



P.A.W.S. Preschool at Wellesley Schools

P. A. W. S.

Preschool at Wellesley Schools

2014-2015

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to P.A.W.S., Preschool at Wellesley Schools! This handbook contains information and guidelines designed to give you an overview of our program.

PROGRAM

Philosophy and Mission of P.A.W.S.

The P.A.W.S. philosophy is that children learn best in high quality early childhood programs that follow developmentally appropriate practices. Our mission is to follow developmentally appropriate practices in an integrated setting while providing a stimulating learning environment that is psychologically and physically safe and that supports the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of every child. P.A.W.S is an engaging environment where children learn primarily through developmentally appropriate play experiences that encourage active participation in learning. We foster a social/emotional environment that encourages a sense of community and that nurtures each individual child within that community.

The P.A.W.S. Program

The Wellesley Public Schools offers integrated language-based preschool classrooms. An integrated preschool is one, which serves typically developing children as well as children with special needs. A flexible but consistent structure and routine is offered, including activities designed to promote language/listening skill, gross and fine motor development, and opportunities for imaginative/dramatic play. Music, sensory activities, and a wide variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities are employed, all of which support a strong foundation for learning. Whenever possible, outside play is a daily event.

Organizational Structure

P.A.W.S. is part of the Wellesley Public Schools and is subject to the regulations for all public schools in Massachusetts. Services to children with identified disabilities are offered as part of the Student Services Department under the leadership of the Director of Student Services. The Director of Preschool Services, who reports to the Director of Student Services, is responsible for the efficient functioning of all aspects of preschool services including community outreach, screenings for children whose parents are concerned about their child's development, consultation to community preschools and family day care programs, and services to children with identified disabilities including children without special needs who attend integrated classes at P.A.W.S. The Preschool Psychologist is in charge when the Director is out of the building.

The Director of Preschool Services is responsible for establishing operational procedures and setting priorities consistent with the Wellesley Public Schools and for assuring sound management and excellence in the educational program at P.A.W.S. The Director of Preschool Services is responsible for the daily supervision and annual evaluation of all professional and support staff.

Each member of the Preschool Staff is responsible for working in a manner that implements the P.A.W.S. philosophy and mission. Teachers work with other Team members to ensure that the program is meeting the needs of each child, that classes are running smoothly, that the curriculum principles are being implemented, and that the P.A.W.S. environment remains safe and secure for all students.

Each preschool classroom is staffed with a licensed masters-level preschool teacher and at least one teaching assistant, all of whom are present for the duration of every class period. Staff receives annual training in areas reported to be of interest or deemed significant by the Director. Additional staff members include Speech/Language Pathologists, Occupational and Physical Therapists, and the School Psychologist. The Director of Preschool Services manages the referral and registration process, and supervises all staff and preschool services classroom teaching teams work closely with the speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist assigned to each classroom. Therapists consult with the team each week and provide therapy to children with special needs both within and outside the classroom. All therapy is based in developmentally appropriate play. Over the

course of the school year, all children without special needs are offered the opportunity to participate in activities as a friend of their peer with special needs both in and outside the classroom. Therapists on each classroom team also lead small and whole group lessons within the classrooms designed to nurture the development of all children while supporting the curriculum.

The Curriculum

The P.A.W.S curriculum is based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: Guidelines for Preschool Curriculum Experiences and balances active and quiet play. The activities are designed to facilitate children's active involvement in their own learning because we believe that children learn through play, active manipulation of their environment, concrete experiences, and communicating with others. Teachers observe each child's activities in order to tailor and expand the curriculum to meet individual student's needs and interests. Teachers also facilitate the children's interactions with each other and their environment as they work alone and in small groups or whole class settings. Staff encourages close communication with parents so that together they can develop strategies to ensure the success of every child as they master the curriculum concepts and work towards increasing independence.

Typical Daily Schedule

P.A.W.S is open Monday through Friday with half and full day programs taking place between 9:10 am and 3:20 pm. In general, classes for three-year old children meet three times a week and classes for four-year old children meet four times a week. Children with special needs who need more time in school to gain skills may be placed in full-day classes through the Team Evaluation and Placement Process. Half-day classes meet for 2.5 hours a day either in the morning or afternoon and full-day classes meet for six hours. Children without special needs are assigned to one class and teaching team. Children with special needs are also assigned to one class and one teaching team but if their assigned class does not include children without special needs, they may spend time in another class accompanied by a teaching assistant from their class to help facilitate their participation in inclusion.

Daily activities include a variety of active and quiet individual and group projects. A typical day may consist of any of the following: free play, art and/or cooking projects, creative expression, sand and/or other sensory play, block play, books, games, puzzles, science exploration, work on computers, snack time and outdoor play.

Opportunities for Play

Staff at P.A.W.S. encourages children to engage in play because it is during play that children begin to learn the important concept of fairness, sharing, taking turns, and following another's lead. When necessary we model the language a child may need in order to join a peer in play. We teach children that playing fair means sharing, trading, or taking turns when two children both want to play with the same materials. We teach children to listen to hear their peer's idea even when it differs from their own.

Each classroom will maintain a block area, easel and art supplies, house corner with dolls and dress up clothes, shelf with puzzles and other manipulatives, book corner with comfortable furniture and shelves with age appropriate anti-bias books, a sensory table and sand/water table, and a writing center. Musical instruments and audio equipment will also be available. Other age appropriate games and toys relevant to the curriculum will also be present. All materials will be openly displayed, labeled and easily accessible to children. In addition, all materials will be rotated frequently to support the curriculum and to maintain the interest of the children.

Opportunities for free play will be built into the daily schedule. Teachers and therapists will take advantage of the child's interests and follow their lead in order to help facilitate the child's play. The goal of facilitating play is to foster age-appropriate social, language, and play skills. When the children are ready developmentally, the concept of Partner Play will be introduced. During Partner Play the teacher assigns two children to play together, helps the partners negotiate with each other to determine in which activity centers they will play, and to play in appropriate ways with one another. The goal of Partner Play is to facilitate age appropriate social, language and play skills while encouraging the children to play with a variety of peers.

Guidelines for play outdoors:

- Children and staff will not go outdoors if the air quality or weather is deemed unsafe (e.g. below 20 degrees or above 95 degrees, or if the pollution index is elevated). The Director or her designee will make the determination if staff will need to eliminate or limit outdoor play. If the weather does not permit play outdoors, teachers will utilize the hall and the large motor room to provide opportunities for appropriate gross motor activity.
- Children should wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather and that is lightweight and appropriate in hot weather. All outdoor clothing should be labeled with the child's name. Children should wear shoes that are safe for running and clothing that is appropriate to the weather.
- Children should be encouraged in play in shaded areas on hot, sunny days. When in the sun, children should wear sun-protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Sun protection (e.g. sun screen or sun block with UVB or UVA protection of SPF of 15 or higher will be applied to exposed skin) parents are asked to provide written permission and appropriate sunscreen/block labeled with the child's name. When public health authorities recommend use of insect use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect-borne disease only insect repellents containing DEET are used.
- The playground will be inspected to insure that the climbing structures and swings are secure and that the surface is free enough of sand to insure safe play. Staff should report any safety concerns promptly to the Director and/or custodian so that the situation can be remedied as soon as possible.

- Teachers will provide visual supervision of children at all time. In addition to opportunities for free play, some outdoor time should be devoted to teaching children to play some of the organized games they will encounter as they move on to kindergarten (e.g. Duck, Duck, Goose; Mr. Wolf)
- Rules about safe play on all structures and in the sand box will be discussed and enforced. For example, children will take turns and slide down the slide while seated, swing on the swings while facing the street, keep the sand in the sand box, run along the outside mulched edge of the play space, etc.

SCHOOL PROTOCOLS

Snack and Celebrations

Snacks are served at preschool each day. Some teachers ask that you send a snack with your child and other teachers organize their own snack program using parent volunteers who choose to purchase snacks from an approved list provided by the teacher. The snack generally includes juice and crackers, cereal, etc. Occasionally, special snacks will be served that may include a variety of fruits, vegetables, cheese, cookies, muffins, etc. It is critical that parent/s (guardian) inform the classroom staff of any allergies or other medical conditions that restricts your child's diet. Each teacher will discuss their birthday celebration policy with the parents to insure that all children's needs are considered.

Out of respect for the variety of cultures and religions represented within the P.A.W.S. community, we are careful to provide curriculum that is culturally sensitive. Due to the increase in numbers of children with serious food allergies attending P.A.W.S. classes, celebrations will include limited and controlled exposure to food items. Each teacher will discuss how she honors children on their birthday with the parents of the children in her class to insure that all children's needs are considered. For example, the birthday child may be given a birthday crown to wear for the day, or parents may send in a non-food item to commemorate the day (e.g. a book to be read and/or donated to the class, a toy or game to show the class, etc.)

Parents should not provide snacks to children younger than four years containing these foods: hot dogs either whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Due to the large number of children with allergies, P.A.W.S. peanut butter or other products containing peanuts should not be sent to school.

Clothing

Children should come to school comfortably dressed in play clothes (paint, glue, etc. may stain clothing). Dress your child for outdoor play (warmer clothing/cooler clothing) as the weather changes. Mark all outside clothing with your child's name. Please consider shoes that are comfortable as well as safe for outdoor play. Winter boots should be large enough to avoid children struggling when putting them on.

Please send in an extra set of clothing to be kept at school. If your child wears diapers, please send a package of diapers and wipes. We will let you know when these items will need to be replenished.

Health

All children must be compliant with immunizations required by the Department of Public Health BEFORE admission to the P.A.W.S. program. Children's medical forms are kept in the Nurse's Office. The school nurse must administer all necessary prescription and non-prescription medications. Parents/ guardians must provide a signed physician's order, which is dated and states what kind of medication, dosage and criteria for administration, as well as a parent permission form, which will be provided to you by the school nurse. It is the parent's (guardian's) responsibility to bring an appropriate supply of medication to the nurse, in the original pharmacy container. Medication must be delivered in person to the school nurse; students should never transport medication to and from school. Medication is administered only by the school nurse and is stored in a locked cabinet.

Head lice are common in schools. If the nurse determines that your child has head lice, you will be called to come and get your child. After treatment and once the nurse has determined that your child is nit free, he/she may return to class.

If the nurse determines that your child has a contagious disease such as Conjunctivitis or Impetigo, she will call you. The child will need to see a physician and begin treatment before returning to school.

Please carefully follow the nurse's guidelines for any illness your child may incur. If any of these conditions develop at school, the nurse or staff will call you. Be sure that staff has an alternate telephone number in the event that you cannot be reached to pick up your sick child. A child should remain home for 24 hours after a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided or after starting medication, including treatment for strep throat. This is required for everyone's health and safety and helps prevent relapse and extended absences.

Nurse's Guidelines When to Keep Your Child at Home

As you know, preschool aged child do not have the same kinds of self-care skills for a cold or infection as school-aged children. In addition, young children often have very close contact with each other and with staff. For these reasons, we ask that parents be considerate of other children and staff when deciding whether to send their child to school. Asking a sick child to participate in the busy school day is not fair to them or the staff. Working parents should make an alternative plan for sick children when planning for the school year.

Here are some guidelines that might be helpful in keeping your child as healthy as possible. This information should help parents/guardians make the decision about whether to send you child to school:

- Any child with discolored nasal discharge should not attend school until the nasal mucus is clear.
- Children should be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to schools.
- Vomiting diarrhea conditions should have stopped 24 hours prior to a child's return to school.
- A child who has had a throat culture for suspected strep throat should not return to school until the result has been determined to be negative. If throat culture results are positive, the child should remain out of school for 24 hours after the start of medication.

Accidents

There is full-time nursing coverage for the hours of the P.A.W.S. program. The school is responsible for providing first aid only for those accidents or sudden illnesses that happen at school. In the event of a more serious incident, 911 will be called. The emergency medical team will decide to which area hospital they child will be transported. When the parent is not available to take or accompany the child, a member of the school staff shall accompany the child.

Unusual Circumstances

If there are any unusual circumstances at home, such as illness or death, parents' vacation, or changes in childcare arrangements, such as a new nanny or baby-sitter, please notify the teachers so that they can help your child adjust more easily to the situation.

Diapering/Toileting Procedures

Children do not have to be toilet trained to attend P.A.W.S. but it is strongly encouraged. For children not yet independent, staff are ready to either help parents (guardians) develop a toilet training program or to help follow through on the one that is currently in place. Please, discuss this with your child's teacher to ensure that the teacher is comfortable implementing the plan.

Children shall wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after being toileted. Staff members shall also wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after assisting children with any toileting routine. Individual paper towels shall be used to dry hands.

Staff will wear gloves before coming in contact with any bodily fluids. Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood shall be double-bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items.

Behavior Management Plan

The goal of discipline is to assist and guide children in the development of self-control. All behavior should be viewed as the child's attempt to communicate. Teachers will discipline in a consistent way, based on an understanding of the function of the behavior and on an understanding of the child's developmental level. Simple and understandable rules will be established in each classroom so that expectations and limitations can be clearly defined. Students should play a role in defining rules for their classroom when appropriate.

Discipline will be constructive in nature, including such methods as diversion, praise for appropriate behavior, encouragement for effort, and separating the child from the situation. Time-out is not considered punishment and may be used if a child's behavior necessitates a "cool down" period. When the child has settled, he/she should be quickly reengaged.

Discipline should never be in the form of punishment (e.g. shaking or hitting, coercion, threats, or withholding of food or recess). Children with persistent, serious, challenging behaviors will be brought to the attention of the Preschool Psychologist and the Director. The Preschool Psychologist is always available to consult with the staff and the parents so that a collaborative team approach can be implemented. Once the Psychologist and/or staff determine the function of the child's behavior, an individualized plan, using positive behavior support strategies, will be developed to help the child learn to use more appropriate behaviors to get his/her needs met.

Regulations Concerning Physical Restraint

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00 the Wellesley Public School has policies and procedures concerning the use of physical restraint. Physical restraint will only be used when nonphysical intervention would be ineffective and the student's behavior poses an imminent threat of harm to self or others. School staff has received training in the use of physical restraint, and only those staff members with in depth training will be called on to implement restraint techniques. In the event that physical restraint is used with a student, parents will be notified and all state and federal regulations concerning reporting restraint will be followed. Follow-up procedures will include reviewing the incident with staff and parents. Complaints and investigations concerning the restraint practices should be directed to Linda Waters, Director of Student Services.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Wellesley Public School District conducts its programs and activities in conformity with title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, MGL, Ch. 76, Sec. 5 and MGL, Ch. 151, and not to allow discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origins, limited-English proficiency, housing status and handicap/disability in any of its activities. This policy also ensures that students should be free from retaliatory action and/or harassment based upon any of the foregoing attributes. Anyone having a complaint alleging a violation to any anti-discrimination laws or regulations, including the proscription against sexual harassment, should immediately bring the complaint to the attention of the administration of the Wellesley Public School district that will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into the charges. In the event that the charges are substantiated, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. It is the policy of the Wellesley Public School district not to discriminate will take appropriate disciplinary action to; Sal

Petralia, Assistant Superintendent, 40 Kingsbury St, Wellesley, MA 02181, (781-446-6210, Ext. 4503) who has been designated as the employee responsible for coordinating the Wellesley Public School district's efforts to implement this nondiscriminatory policy. Any inquiries concerning the application of any discrimination laws and regulations by the Wellesley Public Schools may be addressed to the Department of Education, 350 Malden Street, Malden, MA 02148 (781-388-3300).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Calendar

The P.A.W.S. program follows the Wellesley Public Schools' academic year calendar with the exception of the start date and ending dates. The first day of classes is usually altered slightly to accommodate the needs of parents who also have children in other levels of the school system and the ending date is generally a week before the other schools end. Copies of the current Wellesley Public Schools' calendar are provided to all parents at the beginning of each school year and are available throughout the school year on the WPS web site at www.wellesley.mec.edu

School Closings

If the Wellesley Public Elementary Schools are closed, the P.A.W.S. program is closed. If there is a delay of one hour or more, all morning classes are canceled. Parents should check school closing announcements on local radio and television stations.

Enrollment Progress

Children with and without special needs follow a different admission process. In order to be eligible for enrollment, children without special needs must be three years old by September 1st. To apply for admission for a child without special needs in one of the P.A.W.S. classrooms, parents are asked to complete an application form and the Child Development Inventory Profile. This is an instrument designed to elicit potential areas of risk or developmental concern. Providing this information ensures that potential areas of concern are addressed early, and that a balance can be maintained between numbers of young children with special needs and typically developing children.

Children with special needs are placed in P.A.W.S. classroom through the Team process. To qualify for a slot in P.A.W.S. that is reserved for children with special needs, the child must be demonstrating a special need in two or more domains of development that is significantly affecting their development. Children with special education needs, who qualify, are offered a place in one of the P.A.W.S. classrooms as they turn three or as soon as their needs are identified.

When a child has been admitted, parent/s (guardian) must submit the following:

- A medical form signed by a physician and dated less than one year before entry into the program.
- An up-to-date immunization record.
- A Wellesley Public Schools Emergency Card providing names and phone numbers of people to contact in an emergency as well as permission for emergency medical care and for field trips.
- A letter dated and signed by a parent or legal guardian listing the names of all persons authorized to pick up the child from school.
- The Powerschool enrollment information form required by the Wellesley Public Schools.
- A CORI Request Form if a parent/guardian intends to volunteer in a classroom.
- Wellesley Public Schools State Mandated Race/Ethnicity Data Collection
- Parent/Guardian Permission Form for Media Publishing

Tuition

Tuition increases slightly from year to year. For example, current school year tuition is \$3,250 for a 4 day a week class and \$2,450 for a 3 day a week class and classes meet 2.5 hours a day September to June. There are a limited number of openings for four-year old children to attend 4 six-hour days a

week at tuition rate of \$6,500. A \$300 deposit, which is nonrefundable, is due one month after an acceptance letter is sent to the family. The total tuition is divided into two installments with the deposit deducted from the second semester's tuition. Half of the total tuition is due on August 15th and the balance is due by January 15th. Checks should be made payable to Wellesley Public Schools with a reference to P.A.W.S. and the child's name in the lower left hand corner.

A sliding fee scale is available to provide tuition assistance to those who qualify. More information about tuition assistance can be obtained from the Director at 781-446-6222.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication School and Parents

The preschool staff recognizes the very important role parents/guardians play in the learning process. Therefore, we encourage you to take an active role in your child's program. Staff will make every effort to communicate with parents on a weekly basis and more often if needed. Staff may send home a communication booklet, call parents or utilize email.

The preschool staff recognizes the very important role parent's play in the learning process. Therefore, we encourage parents to take an active role in their child's program. We play a role in helping parents enjoy new friendships with other families as a result of their child's preschool experience. Opportunities for parents to connect are numerous and include such activities such as the play date arranged for late summer, the classroom open house before school opens, the opening day parent coffee, the monthly PTO Board meetings, etc. Fund raising events that take place throughout the year are additional opportunities for families to get involved with P.A.W.S. Parent conferences are regularly scheduled for all students twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Parents/guardians or the teacher can initiate additional conferences at any time during the year. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in parent/teacher conferences. Forms designed to elicit specific topics parents would like to be discussed are to be sent home at least a week in advance so that they can be returned to teachers in time for them to prepare for the conference.

Parents are encouraged to first approach their child's teacher should they have a question or concern about their child's progress. Parents are asked to contact

the Director if they still have questions or concerns after speaking with the teacher or if their questions or concerns are about the program or any policy. There are times when families and caregivers may differ in opinion due to cultural or philosophical differences. The Director and/or School Psychologist will work with families to ensure that the best interests of all children are being met.

Classroom Visits

Parents are welcome in the classroom at all times. No appointment is necessary. However, we appreciate advance notice when possible, as we may have other visitors or classroom observations scheduled.

Conferences and Progress Reports

Parent conferences are regularly scheduled for all students twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Parents/guardians or the teacher can initiate additional conferences at any time during the year. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in parent/teacher conferences. Forms designed to elicit specific topics parent would like discussed, will be sent home at least a week in advance so that can be returned in time for teachers to prepare for the conference.

Assessment Practices

Children, who are placed at P.A.W.S. through the special education evaluation and placement process, are assessed by the Special Education Evaluation Team. Input about each child's development is gathered through written documentation provided by the parents as well as through a parent interview conducted by the P.A.W.S. Psychologist. A comprehensive assessment report is shared with the child's parent at the time of evaluation. Information about children without special needs is gathered through a developmental history completed by the parent.

Once the children become comfortable in the school setting and within the first month of school each fall, children without special needs are screened in all developmental domains (sensory, language, cognitive, gross-motor, fine-motor and social emotional) and the content areas (literacy, math, science, technology, social studies, creative expression, health and safety) using the Early Screening Inventory. At the same time, teachers begin to gather data about the children's interests and skills through observation using the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool. The results of the teacher's observations are used to develop goals for each individual child and to plan curriculum. The results of the fall assessments are also shared informally with parents at the fall Parent/Teacher conference in order to elicit parental input in developing goals for each individual child. The written results of each child's performance on the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool are sent home to parents at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year. For children with special needs, Special Education Progress Reports are also sent to parents at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year.

Teachers will discuss their observation with the child's parent/s if they begin to suspect that the child might be experiencing a delay in any domain of development. The teacher will collaborate with the parent to define opportunities for the child that might provide the child with more practice in specific areas of development. A child suspected of demonstrating a delay in any domain of development is referred for evaluation to the P.A.W.S. Special Education Evaluation Team only after they are given time to adjust to their classroom and appropriate classroom accommodations and instructional interventions have been provided. No formal assessments will be conducted without written parental consent.

Assessment includes formal and informal information gathering about a student's skill levels while they interact with appropriate materials. Formal assessment often includes a combination of norm referenced assessment instruments and behavioral observation. Informal assessment practices include a wide range of information gathering strategies including using behavioral checklists as well as systematic observation of the student interacting with the materials and his/her environment. Once curriculum is in place, teachers have the context for observing what children can do. Our assessment practices:

- are sensitive to and informed by family culture, experiences, children's abilities and disabilities and home language.
- are meaningful and accurate.
- are used in settings familiar to the children.
- take into consideration that a comprehensive curriculum is in place.

Information about each student's progress is shared each fall and spring at parent/teacher conferences. Teachers will elicit topics parents wished to discuss prior to the conference. Written assessment information is shared at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year.

Confidentiality

In accordance with the policy of the Wellesley Public Schools, all information about a child and/or contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. The P.A.W.S. staff will not distribute or release information about any child to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians shall, upon request, have access to their child's record.

Public School Student Records

The following is an abbreviated summary of Student Records Regulations relevant to public school students. The purpose of these regulations is to protect parents' and students' rights of confidentiality and access to this information.

The Records: Once the student reaches elementary school, their record consists of a transcript and a temporary record. The transcript contains the following information: name, address and phone number of the student and of the parent (or guardian), the student's birth date, grade level completed and year completed. The temporary record consists of other information not in the transcript that is of importance to the educational process, including standardized test results. Regular education Progress Reports are part of the child's temporary record. No information about a child's special needs may be kept in the regular education student file.

Access: The parent/s (or guardian) shall have access to the student record and may have copies of any information in the record. Authorized school personnel shall have access to student records. No information contained therein shall be disseminated without the specific informed written consent of the parent (as applicable).

NONCUSTODIAL PARENT:

- (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.
- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:
1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 2. the parent has been denied visitation, or
 3. the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-

custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5) (a).

- (e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

Educational Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations

The Wellesley Public Schools complies with federal and state laws and regulations in the identification and education of children who are in homeless situations. The intent of this policy is to provide stability in school attendance and access to a free and appropriate public education to students who are homeless to the extent that is feasible and required by state and federal law.

The Superintendent has designated the Director of Student Services as the local homeless education liaison. The responsibility of the liaison includes the identification, enrollment and monitoring of students who are homeless to ensure that they have immediate and full opportunity to succeed in the Wellesley Public Schools. In addition, the Wellesley Public Schools has dispute resolution procedures to address disagreements between parents and the School Department about the enrollment of a student. These procedures allow the student to be enrolled in the school which is the parents'/guardians' or student's choice, pending resolution of the dispute.

The Wellesley Public Schools will immediately enroll homeless children in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency.

Students will be maintained in the school of origin except when that is contradictory to the wishes of the student or parent/guardian, or when it is not in the student's best interest. Homeless students will be provided the district services for which they are eligible, including pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, English Language Learner education, and any other appropriate district wide programs. The Wellesley Public Schools will ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Liaison), to and from the current living situation to the school of origin. For more information concerning the rights of students in homeless situations to preschool programs, please contact the Director of the Preschool.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

Children must be accompanied to their classroom by an authorized caregiver. There is a sign-in sheet available in each classroom that must be initialed by the caregiver as they leave the child in the classroom. Staff will meet children who qualify for transportation at their van, accompany them to the classroom, and sign them in. Teachers will bring the children to the front of the building where they will stand in line on the ramp outside and wait to be picked up by their caregiver. As they greet their child, teachers will hand caregivers the class list to sign-out as they assume the responsibility for their child.

Written Permission

If your child is to be picked up by any person not already authorized to do so, you must send a note. The note should be dated, include the name of the person picking up the child, and must be signed by a parent/guardian. Please inform the person picking up your child that the teachers will ask for identification. If your child is going to visit the home of a classmate directly from school, you must send a note containing all the details that is both dated and signed.

Transition to Kindergarten Information Sharing Process

Children, who are age eligible for kindergarten, are not automatically enrolled in their neighborhood school. Parents must contact their school to let the Principal know about their child. Contact information follows for each of the seven elementary schools:

School	Phone	Principal	Secretary
Bates	781-446-6315	Toni Jolley	Dianne O'Sullivan-Gard
Fiske	781-446-6265	Anthony Colannino	Beth Watson
Hardy	781-446-6270	Charlene Cook	Janet Rixon
Hunnewell	781-446-6275	Ellen Quirk	Amy Mistrot
Schofield	781-446-6280	Gerardo Martinez	Brenda Hoye
Sprague	781-263-1965	Susan Snyder	Lennie Becker
Upham	781-446-6285	Jeffery Dees	Robin Boucher

The information sharing process for children with special needs begins with an evening meeting held in late January or early February. The Director of Preschool Services describes the information sharing process and The Department Head of Elementary Special Education describes special education services that are available in each of the elementary schools. Representative special education and regular education staff from the elementary schools describe what a typical day in kindergarten might look like for a child who is receiving special education services.

Transition meetings are held for each student with a current IEP beginning in March. The format of the meeting is similar to all Team meetings: strengths, challenges, goals, and services. Representatives from the special education staff in the various elementary schools prepare for the transition meeting by reading all of the documentation available on each student and observing the student in their P.A.W.S. classroom. Their role is to listen to the information presented and then help to define the student's goal based on their knowledge of the kindergarten curriculum and the services they will need to achieve them.

Parents of all students are invited to informational meetings held at their child's neighborhood school beginning in late spring. The Principal and staff from each school describe qualities about their school that makes them unique. Kindergarten teachers describe what a typical day might look like. A tour of the kindergarten classrooms and the school is also provided. These informational meetings are a nice opportunity for parents to meet each other and to learn more about what will be their child's school for many years. Some of the school also host social gatherings for the children prior to the opening of school so watch your mail carefully for invitations coming your way.

All children, who are age eligible to enter kindergarten, participate in a screening held each spring. This screening is a state mandated process designed to identify students who might be at risk for having special needs. Teachers and other staff consider the kindergarten screening as an opportunity to meet and get to know the children coming into their kindergarten classrooms. For this reason, children who have already been identified as having special needs also participate in kindergarten screening with their peers.