrence of the possible discrimination.
- The Superintendent of Schools is the Title VII and Title IX Coordinators, and he/she can be contacted at (860)379-0706. The Director of Pupil Personnel Services is the Section 504 Coordinator and he/she may be contacted at (860)379-0852.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Principal, Hinsdale School: Mr. Matthew O'Connell, 201 Pratt Street, Winsted, Connecticut 06098. The phone number is 860-379-5423.

Superintendent: Mr. Blaise Salerno, 201 Pratt Street, Winsted, Connecticut 06098. The phone number is 860-379-0706.

Director of Pupil Personnel Services: Ms. Cate Tower, 201 Pratt Street, Winsted, Connecticut. The phone number is 860-379-0852.

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities: 21 Grand Street, Hartford, Connecticut. The phone number is 860-541-3400, Connecticut Toll Free is 800-477-5737. The TDD number is 860-541-3459.

Office for Civil Rights/Boston, U.S. Department of Education: 33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110. The phone number is 617-289-0111.

## **ADMISSION/PLACEMENT**

A student seeking enrollment in Hinsdale School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal.

A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student. After such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child.

Students enrolled in a school identified for school improvement pursuant to federal law may transfer to another public school within the district that has not been identified for school improvement. The transfer will be allowed in accordance with law. Transportation will be provided by the district.

## **ASBESTOS**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The Winchester Public Schools has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Request to review these plans may be made in the school office.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or enrichment to the student community.

Attending assemblies is a privilege, and may be revoked based on poor conduct. If this occurs, the child will be provided with work related to the assembly topic to be completed in school during the assembly time.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

### ***Absences***

Connecticut law requires parents make sure their school age children (as defined by Connecticut General Statute 10-184) attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key ingredient in school success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism, while providing students the opportunity to make-up school work missed due to a legitimate absence.

Given the importance of school attendance, every attempt should be made to bring students to necessary appointments after school, weekends, and during vacation periods.

Should an absence occur it will be classified by the school as **“excused”** or **“unexcused.”**

An absence will be classified as **“excused”** for reasons such as: *illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, or an emergency or other exceptional circumstance*. All other absences will be classified as **“unexcused.”**

### ***Tardiness***

Students who are not in the school building by 8:50 are considered **tardy** and must report directly to the office. Tardy students will be asked to sign in and will be given a “late pass” to take to class.

### ***Truancy***

A student will be identified as truant when he/she has four (4) unexcused absences in one month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year. In addition, a student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant. Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. A parent meeting will be called to help solve the problem. This may involve support from appropriate school personnel and/or referral to appropriate community agencies.

The Superintendent of Schools will file a written complaint with Superior Court Juvenile Matters if a parent fails to cooperate with the school in trying to solve the student's truancy problems.

### ***Make-Up Work***

All efforts shall be made to provide children with make up work that is missed due to being absent from school. The responsibility for completing make-up work lies with the student. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied make-up work privileges. Such absences may also be reflected in the student's final grade.

### ***Reporting an Absence***

When an absence is absolutely necessary, parents are requested to call the school by 9:00 AM of the day of the absence. A message can be left on the school answering machine any time before this. A parent calling the school to report an absence should give ***the child's name, the child's teacher, his or her name, relationship to the child, the date of absence, and the reason for the absence.***

### ***Arrival and Departure from School***

Our bus transportation is provided by **First Student** and coordinated there by Jody Audia. She can be reached at 379-0020. It is preferred that you call or e-mail the principal first with any questions or concerns before calling the bus company directly.

### ***Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students from School***

Under no circumstance may a student leave school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents and school administration. If it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent should send a written request to the office. Most times, parents will send in a note with the child on the day of the early dismissal. The parent may then arrive at the office, and the child will be dismissed from class. The parent must then sign the child out of the office.

Telephone requests for early dismissal or simply arriving—without notice—to pick up a child is discouraged. Such action should be reserved for true emergency or unusual situations. In the case of a telephone request for early dismissal, no action will be taken unless the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent. The office staff may ask the caller for an identifying piece of student information—i.e. social security number—as a safety check.

A parent may provide a written request to have someone else pick up their child. Again, a prior written request should be used as notice, and not a telephone call, or unannounced arrival.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district.

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Winchester Board of Education holds regular business meetings in the town hall. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

The Board's main purpose is policy setting in order to facilitate high levels of student achievement. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

The Winchester Board of Education meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at Town Hall at 7:00 PM.

Members:

Rose Molinelli—Chairperson	James DiVita
Richard Dutton	Raymond Neal
Christine Royer	Karen Beadle
Susan Hoffnagle	Paul O'Meara
Cheryl Bartley	

## **BULLYING**

In accordance with Connecticut Public Act 02-119 and Winchester Public Schools Bullying Policy 5131.1, bullying will not be tolerated.

Bullying behavior is defined as any overt acts by a student or groups of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity, which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Such behavior will result in disciplinary action. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks.
2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based or gender-based put-downs.
3. Threats and intimidation.
4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions.
5. Exclusion from peer groups within schools.

### ***Reporting Procedures***

Any person who believes he or she has been a victim of bullying may report the matter to any teacher or member of the school district administration. Any school employee, contractor, or volunteer with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying, whether by witnessing such conduct or by receiving student reports of bullying, shall report the alleged act immediately to any appropriate school district official designated by this policy. Students may anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. Parents or guardians of students may also file written reports of suspected bullying.

The building administration is responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the building level. However, any person may report bullying directly to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The building administration will notify the Superintendent and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services of any reported incidents of bullying.

Teachers, administrators, other employees of the school district, volunteers and contractors shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include bullying. Any such individual, who receives a report of, observes, or who otherwise acquires knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute bullying must inform the building administration immediately.

### ***School District Action***

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, school officials shall undertake or authorize an investigation.

If, upon investigation, it is determined that bullying has occurred, the superintendent or his/her designee will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations.

The parent or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed shall be notified by the superintendent or his/her designee of the results of the investigation. The notification shall include a description of the response of school staff to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying.

A list of the verified number of acts of bullying shall be maintained and shall be available for public inspection.

The superintendent shall be responsible for developing an intervention strategy for school staff to deal with bullying.

### **CAFETERIA**

The rules governing cleanliness, good manners, and respectful conduct in the cafeteria are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for forfeiting the right to eat in that location, as well as any other discipline necessary. To help facilitate order, all students will have an assigned seat, which may be rotated periodically as the year progresses.

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained by calling the Food Service Director at 738-9304.

Students will be able to charge two lunches and then a post card bill will be sent to students. If payment is not received a follow up letter will be sent from the Principal with the total amount due. Students may only be permitted to charge a reduced lunch if outstanding charges are not paid promptly.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

Teachers, principals, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and licensed nurses are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff is trained to follow them.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, and deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect is also considered child abuse.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Every effort will be made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Parents will have an opportunity to provide information relative to placement. The final decision for placement rests with the principal or his/her designee.

### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that e-mail communications, using district computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

#### ***Internet Usage***

The Internet shall be used to support education and research, consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Before any student uses the Internet at the Hinsdale School, they must sign a **"Student Internet Policy/Student Internet User Agreement Form"** which states that the student (and parents) have read the **Internet Use Rules and Responsibilities**, and have agreed to the terms and conditions outlined.

#### ***Internet Use Rules and Responsibilities***

Students are responsible for good behavior on computer networks just as they are in a classroom setting. Communications on the network are often of a public nature. General rules for behavior and communications apply. Internet access is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others in relation to school work. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, based upon the acceptable use outlined in this document, the system administrators will deem what is an appropriate use and their decisions are final. The system administrators may close an account at any time. The administration of Hinsdale School may deny, revoke, or suspend user accounts.

Individual users of the internet are responsible for their use of the network. The use of their account must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with academic expectations of the Internet. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material

in violation of U.S. or state regulations including copyrighted, threatening, or obscene materials is prohibited. Use for commercial activities by for-profit organizations, product promotion, political lobbying, or illegal activities are strictly prohibited.

The user is expected to abide by the following network rules of etiquette:

1. Be polite. Do not write or send abusive messages.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
3. Transmission of obscene materials is prohibited. Sending or receiving offensive messages or pictures from or to any source will result in immediate suspension of Internet privileges.
4. Do not reveal the personal address or phone number of yourself or theirs.
5. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. The people who operate the system do have access to all mail. Inappropriate messages can result in suspension of privileges.
6. Do not use the system in such a way that it would disrupt the use of the network by others.
7. Vandalism – any malicious attempt to alter or destroy data of another user – will not be tolerated.

Any questionable action may result in the cancellation of user privileges.

Violation of any of the above mentioned rules and responsibilities will result in a loss of access and may result in other disciplinary or legal actions.

## **CONDUCT--STUDENTS**

At Hinsdale School, we believe in setting positive expectations in all areas. In general, our positive expectations center on the six components of good character: Students are expected to be **Responsible, Respectful, Caring, Trustworthy, Fair, and Good Citizens.**

In general, students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. Students who violate school rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

### ***Dangerous Weapons/Instruments***

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as appropriate disciplinary action.

The list of dangerous weapons/instruments and other prohibited items includes but is not limited to: guns, martial arts weapons, tobacco products, facsimiles of weapons, firecrackers, sling shots, cap guns, matches, lighters, drugs and alcohol, facsimiles of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, BB guns, razor blades/box cutters, knives of any size or kind, and chains.

Please refer to the Winchester Public Schools policies #5131.3 and #5131.7 or contact the administration if you have any questions.

### ***Other Prohibited Items***

This list is more typical of the common issues encountered at the elementary level. These items are prohibited at school.

Trading cards, candy and gum, toys and games.

Also, students are not permitted to possess such items as cell phones, laser pointers, beepers or remote paging devices while on school property, on school transportation, or while attending a school sponsored activity on or off school property. ***The principal may grant written permission for the possession of a cell phone based on a parent request regarding a legitimate safety concern.*** In this case, the Principal may require that the cell phone be checked in with the teacher in the morning before the opening bell and returned after the final bell.

In addition, radios, CD players, I-Pod type devices, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, or electronic games are not permitted at school.

Inappropriate items—such as the type listed in the “more typical” list above—will be collected by teachers and turned into the principal. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day to be taken home by the student or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item.

## **DISCIPLINE**

A student who violates the district’s code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates publicized board of education policy.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:

Student Counseling	After School Detention	Expulsion
Verbal Warning	Removal of Privileges	Referral to Police
Written Warning	School Community Service	
Parental Contact	Financial Restitution	
Writing Assignment Related to Misconduct	In-School Suspension	
Office Detention	Out-of-School Suspension	
Removal from Class		

### ***Removal of Privileges***

This includes recess, special school events, field days, and field trips or class activities.

### ***After School Detention***

A student may be detained outside of school hours on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until a student’s parent has been notified of the reason for the detention and the parent can make arrangements for the student’s transportation on the day(s) of the detention.

### ***Removal from Class***

Any teacher may remove a student from the classroom when such student deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom. The student should be sent to the office or a pre-designated, supervised location. Whenever a teacher removes a student from the classroom, he or she shall immediately inform the principal of the student’s name and the reason for the disciplinary action taken.

### ***In-School Suspension***

The student is assigned to a supervised room and will complete a program that may include completing class work, community service, academic skills practice, and processing the reason for the suspension. Failure to cooperate with the in-school suspension requirements will result in an out of school suspension. Parents/Guardians will be called to school to pick their child up from school.

### ***Out-of-School Suspension***

The student is suspended from school. An out-of-school suspension is a very serious consequence. Parents/guardians are expected to pick up their child if he/she is suspended from school.

### ***Expulsion from School***

The student is excluded from school for an extended period of time—the maximum being the total number of days in a school year. Expulsion results when the student’s behavior continues to disrupt the learning environment or constitutes a serious violation of Board of Education policy. In these cases the Principal will make a recommendation of expulsion to the Superintendent.

## **DRESS**

Children should come to school dressed in clean, comfortable clothing which allows them to participate in the many types of activities that occur during the elementary school day. Appearance should reflect that children are in school, ready to work and learn. School dress is different than typical dress for the mall, a concert, a party or the beach.

Student dress may be regulated and restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive, or contrary to law. In any instance in which there appears to be a question, the administration reserves the right to make the final judgment. In addition, the administration reserves the right to expand the dress code as dress fashions and fads evolve and change to include attire not listed specifically below, but which is inappropriate.

## ***GENERAL REQUIREMENTS***

### ***CONDITION AND FIT***

Clothing should be neat, clean and free of any rips, tears, and/or holes.

Clothing should fit, not be oversized, or too tight. Pants should be secured at the waist and not drag on the floor or extend past the heel of the shoe.

### ***COVERAGE***

Clothing should be modest and appropriately cover the back, shoulders, chest, midriff, buttocks, and all undergarments—especially when making a normal range of movement needed in school—such as raising your hand in class. Shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses must cover to the mid-thigh or below.

Therefore, low cut, partially cut or otherwise revealing clothing that exposes these areas will not be permitted. See through or mesh type clothing is not permitted unless worn over other solid clothing.

### ***CONTENT—GRAPHICS OR WRITING***

Graphics or writing on clothing or other personal items should be appropriate for school. Graphics or writing that symbolize, glorify, or suggest tobacco, alcohol, or drug use, sex, violence, gangs, activity illegal to minors is not permitted.

In addition graphics or writing on clothing that is threatening, rude, has a double meaning, or is disrespectful will not be permitted.

## ***SAFETY CONCERNS***

### ***SHOES***

Shoes should be appropriate for the normal activities of elementary school—for example, boarding a bus, walking up and down stairs, or playing at recess.

Sneakers are generally the best for overall wear, however, any shoe, as long as it has a back—or a strap—and a closed toe is permitted.

Open toed or un-backed shoes—such as flip-flops—are not permitted. High heeled shoes, slippers, rubber shoes perforated with holes, or shoes with retractable wheels, are not permitted. In addition, shoes must be fastened correctly.

### ***WEATHER***

Clothing must be appropriate and safe given the weather conditions. In other words, shorts and a t-shirt may be inappropriate if worn on a cold winter day.

### ***ITEMS NOT PERMITTED***

*Specifically, the following items are not permitted as they tend to be unsafe and or disruptive of the educational process.*

Sleeveless clothing like halter, tank, spaghetti strap, or muscle shirts. Clothing must have enough sleeve material to cover the shoulders.

Clothing that has metal studs or chains—including chains connected to wallets.

Clothing with oversized writing or graphics across the seat.

Oversized jewelry—for example, large necklaces with heavy ornaments.

Excessive amounts of jewelry—for example, many rings or bracelets that may interfere with writing or be a distraction.

Head or face coverings—including hats, bandannas, and sweatbands, and sunglasses—except when worn for religious or medical reasons. Hoods should not be worn during the school day.

Clothing designed for outerwear being worn inside—such as heavy winter coats.

Stickers, glitter, writing, or graphics worn on the face.

Cosmetics or make-up. Clear lip gloss or clear Chapstick may be worn.

Extreme hair dyeing using unnatural colors—for example bright pink.

### ***CONSEQUENCES***

Students who are in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office and the student's parents will be called. If able, a parent will be asked to bring in a change of clothing, or the student may be asked to wear a substitute item from the nurse's room. If violations persist, students may be given other consequences up to and including suspension.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communications. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

The Superintendent or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate or position.
4. The material does not promote profit making organizations.
5. The material does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbook.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on radio stations WTIC (1080AM) and WZBG (97.3 FM), and local television stations, at regular intervals between 6:30 AM and 8:00 AM.

Out-of-district special education transportation will not be provided when schools are closed due to weather conditions.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources.

Please see pages 4 to 7 of this handbook for further explanation and a copy of the Winchester Board of Education Grievance procedures for Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504.

## **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION**

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian.

## **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided without charge to students. The student may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

1. Club dues.
2. Security deposits.
3. The materials for a class project that the student will keep.
4. Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
5. Voluntary purchases of pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, etc.
6. Insurance on school-owned instruments, instrument rental and uniform maintenance.
7. Fees for damaged library books and school-owned equipment.
8. Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra curricular activities.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. *Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal.* While on a trip, all students are considered to be “in” school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity. In addition, a signed permission slip is needed for a child to attend the field trip. Verbal permission will not be sufficient in this case.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill may be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. When the alarm sounds, students are to move along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

## **FUND-RAISING**

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the Principal at least 30 days before the event. Except as approved by the Superintendent, fund-raising by any group is not permitted on school property.

## **HARASSMENT STATEMENT**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else’s behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or any disability they may have. The District has zero tolerance for harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

Please see pages 4 to 7 of this handbook for further explanation and a copy of the Winchester Board of Education Grievance procedures for Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504.

## **HEALTH PROGRAM**

The major purpose of the school health program is to maintain, improve and promote the health of the child. The program should include adequate supervision of the physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects of school life. A child's good health is the responsibility of the parents of the school age child.

*Physical examinations* are required prior to school entry. These examinations are to be made by the pupil's family physician (free health assessments are provided to students whose parents meet the eligibility requirements under the Connecticut General Statute Section 10-20)

*Vision screening tests* are administered to all pupils annually.

*Hearing screening tests* and tympanometry screenings shall be administered annually to all pupils in kindergarten through grade three. Tympanometry screenings will be done as often as indicated by initial results. In grade 5 hearing screenings will also be administered. Any child suspected of having a hearing loss may be referred for a screening at any time during the school year.

Every child is *weighed and measured* annually.

*Postural screening* will be done annually in grade five.

### ***Illness***

Children who are ill or show signs of becoming ill should not be sent to school. If a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified and will be expected to provide immediate transportation. Parents should ensure that the school has current emergency data for an accident or illness in case there is no one at home. Emergency data forms are sent home every fall for updating; please notify the nurse of subsequent changes.

### ***Accidents***

When a child suffers a serious accident, the parent will be notified immediately. In case of an emergency, it is the parent's responsibility to transport the child for proper medical treatment. If parents cannot be reached, the principal/school nurse will arrange for the child to receive the needed medical attention.

### ***Reporting of Accidents and Insurance***

All accidents which occur at school or en route to or from school are to be reported to the office immediately. If the student is insured under the school accident insurance program, the principal must be given information so that an insurance form may be completed and sent home with the child.

### ***Recess/Gym***

Recess and gym are a valuable and scheduled activity and are a part of the regular school program. Children are expected to come to school properly clothed for weather conditions. Written parental requests for exclusion from recess or gym will be honored for 2 days. Extended exclusion for more than 2 days, requires a physician's written statement.

### ***Medication in School***

Students who are to take prescribed medication during school hours must have medication delivered to the school nurse or the principal by the parent or responsible adult in a properly pharmacy labeled container with the name of the student, physician and date of original prescription and directions. The school nurse and parent or guardian will review the plan for all medication administered at school.

***No medication is to be given in school without a written order from the doctor and authorization by the parent.***

Students are not permitted to carry any medication to school. This includes aspirin, cough drops and all other over the counter medications.

### ***Immunization***

Parents must comply with Connecticut State Statutes concerning immunization of school children. If there are questions concerning immunization requirements contact the school nurse or your family physician.

### ***Allergies***

It is important that the school nurse and staff be alerted to such allergies as bee stings, insect bites, or any severe reaction to foods, medication or environmental substances. If indicated by a physician, emergency medication should be authorized and kept in the nurse's office at school to be administered when needed.

### ***During Vacation Time and Summer***

Many times children have been stricken with a serious illness or communicable disease, sustained a fracture or injury, has had an operation or procedure such as tubes in ears, etc., have seen the doctor and received prescription for glasses or new lenses, or have received an immunization booster during the summer. The nurse should be informed so that medical information can be updated and staff informed when necessary.

### ***Health File***

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education and under the direction of the school nurse.

### ***Communicable/Infectious Diseases***

Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

### ***Disabilities***

The school district will not discriminate on the basis of a disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

### ***Emergency Medical Treatment***

Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency.

### ***Homebound***

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of two weeks or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist or the Planning and Placement Team. Home instruction may also be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

### ***Immunizations***

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Rubella and Hemophilus Influenza Type B.\*

The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records upon entry. Efforts will be made to locate previous records and updated immunization will be required in a timely manner per State of Connecticut regulations.

For further information regarding immunizations contact the school nurse.

***Physical Examinations***

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a) Health assessment shall also be required in grade 6 (or 7) and in grade 10 (or 11).

**HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals.

Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student’s work in school.

Homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday night. Selected long range projects at the upper grade level will be assigned on weekends.

It is expected that each student do his/her own work; however, it is recognized that occasional parent assistance may be needed. As we work to make your youngster as independent a learner as possible, we urge parent help be given judiciously.

Parent awareness and support in relation to completion of homework is most important. Your help in setting the climate, physical space, and time for home study is a key to successful home study. To keep informed and to demonstrate your alliance with the school, a brief check of homework upon its completion is most effective.

The length and type of assignments will vary with the grade level of your youngster and the speed and accuracy he/she brings to each task. The following general guidelines will help you:

***Homework Expectations on Week Nights – Monday through Thursday***

Kindergarten	0 – 15 minutes
Grade 1	15 – 30 minutes
Grade 2	30 – 45 minutes
Grade 3	45 minutes
Grade 4	45 minutes
Grade 5	1 hour

Assignments may include independent reading, creative and expository writing, reinforcement of language, spelling, and math skills and word problem reinforcement. Long range assignments may include book reports, science, social studies, and independent projects.

It is important that you contact your child’s teacher if your youngster is consistently over or under the time guidelines or if your child is consistently having difficulty understanding and/or completing assignments.

**INSURANCE**

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangements are contractual between the parent and insurance carriers, and the Winchester Public School assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

**INVITATIONS**

Students and/or parents may not distribute invitations to out-of-school activities, unless the whole class is being invited. Otherwise, feelings tend to get hurt, and this may cause a disruption in learning.

## **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

Kindergarten registration takes place in April. Information regarding registration procedures is sent home with all Winchester students and published in the newspaper in April. Anyone not receiving such information is requested to contact the principal's office at Batcheller School. Children who will become five years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible to attend Kindergarten beginning in the fall term of that year.

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS**

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, and homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

## **LOITERING/CAUSING A DISTURBANCE**

All visitors must register in the main office. Staff members should be alert to the possibility of unauthorized visitors and promptly report any concerns to the principal. Any person shall be considered loitering on school grounds when he/she loiters or remains in or about a school building or grounds, without any reason or relationship involving custody of or responsibility for a student or any other license or privilege to be there.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in the school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings and from loitering on grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any articles which are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in at the office. Unclaimed articles will be disposed of after each parent conference week to an appropriate charity and at the end of the year. Loss or suspected theft of personal or school property should be reported to the main office.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

Students are invited to use the books, magazines, newspapers, and other materials located in the media center. Students are responsible for any material they sign out. Materials must be returned to the library paraprofessional at the circulation desk. Students must pay for any materials they lose or damage. A student's grades, transcript, or report card may be withheld until a student's obligation is met.

## **MEDIA INVOLVEMENT**

There will be times when the local newspapers or other media representatives will visit the school to feature our students or the school community in a print article or photograph. In addition, teachers sometimes videotape lessons to be viewed by others to improve instructional practice. For permission or denial regarding your child's being photographed, interviewed, and/or videotaped, please indicate your preference on the form that is sent home via your child at the beginning of the school year.

## **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires schools selected to participate in this national testing program to notify parents of children who will be taking the test of their right to exclude their child. Parents also have the right to inspect all NAEP data, questions, and assessment instruments.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference.

A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

The Hinsdale School PTO is a vital link between the school, community, and the parents it serves. Thus, parents are urged to join and take an active part in this organization.

### **PERSISTENTLY DANGEROUS SCHOOLS/VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME**

Students enrolled in a school identified as “persistently dangerous” by the State Department of Education or a student who is the victim of a violent criminal offense, as defined by the State Department of Education, are entitled to transfer to a safe school elsewhere in the district with free transportation.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child’s school assignment area may contact the Principal.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical Education is required of all students. A written parental excuse for a particular reason will be honored for two days. If there is need for a continued excuse, a doctor’s statement must be presented. Elementary children should wear play clothes and sneakers on gym days.

### **PLAYGROUND RULES**

Safety is the overriding concern on the Hinsdale School Playground. At the beginning of each year, students are gathered outside and the rules for playing safely are detailed. In general they include, but are not limited to:

- All students must wear sneakers and appropriate clothing
  - Fashion sneakers, sandals, plastic or leather soled shoes or boots, shoes without ties or straps are not permitted
  - Clothing with drawstrings, oversized shirts, pants or hoods; long dresses or skirts without shorts underneath are not permitted
- Stay within the playground boundaries and in sight of adults on duty
- Do an appropriate activity
  - All forms of football, wrestling, playfighting, and other potentially dangerous contact games are not permitted
- Use the play equipment safely and according to instructions. Mr. Moscaritolo trains each class in this area before they are permitted to use the playscape.
- Do not sit or stand on any top bar of our play equipment
- Report all misconduct and injuries immediately to a duty teacher
- Keep your body—hands/feet—to yourself
  - Gentle tagging is permitted
- Line up by walking when the end of period whistle sounds

Parents are asked to reinforce these rules at home and acknowledge your receipt of this information on our sign off page.

### **POSTERS**

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by the Principal. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed. Any student who posts such material without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

It is the intent of the Board of Education to provide the best possible educational program to each of the students in the Winchester School System by accommodating each individual student’s educational needs. With this in mind, it is necessary to account for those students who do not meet minimum requirements for promotion from grade-to-grade within the system, K-5. For promotion any K-5 student must successfully complete Reading and Mathematics plus another major subject (English, Science or Social Studies) with a yearly average of 70 percent or better for each of the

three major subjects. Each student must attain an average of 65 percent or better per subject in the same period of time in the two remaining major subject areas.

Detection of any problems should occur in the earliest possible grade so that immediate corrective action/program can be undertaken. Students whose promotion is questionable will be referred to their school's Child Study Team.

All procedures pertaining to this policy are considered void in regard to those students diagnosed as in need of special education under Section 10-75 of the General Statutes, 1976 amended, July 1, 1973. Retention and Promotion decisions for those students are under the jurisdiction of a Planning and Placement Team.

If a student fails to meet the above stated promotion policies and there are compelling, mitigating, or extenuating circumstances sufficient to suggest "passing" such student on to the next grade level as determined by the school principal, then this fact should be made known to the Superintendent of Schools, with adequate time for complete investigation of the total circumstances. The Superintendent will then make an appropriate decision.

## **PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT**

Each student is assigned a desk, a classroom cubby, and/or other equipment. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, should be kept in good order, and not abused.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the office immediately if it isn't functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students may not bring in locks from home and attach them to school provided storage areas. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

## **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner.

## **PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES**

### ***Special Education***

The Pupil Personnel Services Department ensures that all children requiring special education and related services receive needed support. A team approach is used in collecting diagnostic data, evaluating the data, and formulating an adequate special program for each identified child. The Pupil Personnel Services Department monitors each child through a Planning and Placement Team, making certain that an adequate education is being provided and that pre-referral interventions have been attempted. Due process procedures are followed.

Diagnostic services are utilized to determine if any child meets the criteria of a handicapping condition recognized by the State of Connecticut. Should a Planning and Placement Team determine a child has a handicapping condition, services will be provided to meet the student's educational needs. Services are provided on a continuum beginning with consultation and ending with full time placement in a segregated setting.

Support services may include: Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Assistive Technology, Speech/Language Therapy and Special Transportation. These services must be related to educational concerns only.

### ***Regarding Gifted and Talented Identification***

It is the policy of Shared Services and the members to comply with all federal and state regulations regarding students with exceptional Learning Ability and/or Outstanding Talent in the Creative Arts. Special Education regulations require that all school age students be identified by the local school district and that a report of these students be made to the Connecticut State Department of Education through the ISSIS system. Although current regulations do not require that services be provided to identified Gifted and Talented students, if the district offers services, appropriate referral must be made to the PPT and an appropriate plan developed.

### ***Contact***

The Department personnel are available to answer your questions and concerns, and provide consultation to facilitate your child's success, socially and emotionally, as well as academically. Parents may refer their child to the Department via classroom teachers, the building principal, or directly to Pupil Personnel Services. If you, as parents, have questions

regarding these programs or services please contact your child's principal, our school psychologist—Mike Weaver—or Pupil Personnel Services at 379-0852.

### **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority. Although the Winchester Public Schools have implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

1. Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
2. Follow the school's code of conduct.
3. Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
4. Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
5. Follow the instructions of staff that are over seeing the welfare of students.

### **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and President's Day are encouraged. Students, faculty, and administration are reminded of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Non-participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH: FREE AND REDUCED PRICE OPTIONS**

Application forms to receive free lunch or lunch at a reduced fee are handed out at the beginning of the school year. These forms are reviewed by the Lunch Program Director and those eligible for the free lunch program are informed at school. The prices of school lunches are posted at the beginning of the year through a press release. Menus are published weekly in the local newspaper, and online at the district website. The lunches are planned to include the four basic food groups to provide the children with a well-balanced meal.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, includes, but is not limited to the following:

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including, insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct; threats or suggestions that a student's submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome conduct will in any way influence a decision regarding that student; conduct of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with the student's learning or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment – such as the display in the educational setting of sexual suggestive objects or pictures.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) when the allegations are not minor and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

Please see pages 4 to 7 of this handbook for further explanation and a copy of the Winchester Board of Education Grievance procedures for Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are: working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's or student's right of access to and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Copies of student records are available at a minimal cost per page, payable in advance. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the Superintendent by October 1, 2009, or within 2 weeks of the entry date for a new student. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

The District will release to the Hinsdale Parent Teacher Organization the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and grade levels of students (unless the Principal is informed by October 1 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTO for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

The district's HIPPA Privacy Officer can be contacted by calling the Board of Education offices at 379-0706.

### **SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns subjects such as religious practice, family income, or student or family psychological issues. In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children.

### **TOBACCO**

Student shall not smoke or use tobacco products on school property or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law.

### **TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.

### **TESTING**

All students in grades 3 through 8 and in grade 10 will participate in the CMT and CAPT programs. Special education students participate in the CMT and CAPT programs except in the rare case when non-participation in the assessment is required by the student's PPT. The graduating class of 2006, and thereafter, must meet district standards for graduation, in addition to required course credits. The CAPT test is one of the measures to be used to determine if students have met the identified standards. Student scores on each component of the CAPT may/shall be included on transcripts and permanent records. Students attending a district school identified under the No Child Left Behind Act for improvement, corrective action or restructuring may, as required by law, may transfer to another district school and/or receive supplementary educational services at district expense in compliance with federal legislation.

### **TEXTBOOK CARE AND OBLIGATIONS**

Students are responsible for the care of books and supplies entrusted to their use. They will be asked to pay for any damage to textbooks, equipment, or materials. In accordance with state law, the school reserves the right to withhold grades, transcripts, or report cards until the student pays for or returns the textbooks, library book or other educational materials.

### **TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES**

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

### **THREATS**

Any student who threatens in any manner, including orally, physically or in writing, harm to the person, or damage to the property of a member of the school community, including any teacher, member of the school administration, or any other employee, or a fellow student, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

In addition, the Superintendent shall refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible criminal prosecution and shall take all available measures to ensure the safety of those in the school community in the event of the student's return to school.

## **TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Students withdrawing from school must notify the office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms for their parents to complete. Included will be a formal written statement of withdrawal and release of records form.

On their last day of attendance, students will be given a form that must be signed by each of their teachers. This form will indicate their grade at the time of withdrawal and that all materials have been returned. Records cannot be forwarded until all materials have been returned.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students assigned to ride a bus must only ride the bus that they are assigned to. There are no exceptions. Emergency child care situations on a certain day may result in the Principal allowing a student to ride another bus home. Please call the Principal the day of the emergency to discuss this. If there is a change in living situations that require a new designation, please contact the school office. Bus concerns may be addressed directly with First Student Bus Company at 379-0020 or by calling Mr. O'Connell.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

Safety during school transportation is a primary consideration for parents/guardians, school authorities and bus operators. Fortunately, most of our students respect and understand what is expected of them. The bus company may use, without prior notice, a video camera or other device to record the conduct of students on their buses. The recording will be used to document inappropriate conduct. The following guidelines have been established and will be enforced.

Students boarding the bus are to go directly to a seat and remain there until reaching their destination and the bus stops moving. Students are not permitted to stand or move to another seat unless directed to do so by the bus driver. Students who are required to cross the street when exiting the bus must cross in front of the bus.

Students are prohibited by state law from throwing objects out of bus windows and extending any portion of her/his body out of an open bus window.

Pushing, hitting, tripping or annoying any other passenger(s) on the bus is not acceptable behavior.

Eating, smoking, or playing with matches, cigarettes, lighters or sharp objects is not permitted.

Students are to refrain from shouting, using profanity, throwing objects or distracting the driver.

Damage done to any portion of the school bus by a particular student is to be paid for by the student or the parent/guardian. Vandalism represents grounds for immediate suspension without the usual warning.

The bus driver is in full charge of the bus and of the students being transported. In accordance with Winchester Public Schools policy #5145, inappropriate behavior on buses will be reported by bus drivers on a District Bus Behavior Slip.

### ***Reports of inappropriate behavior will result in disciplinary action under the policy:***

The first offense is a warning.

The second offense is a three-day suspension from the bus.

The third offense is a two-week suspension from the bus.

The fourth offense is a suspension from the bus for the balance of the school year.

Discipline may be modified for good and sufficient reason.

It will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians to transport their child to and from school on a daily basis for the length of the suspension.

## **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the District Business Manager, at the superintendent's office. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

## **VANDALISM**

The parent of any minor/unemancipated child who willfully cuts, defaces, or otherwise injures in any way any property, real or personal, belonging to the school district shall be held liable for all such damages up to the maximum amount allowed under state law.

The liability provided under Connecticut General Statute 52-572 does not relieve the minor(s) of personal liability for such damage or injury. This liability of the parent for damages done by a minor child is in addition to any other liability that exists in law.

The parent or guardian of a minor child shall also be held liable for all property belonging to the school system lent to the student and not returned upon demand of the school system. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action.

## **VISITORS**

The Board of Education encourages parents, the media, and other interested individuals to visit the schools. The Board believes that there is no better way for the public to learn what the schools are actually doing.

To ensure that schools are not disrupted and that no unauthorized persons enter buildings or grounds with wrongful intent, all visitors to School District facilities and sites shall report to the administrative office of that site upon their arrival. Each school shall post a sign to this effect in a clearly visible location near entrances to the building. Visitors will receive authorization from the principal or designee before visiting elsewhere in the building. Visitations shall be scheduled in advance, if at all possible.

If in the judgment of the school principal or designee, the visitor's presence may have a disruptive effect on the educational program, the principal or designee shall have the authority to deny the visitor access to the school or the school site, or the access of the visitor may be restricted in time or place. Generally speaking, visitations shall be limited to one hour in length. Visitors shall respect all students' rights to privacy.

The school personnel's first responsibility is to students, and so school personnel may be unable to converse at any length with visitors. If a conference is desired, arrangements will be made for an appointment at another time.

When parents have been invited to a classroom or assembly program, this provision will not apply.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our schools. The Board endorses a volunteer program in schools subject to suitable regulations and safeguards.

Annually, principals shall submit a list of all regular volunteers in the school (chaperones on field trips, classroom volunteer assistance, etc.) to the Superintendent of Schools for approval.