

CODE OF CONDUCT

Worcester Central School District



2023-2024

I. INTRODUCTION

The Worcester Board of Education ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment and maintain very high academic and behavioral standards for all students. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other staff, parents, and visitors is essential to the achievement of this goal. Accordingly, in collaboration with students, parents, teachers and administrators, the Board has established this Code of Conduct. It applies to all students, school personnel, parents, and other visitors when on school property or in attendance at a school function.

The ultimate goal of the Code of Conduct is to help students develop the attitude and practice of self-discipline. Students are encouraged to demonstrate proper behavior even when no one is watching. The Code of Conduct provides specific guidelines for students to understand and apply acceptable behavior. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty, and integrity. It is through a partnership with parents, staff, teachers, and administration that our students will **strive** to meet these expectations, have **support** in following the Code of Conduct, and ultimately **succeed** in becoming self-disciplined members of our school community.

II. DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT (DASA)

DASA specifically prohibits bullying, discrimination and harassment by school employees and students on school property or at a school function by school employees and students based on, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, actual or perceived: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. Also included are provisions for reporting and intervening in cases of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Any related complaints should be brought to the attention of the building principal, who serves as the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC), within one day of witnessing the incident, and a written report must be turned in within two days of the incident to assist in implementation of the DASA in each school building.

The Dignity Act Coordinators are: Katie Sill, Elementary Principal
Mrs. Melissa Leonard, Secondary Principal

III. STUDENT CONDUCT

A. STUDENT RIGHTS

The District is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition to those rights, all district students have the right to:

1. A safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment.
2. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of age, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability.
3. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty as in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
4. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those

rules from school personnel.

5. Be free from discrimination, bullying and harassment on school property or school functions including but not limited to the educational program, activities, or admission policies of their school. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), or any other legally protected category.

B. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students have the responsibility to:

1. Obey all school rules and regulations.
2. Attend school regularly and punctually unless they are legally excused and be in class on time and prepared to learn.
3. Show respect for fellow students, teachers and all school district staff.
4. Accept responsibility for their actions.
5. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
6. Conduct themselves as representatives of Worcester when participating in or attending Worcester sponsored extra-curricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
7. Respect all property.
8. Be safe, and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
9. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning.
10. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
11. React to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
12. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
13. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
14. Ask questions when they do not understand.
15. Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
16. React to direction given by teachers, administrator and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.

C. STUDENT DRESS CODE

All students are expected to give attention to personal grooming and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress, thereby helping students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting. The intent of this dress code is to foster an environment that is sanitary, safe and conducive to teaching and student learning. It is also intended to provide guidance to prepare students for their role in the workplace and society.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance shall:

1. Not endanger the health, safety and welfare of self or others.
2. Not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
3. Not include any item that is vulgar, obscene, libelous, or that denigrates another's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.
4. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
5. Recognize that extremely brief garments such as tube tops, strapless tops, net tops, halter tops, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and see-through garments may be deemed as inappropriate within the educational setting.
6. Similarly, bare midriffs more than 2 inches, backless shirts, short miniskirts and shorts may also be deemed as inappropriate to the educational setting.
7. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
8. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
9. Hats in the school building, during the school day and in the classroom at teacher discretion.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item, and if necessary or practical replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension.

D. BEHAVIOR-RELATED OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with regard for the rights, safety and welfare of other students, district personnel, and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The rules of student conduct listed hereafter are intended to focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who do not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate school rules will be required to accept penalties for their conduct.

Disciplinary action will be firm, fair, and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. The staff at a school has the responsibility for taking appropriate actions when a student is involved in a situation which disrupts the learning environment of a school.

When determining the consequences, they will take the following into consideration:

1. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
2. The age-appropriateness of the consequence.
3. The student's prior disciplinary record.
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
5. Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate.
6. The extent to which the offense interfered with the responsibility/rights/privileges/property of others.
7. The extent to which the offense posed a threat to the health and safety of others.
8. Other extenuating circumstances.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lesser penalty than subsequent violations. In the case of students who are habitually disruptive or who frequently violate school rules, administrators have the prerogative of applying more severe penalties at any stage, including removal from class and suspension from school.

Although not all-inclusive, the following list of offenses on school property or at a school function and range of consequences apply in most circumstances.

CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

WCS ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO USE THEIR DISCRETION IN DETERMINING ANY AND ALL INFRACTIONS.

The offenses are listed in four sections determined by severity of the offense. Please refer to the Discipline Chart for details of Infractions and Consequences.

INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 1 Infractions:

Including but not limited to:

Disruptive

- Disrespect toward any **student** on campus
 1. Active or passive disrespect
 2. Insults, name calling

Endangerment

- Safety issues
 1. Riding bike, skateboard, heeies, scooter, roller blades on campus
 2. Running in buildings halls, on sidewalks or in parking lot
 3. Minor bus misbehavior

Insubordinate

- Other
 1. First time dress code violation*

***Students will not be allowed to return to class until meeting the WCS dress code policy**

 2. Loitering

(Repeated offenses at Level 1 will cause all offenses to be treated as Level 2)

LEVEL 2 Infractions:

Including but not limited to:

Academic Misconduct

- Dishonesty
 1. Lying
 2. Academic dishonesty (cheating, forgery, plagiarism) *
 3. Taking another person's property

Disruptive

- Disrespect toward any **teacher, staff, student or adult** on campus
 1. Active or passive defiance
 2. Insults, name calling, inappropriate language
 3. Negative body language or gestures
- Vulgarity
 1. Obscene behavior, language or gestures
 2. Abusive language
 3. Use of ethnic or racial slurs
 4. Drawing and/or sharing obscene pictures or objects
- Other
 1. Minor computer violations
 2. Parking violations*
 - *May result in removing vehicle from WCS premises and/or loss of parking privileges
 3. Possession or use of forbidden items (other than weapons or drugs)
 4. Leaving assigned area without permission (classroom, lunch, special)
 5. Disorderly behavior
 6. Late to class/school

Endangerment

- Intimidation
 1. Written or spoken threats
 2. Extortion
 3. Bullying
 4. Harassment
- Minor aggressive act
 1. Threats of fighting or harm
 2. Hitting, tripping, pushing, holding, pulling
 3. Throwing or poking with any instrument or object
 4. Recklessness of motion
 5. Riding bikes, scooters, wheelies, roller blades or skateboards on campus

Insubordinate

- Dress code violations
 1. Refusal to comply with dress code*
 - *Students will not be allowed to return to class until meeting the WCS dress code policy
- Refusal to do academic work in a timely manner

- Public display of affection (anything more than holding hands is considered inappropriate displays of affection)

LEVEL 3 Infractions:

Including but not limited to:

Chronic repetition of level 1 or level 2 offenses may be elevated to level 3 consequences.

The **first** violation of any of the offenses listed will result in a short or long-term suspension.

Endangerment

- Harassment, threat and intimidation
 1. Bullying
 2. Any behavior that is degrading, offensive, inflammatory
- Sexual offenses
 1. Pornographic materials in any form
 2. Sexual misconduct
 3. Unwanted advances verbal or physical
- Other
 1. Failure to report to a teacher, administrator, or staff member the plans or actions of another student who has acted or plans to act in a manner against the WCS code of conduct.
 2. Repeated use of racial/ethnic slurs
 3. Spitting on or at any person
 4. Placing any foreign substance in/on another person's possessions

Disruptive

- School policies, other violations
 1. Not following directions in ASD (After School Detention)
 2. Disrupting or skipping ASD
 3. Open defiance or disrespect of teacher or staff member
 4. Use or display of gang related, drug, satanic or sexual symbols, gestures or words
 5. Excessive use of vulgar, obscene language or swearing at a staff member
 6. Misuse of cell phone or unapproved electronic devices during school hours
 7. Repeated tardiness to school or class
 8. Repeated or extreme computer violations
 9. Not attending all or part of a class
 10. Not following directions/being out of area on a field trip
 11. Not following directions during bussing/ or presenting a safety hazard
 12. Repeated dress code violations
 13. Parking infractions/speeding or reckless driving on or around campus
 14. Suspicion of being under a controlled substance or any mind-altering substance
 15. Disrupting class/school sponsored events
 16. Repeated Level 2 infractions
- Theft
 1. Petty theft
 2. Possession of/selling or receiving stolen property

- Vandalism
 1. Destruction or defacing school property
 2. Destruction or defacing personal property of others
 3. Disrespect/misuse of students, staff or property

Violent

- Aggression
 1. Aggressive provocation (gestures, verbal, written or online)
 2. Assault
 3. Fighting/physical altercation
 4. Physical injury caused by intent to do harm
 5. Threats of violence
- Weapons or dangerous items
 1. Look alike weapons

**LEVEL 4 INFRACTIONS:
including but not limited to:**

The first violation of the offenses listed in Level 4 will result in an automatic recommendation for suspension, long term suspension, superintendent’s hearing and may include involvement with appropriate authorities as mandated by state law.

Disruptive

- Trespassing
 1. Going on or remaining on campus for the purpose of disrupting any function
 2. Refusing to obey lawful order to leave campus
- Theft
 1. Burglary/breaking and entering
 2. Robbery
 3. Armed robbery
- Vandalism or criminal damage
 1. Damaging school or personal property

Endangerment

- Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drugs
 1. Distribution and/or sale of illicit substances, over the counter medication
 2. Possession, use or distribution of prescription drugs or medication, alcohol, or tobacco
 3. Look alike drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or related paraphernalia
 4. Being under the influence of any controlled or mind-altering substance
- Harassment, threat, or intimidation
 1. Repeated use of obscene language, gestures, or images
 2. Severe emotional harassment or intimidation
 3. Threatening to cause physical injury to any person campus
- Sexual Offenses
 1. Assault
 2. Unwanted touching or groping
 3. Abuse

- 4. Harassment
- 5. Indecency

Violent

- Aggression
 1. Assault
 2. Aggravated assault
- Arson
 1. Of a structure or property
 2. Of an occupied structure
- School threat
 1. False use of fire alarm, calling 911 or bomb threat
 2. Threatening or plotting to cause school damage or harm to others
- Weapons and dangerous items
 1. Carrying a weapon on campus
 2. Use or threat of use of a deadly/dangerous weapon
 3. Use or threat of use of explosive device including fireworks

DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES AND PROCEDURES

	LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS	LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS	LEVEL 3 INFRACTIONS	LEVEL 4 INFRACTIONS
CONSEQUENCES	Verbal Warning Think Sheet	Lunch Detention After School Detention	After School Detention In-school Suspension Out-of-school Suspension Loss of Privilege	Out-of-school Suspension Long-term Suspension Alternative placement
PROCEDURES	Teacher: Student Conference Parent Contact	Teacher: Parent contact before referral to administrator Administrator: Student conference Parent contact	Teacher: Referral to administrator Administrator: Student conference Parent conference	Teacher: Referral to administrator Administrator: Student conference Parent conference Superintendent's Hearing
Theft or damage by a student may require restitution of loss or repair				
Any offenses which violate federal or state laws will result in the involvement of appropriate authorities				

E. ADDITIONAL REFERRAL OPTIONS

PINS Petitions

The district may file a PINS (Person In Need of Supervision) petition in Family Court on

any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:

- a. Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.
- b. Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.

F. DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

At times it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. Students with disabilities are afforded certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. Procedures followed for suspending, removing, or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities must be consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and Part 201 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

This code of conduct affords students with disabilities subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable federal and state law and regulations.

G. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct and any potential criminal activity to a teacher, guidance counselor, the building principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the building principal, the principal's designee or the superintendent.

1. Reporting Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

The School Principal is the school employee charged with receiving all reports of harassment, bullying and discrimination; however, students and parents may make an oral or written complaint of harassment, bullying or discrimination to any teacher, administrator or school employee. Students or parents may use the District's Bullying/Harassment Student/Parent Report form to file a complaint. A copy of this form is attached to this Code as Form A. All complaints shall be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints. The district will act to promptly investigate all complaints, verbal or written, formal or informal, of allegations of discrimination, harassment and bullying; and will promptly take appropriate action to protect individuals from further discrimination, harassment and bullying.

It is essential that any student who believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying or retaliatory behavior, as well as any individual who is aware of and/or who has knowledge of, or witnesses any possible occurrence, immediately report same to any staff member or administrator. The

staff member / administrator to whom the report is made (or the staff member / administrator who witnesses or suspects bullying / cyberbullying behavior) shall document and take appropriate action to address the immediacy of the situation and shall promptly report in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

IV. STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to inappropriate staff behavior shall report the incident to any staff member, the employee's supervisor, the student's Principal or the District's designated Complaint Officer.

V. PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to establish rules for public conduct on school property and at school functions. Dress and behavior will be appropriate to the school environment and will not detract from the educational process. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, parents/guardians, teachers and district personnel. Such rules, as well as consequences for violation of such rules, are contained in this code as well as Board Policy and related Administrative Regulations.

1. Prohibited Conduct

No Person, either alone or with others shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, overly revealing, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school environment.
5. Threaten, intimidate, harass or discriminate against any school staff member or other person(s) on the basis of a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), or other legally protected status.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises, playing field (home or away) or other related school location without authorization, or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.

8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use firearms or weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the Board of Education (or its designee).
11. Loiter on or about school property
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

VI. TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

The Worcester Central School District furnishes transportation to those students whose disability or distance from the school make the service essential. Except as otherwise mandated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), riding these buses is a privilege and may be withdrawn if the student does not comply with the rules and regulations set forth in this District.

Bus drivers shall be held responsible for reasonable and acceptable behavior of students while riding the school bus. Students riding school buses are expected to conform to the rules of conduct in order to permit the bus driver to transport his/her passengers safely.

The Board of Education, the Superintendent and/or his/her designee has the authority to suspend the transportation privileges of children who are disorderly and insubordinate on buses. Generally, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to make alternative transportation arrangements for their children who have been suspended from riding the bus.

Student Lockers, Desks, and other school storage places

Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to student lockers, desks and other storage places. Such places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, and/or law enforcement officials, and may be conducted with the assistance of drug detecting dogs without prior notice.

Worcester Central School

2023-24 Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form

Date Incident Reported: _____ Person Completing Report: _____

Person Reporting Incident: _____

___ Student ___ Parent/Guardian ___ School Staff ___ Other: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

1. Name of student victim: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____

2. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (Identify student/employee):	Grade	Age
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3. On what date (s) did the incident occur? _____

4. Place an **X** next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened (more than one choice may apply):

- ___ Single occurrence
- ___ Multiple occurrences
- ___ Weapon (specify) _____
- ___ Intimidation or abuse but no verbal threat or physical contact
- ___ Verbal threat but no physical contact
- ___ Verbal threat and physical contact

5. Where/when did the incident occur?

Place: _____

Time: _____

- ___ On school property
- ___ School function
- ___ School function off school grounds

6. What did the alleged offender(s) say or do? (Attach separate sheet if necessary)

7. What did the victim say or do? (Attach separate sheet if necessary)

8. Was the conduct:

- Drug related
- Gang/group related
- Bias related (actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex or other: _____ ex. appearance, socio-economic status, etc.)
- None of the above

9. Witness information:

(Attach separate sheet if necessary)

Date Interviewed	Student Name	Information Disclosed
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

13. Do you find that this behavior constitutes bullying/harassment?

___Yes

___No

14. For VADIR reporting purposes, does the conduct constitute threatening, stalking or seeking to compel a person to do something; intentionally placing or attempting to place another person in fear of imminent physical injury; or engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability that substantially disrupts the educational process?

___Yes

___No

15. For BEDS reporting purposes, does the conduct constitute discrimination and/or harassment on school property or at a school function that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such severe or pervasive nature that it:

a. has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being; or

b. reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.

___Yes

___No

Parent Contact:

Person Contacted: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Numbers: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____