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SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
2. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
3. The school calendar will include the provision for 185 days and will be developed in accordance with the provisions of the Wellesley Teachers Association (WTA) collective bargaining agreement. As a general rule for calendar development, when Labor Day occurs prior to September 4, the start date for students will be the Tuesday after Labor Day. When Labor Day occurs on September 4 or later, the start date for students will be the Wednesday before Labor Day. The Committee will continue its practice of adopting the next year's school year calendar annually, no later than December 31st, and the Committee agrees that in any given year it may vote exceptions to the general guidelines stipulated.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; early release days; in service days; and parent conferences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1G; 71:1; 71:4; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12
Board of Education Regulations for School Year and School Day, effective 9/1/75
Board of Education, Student Learning Time Regulations
603 CMR 27.00, Adopted 12/20/94
WTA Collective Bargaining Agreement

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help ensure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until 15 minutes prior to the start of the official day unless bus schedules require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 69:1G; 71:59
Board of Education Regulations for School Year and Day, effective 9/1/75

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The District includes a preschool program, K-5 elementary schools, a 6-8 middle school and a 9-12 high school.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level in all schools ages 3 through 21.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established within the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the Massachusetts Department. of Elementary and Secondary Education and to serve the needs of all students.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary for the District to meet the needs of the students in its schools. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise.

The Committee expects its faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 69:1E
 603 CMR 26:05

CURRICULUM APPROVAL

The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will advance the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly reviewed and found to support educational goals. The Superintendent shall inform the School Committee of all new courses and substantive revisions in curricula and the School Committee shall approve such changes, including the middle and high school programs of studies, via the annual budget process.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 71:1; 69:1E

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The School Committee will attempt to provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Committee's belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program will contribute to this goal:

1. To aid the development of the entire student so that a well trained mind may function properly in a healthy body.
2. To encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school, and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have a carry-over value for later activities in every day life.
3. To increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to good health.
4. To impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:3
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education, adopted 4/25/78,
effective 9/1/78
603 CMR 26:05

HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the system's health education program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

**HEALTH EDUCATION
(Exemption Procedure)**

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Wellesley School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of its students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice or access to instructional materials for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

REF.: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education

TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Prior to the beginning of their athletic season, students will be presented educational materials on the dangers of opiate use and misuse along with the head injury safety program.

The District will-administer in two grade levels a verbal screening tool to students for substance use disorders.

Parents will be notified of the screening beginning each year and may opt out by written notification to the District. Trained professionals will conduct screenings during school hours. All information is confidential and cannot be subject to discover or subpoena in any civil, criminal, legislative or administrative proceeding. No record of any pupil statements will be kept.

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the District shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

SOURCE: MASC March 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1 ;71:96

CROSS REFS: GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy
JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

VOTED BY SC: November 15, 2016

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS
(PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS)**

The goals of the Wellesley Public Schools special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at his/her own level, to gain independence, self-reliance and to be active members of the community at large

The requirements of Chapter 71B and the Massachusetts General Laws (known as Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972) and state regulations will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of 3 through 21 who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The School Committee believes that most children with special education needs can be educated within the general education classroom if they are given specially designed instruction, accommodations and the related service supports they require. These children shall also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children require specialized programs, classes or schools. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide these children with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services for children with special education needs. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be afforded the right of due process.

LEGAL REFS.: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)
 Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
 Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through
 7/1/81
 603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR 504 ACCOMODATION PLANS

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all enrolled students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Department Head.
2. The Special Education Department Head shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
3. The Special Education Department Head or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
4. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
5. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.
6. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
7. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and that of others.
8. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up Team meeting.
9. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
10. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. The observer will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

11. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) prior to any follow-up Team meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71B:3
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

NOTE: The following quotes from the DESE Advisory are important points of understanding to the implementation of this policy.

“School districts and parents have reported that, typically, observations are between one and four hours. While useful as a general rule, the Department recommends that district policies and practices specify that the duration and extent of observations will be determined on an individual basis. Districts should avoid rigid adherence to defined time limits regardless of the student's needs and settings to be observed. The complexities of the child's needs, as well as the program or programs to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it. Discussion between school staff and the parent or designee is a good starting point for resolving the issue.”

“The observation law states that districts may not condition or restrict program observations except when necessary to protect:

- The safety of children in the program during the observation;
- The integrity of the program during the observation;
- And children in the program from disclosure by an observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program.”

**COMPENSATORY EDUCATION
(Title 1)**

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committee ensures comparability in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

LEGAL REF.: Title 1, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to comply with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. (language instruction for limited English proficient and
immigrant students contained in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)
42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
603 CMR 14.00

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the principal shall arrange for provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal shall coordinate such services with the Director of Student Services for eligible students. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan).

LEGAL REFS,: 603 CMR 28.03 (3)(c)

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel--teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

The Wellesley Public School libraries welcome donations of books and other resource materials from individuals and organizations but also reserve the right to refuse materials that do not meet the criteria for selection stated above.

In addition, financial donations to benefit Wellesley Public School libraries are accepted with the understanding the library media specialist, with input from the building Principal, retains the right to use funds to purchase those curricular materials that are needed for the library based on the needs of the individual school

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs. Print items include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, microfiche or microfilm. Non-print items include films, disc records, filmstrips, slides, prints, audiotapes, videotapes, compact discs, online resources, and computer software.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student
Based on knowledge of students
Based on requests of parents and students
- Needs of the individual school
Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school
Based on requests from the professional staff
- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed “standards” or “classics”, will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Organizations, institutions, and individuals at times develop materials that are offered to schools free or inexpensively. As a general rule, sponsored materials present a particular point of view, and extreme care must be exercised in evaluating and using them. The responsibility for using sponsored materials rests with the certified staff member who recommends its use. In any questionable instance, the Principal and Assistant Superintendent shall be informed and shall decide whether its use is in the best interests of the students.

Sponsored materials must meet the same basic selection criteria as any other learning material, as well as the following special criteria.

Any expression of a point of view should be clearly identified.

Any advertising that appears on or with any material should be in good taste and unobtrusive.

The source of all material should be clearly identifiable.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION **Access to Electronic Media**

The Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to electronic media. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of student computer use, ethical use of electronic media (including, but not limited to, the Internet, e-mail, and other District technological resources), and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines shall prohibit utilization of networks for prohibited or illegal activities, the intentional spreading of embedded messages, or the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
- Safety and security of minors when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct or electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them.

The District shall provide reasonable public notice of, and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate its Internet safety measures.

Permission/Agreement Form

A written parental request shall be required prior to the student being granted independent access to electronic media involving District technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges, and penalties for policy/procedural violations, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be kept on file as a legal, binding document. In order to modify or rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Superintendent with a written request.

Employee Use

Employees shall use electronic mail only for purposes directly related to work-related activities.

Employees shall not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless they have been given authorization to do so. (Authorization is not required each time the electronic media is accessed in performance of one's duties.) Each employee is responsible for the security of his/her own password.

Community Use

The Superintendent or designee shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community. Upon request to the Principal or designee, community members may have access to the Internet and other electronic information sources and programs available through the District's technology system, provided they attend any required training and abide by the rules of usage established by the Superintendent or designee.

Disregard of Rules

Individuals who refuse to sign required acceptable use documents or who violate District rules governing the use of District technology shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

Responsibility for Damages

Individuals shall reimburse the Committee for repair or replacement of District property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

Responding to Concerns

School officials shall apply the same criterion of educational suitability used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to specific databases or other electronic media.

Audit of Use

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process to determine whether the District's education technology is being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access for both minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to computers with Internet access by minors, harmful to minors;
2. Maintaining and securing a usage log; and
3. Monitoring online activities of minors.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

CROSS REFS: IJNDB, Acceptable Use Policy – Technology

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY – TECHNOLOGY

Purpose

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

Availability

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

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

Access to the system/network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Wellesley Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Wellesley Public Schools.

Acceptable Use

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

Monitored Use

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

Liability

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

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - TECHNOLOGY
Administrative Procedures for Implementation

1. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.
2. The District will provide training to users in the proper use of the system/network.
3. The District will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
4. Copyrighted software or data shall not be placed on the District system/network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the system administrator.
5. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
6. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
7. Initial passwords provided by the network administrator should be set to expire on login.
8. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
9. Students completing required course work will have first priority for afterhours use of equipment.
10. Principals or their designee will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
11. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of District technology. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
12. Principals or their designee will ensure that training is provided to users on appropriate use of electronic resources.
13. Superintendent or designee shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
14. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
15. The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by District policy.
16. System users shall not use another user's account.
17. System users should purge electronic information according to District retention guidelines.
18. System users may redistribute copyrighted material only with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or in accordance with applicable copyright laws, District policy, and administrative procedures.
19. System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system/network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
20. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited.
21. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of District policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

22. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
23. Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
24. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
25. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and other inflammatory language is prohibited.
26. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving message is prohibited.
27. Transmitting or viewing obscene material is prohibited.
28. Revealing personal information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) is prohibited.
29. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's system/network.

A user who violates District policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of system/network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT WEB PAGES

The Wellesley Public Schools will use the Internet as an effective, efficient and timely source of information, method of communication and vehicle for resource collection. In order to take advantage of the opportunities the Internet provides, the Committee authorizes the creation of school and/or District Web pages on the Internet.

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

1. Support of curriculum and instruction – intended to provide links to Internet resources for students, parents and staff in the District.
2. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools and District to students, staff, parents, community, and the world at large.
3. District technology support – intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

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

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

The Wellesley Public Schools has the right to retain control of web sites and courses developed under contract for the Wellesley Public Schools or within the scope of employment by Wellesley Public Schools.

POLICY ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL NETWORKING

Internet AUP still in force

This policy is adopted in addition to the District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (IJNDB), which governs use of the District's technological resources.

Scope of Policy

This policy is intended to provide guidelines to Wellesley Public School staff members and volunteers with regard to electronic information they may provide for public or private dissemination, as well as with regard to electronic communication with students/parents/guardians/public. All online, electronic, or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications. The use of the term staff in this policy is intended to include teachers, administrators, advisors, coaches, and all other employees both full time and part time, as well as volunteers.

Establishing Appropriate Boundaries

Essential tools in social media enable teachers to provide their students with links to education resources, post homework assignments, monitor a discussion forum on topics related to the curriculum, manage schedules, or answer specific questions. However, there needs to be a clear distinction between professional and private use when using social media.

If staff members wish to use social media as part of their professional practice, they should set up a separate professional account and keep their communications with students focused solely on educational issues, so that there is no perceived or actual ambiguity between a staff member's work as a professional and his/her personal life. Social media related boundary violation cases that come before teacher regulatory authorities are those where staff are unable to maintain an appropriate professional relationship, either by inadvertently allowing students to access personal information or photos or by communicating with students in a way that does not maintain the professional nature of the staff-student relationship and is often without a valid educational context. Staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise.

Whenever and wherever possible, staff should use District resources to communicate with students and conduct official WPS business. In addition, any electronic communication using one's own personal resources, as opposed to District resources, compromises the staff member's, as well as the District's, ability to retain public records in accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws: c.66 §10 public records laws. The law requires public employees who send, receive, or maintain records in their capacity as public employees, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When staff members communicate through school-based resources, such as staff email, or school sponsored web pages, such records can be retained and archived through the school's information technology department. If, however, a staff member communicates outside of these resources, the District's ability to retain such information is limited. The burden falls on the staff member to comply with public records laws when using personal cell phones, email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

Expectations of Staff

With this in mind, the Wellesley Public Schools has instituted this “Electronic Communication/Social Networking Policy,” and announces its expectations for staff members’ use of social media networks including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, personal email accounts, cell phones including text message features, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems. The implementation of these expectations will be set out as Administrative Procedures, which will be maintained by the Superintendent of Schools, and which will be disseminated to all staff annually.

- All staff members will be responsible for information that they make public through the use of electronic communication.
- The same principles applied to in-person communication should be applied to online communication, such as privacy, decorum and professionalism. No matter what medium of communication a staff member selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate teacher/student boundaries.
- The line between professional life and personal life must be clear at all times. Staff members should only use their educational social media account or educational email account to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians, and should only communicate on matters directly related to education. Relationships associated with such educational social media accounts should only be with members of the educational community, such as administrators, teachers, students, and parents of such students. It is strongly recommended that staff reject requests from individuals who do not fit into these categories.
- At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information.
- Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention, and perhaps disclosure under the public records law. All staff will follow the Administrative Procedures for retaining such records. This includes for example blog entries with comments, text messages, and all other electronic correspondence.
- This policy is not intended to infringe upon a staff member’s right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with other professionals on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when speaking as an employee, restrictions may be placed upon one’s freedom to express oneself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain one’s status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in the classroom, and remain objective with respect to students.
- Staff members are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal social media accounts to communicate with students, or their parents/guardians. Communications with students/parents/guardians, even if not using school resources, are within the jurisdiction of the school District to monitor as they arise out of one’s position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school District or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose one to discipline up to and including discharge. Even when not using a school telephone, computer,

classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student, that contact is within the school District's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If a staff member's behavior is inappropriate, undermines their authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises objectivity, or harms students, the school District reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. A staff member may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians.

- The District recognizes that, in limited cases, use of cell phone text messages, cell phone calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which staff serve as duly appointed advisors, they may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school based email accounts, school-provided telephones or school-based web pages. In such limited circumstances, the District anticipates that staff members will make reasonable use of their cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like according to the Administrative Procedures in force at the time. These communications are subject to retention and disclosure as described in the Administrative Procedures.
- When staff members communicate as employees of the District in their online communications, they must be aware that readers will assume they "speak for the school District." Therefore, all online communications must be professional and reflect positively on the school District.

Use of School Logo or Copyright

Staff members may use the school logo or likeness only with the express permission from the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

LEGAL REFS: Title 17 U.S. Copyright law
Massachusetts General Laws: c.66 §10 (public records)
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. §1232 g

ACADEMIC FIELD TRIPS

The Wellesley School Committee (SC) recognizes that academic field trips are an extension of the classroom experience that expand and reinforce concepts learned in the classroom and can provide new and unique experiences not available in the classroom setting. An academic field trip is defined as a visit to a location beyond school grounds that has a direct relationship to a curricular field.

Wellesley Public Schools will sponsor academic field trips for students only when trips meet the following criteria:

- **Time and Learning** - The learning activities associated with the field trip map to the curriculum frameworks and satisfy time and learning requirements.
- **Equal Opportunity/Accessibility** - The right of a student to participate in any school-sponsored program is not infringed upon or impaired because of gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, or disability group, or any other reason not related to his/her individual capabilities
- **Students with Disabilities** - Any concern about the safety or appropriateness of a disabled student's participation in a field trip will be referred to the student's liaison (if a special education student) or to the Section 504 Coordinator (if the student is on a Section 504 plan), whichever may be applicable, for the scheduling of a Team Meeting. The Team will review the concern, review any other relevant documents, make a Team determination how the student can participate and what, if any, accommodations are necessary for the student's participation in the field trip.
- **Affordability** - Field trips should be affordable and accessible to all qualified and interested students. Students may be allowed but not required to participate in reasonable group fundraising efforts to defray the cost of field trips.
- **Educational Alternatives** - Students who cannot participate in field trips shall receive educational alternatives that have related academic and intellectual value. Instruction of students unable to attend the field trip should not be lessened due to an inability to attend.
- **Health and Safety** - The health and safety of students and staff are given utmost consideration in the approval, planning and conduct of all school-sponsored trips. Staff involved in planning a field trip will include the District nursing staff in the planning process in accordance with the District nursing protocol to determine specific health/medical needs of students, the inclusion of nursing staff on the field trip, or other medical care required.
- **Student Behavior** - Students participating in any type of field trip are required to adhere to school rules and regulations. Attendance on school-sponsored trips is not a student's right, but a privilege. No student may attend such a trip if, in the determination of the principal or his/her designee as part of disciplinary action unrelated to a disability, the student's behavior has been so inappropriate or antisocial as to be deemed disruptive to the planned trip.

- **Supervision** - Staff from the requesting school direct the trip, and a staff member is identified as the Staff-in-Charge and is in attendance to ensure compliance with this policy.
- **Transportation** - Wellesley Public Schools uses its regular contracted bus service for most field trips. Use of vans and private automobiles for field trips without prior approval from the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, is prohibited. A field trip that proposes to use private passenger vehicles must be submitted in advance to the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, for review of the trip itinerary, driver information (license, adequate insurance coverage, liability release form, CORI, etc.) and consideration of all safety concerns with respect to the proposed transportation. The Superintendent, or designee, will make the final decision as to the acceptable mode of transportation for the field trip. Selected carriers for late night, overnight or out of state travel must be licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Carriers with an FMCSA safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory" will not be used. Selected carriers will be prohibited from using subcontractors unless sufficient notice is provided to the District to allow for verification of the subcontractor's qualifications and safety rating. Travel itineraries must allow enough time for drivers to rest in conformance with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense. Public transportation may also be used, subject to review and approval by the Department Head/Director and Principal, particularly with respect to number of chaperones, time in transit, and accessibility to all students.

Exchange Programs

The School Committee has established foreign exchange programs which have specific requirements and approval processes. All of the above criteria may not be applicable to these programs.

Enrichment Field Trips

An enrichment field trip is defined as attendance at contests, regional events, or other trips beyond the school grounds that is not a part of the curriculum and does not count toward meeting the time and learning requirements. While they may be valuable experiences for students, every effort should be made to mitigate the effect of enrichment field trips on time and learning.

Compliance with State Ethics Disclosure of Financial Interest

In no event shall staff members involved in organizing and/or attending an approved field trip be compensated, directly or indirectly, from any company, sponsor or others for his or her role in organizing or attending the field trip. However, the State Ethics Commission does allow for the costs of the trip for the staff member/chaperone to be covered, in which case the staff members(s)/chaperone(s) must file a Disclosure of Financial Interest Form with the School Committee and Town Clerk.

The School Committee shall first make the determination that the trip serves a legitimate educational purpose and that the benefits to the students and the education process outweigh the private benefit to the teacher, the tour company and/or the chaperones.

Related Definitions:

Chaperone - A person, other than a teacher and instructional assistant, age 21 or older, who accompanies and supervises the students on a field trip. A satisfactory Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check is required of all chaperones.

Staff - All paid school personnel.

Staff-in-Charge - The teacher attending the trip designated to ensure compliance with this policy.

Approval Criteria

The table below lists the terms used for trips of various lengths and the approval required. Note that out-of-state travel requires School Committee approval regardless of the trip length. In no case will a trip exceeding five school days be approved.

X - Approval is required by the indicated person.

Trip Length	Principal	C&I Director	Supt.	SC
Day - Within the School Day* Academic Non-Academic	X X	X		
Extended - A visit extending beyond the school day but returning prior to midnight. Academic Non-Academic	X X	X	X X	
Overnight - A visit that involves overnight travel and/or an overnight stay. Academic Non-Academic	X X	X	X X	X X
Out of State - A visit that involves travel outside of Massachusetts, whether a day trip or an overnight trip. Academic Non-Academic	X X	X	X X	X X
Foreign - A visit to a foreign country. Academic Non-Academic	X X	X	X X	X X

All field trips, longer than half of the school day, also require the approval of the Superintendent.

Approval

All foreign trips require School Committee approval and must be received prior to the school year in which the trip is to take place and prior to making any final financial and/or contractual arrangements. All field trips must be approved in writing by the appropriate authority as specified in this policy. The initial documentation to request a field trip must include:

Documentation

1. The purpose of the trip including a mapping to the curriculum frameworks
2. Proposed dates
3. Proposed itinerary
4. Estimated number of students expected and percentage of eligible students participating
5. Cost per student (if applicable)
6. Ratio of chaperones/teachers to students
7. Description of transportation arrangements
8. Description of arrangements for meals and lodging (if applicable)
9. Means of financing
10. A draft copy of any contract associated with the trip
11. A description of the educational alternative, and mapping of that alternative, for students not attending the trip
12. A description of the process that will be used to determine student eligibility
13. After the initial trip approval, subsequent approval documentation must include information detailing how the above trip conditions have changed since the initial trip was approved. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form that includes appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication. An emergency crisis plan will also be documented and provided to the Administration before the departure of any field trip.
14. Compliance with State Ethics Disclosure of Financial Interest

Restrictions

Non-School Sponsored Trips. Staff members are prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. Teachers and other school staff who privately conduct educational tours or trips must clearly state that these trips are not school-sponsored and that the Wellesley School Committee and the Wellesley Public Schools do not sanction the trip nor assume any responsibility or liability for the trip.

CROSS REF.: JJH, Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

LEGAL REFS.: Massachusetts Department of Education Regulations 603 CMR 27.00: Time and Learning.
 M.G.L. c.71, s. 37N - Policy for School-Sponsored Student Travel
 M.G.L. c.71, s.38R- Criminal Records: Checks of Application
 M.G.L. (c. 268A, s. 17 (a)) - Conduct of Public Officials, Employees
 Municipal employees; gift or receipt of compensation from other than municipality; acting as agent or attorney.
 Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002
 M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Assistant Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of district assessments and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To ensure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere free from partisanship and prejudice, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on thoughtful analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations when such presentations may be considered controversial. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.
3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted to non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted to non-school groups for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A Principal may grant a non-school group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of church and state separation and the preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools.

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The Wellesley School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

Whenever any animal is allowed on the school grounds or in the classroom students should be educated on **safe and proper handling procedures** before handling or touching these animals; and should receive very clear **instructions on how to wash their hands thoroughly after handling animals, their cages, or surfaces animals have come in contact with, and always before eating.**

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities. The school nurse shall be notified if any animal is approved to come into the school building.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the Wellesley School District.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Chicks and ducklings carry the high risk of transmitting enteric disease (diarrhea) to people, especially children, so these animals are inappropriate in schools without education on **safe and proper handling procedures**, as described above.

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs,* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Wellesley School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff.

Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF.: 28 CFR, Part 35

CROSS REFS.: ECA, Building and Grounds Security