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## **INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS**

The primary function of a school program is the instruction of students. All staff activities and efforts shall be directed toward providing a high quality, effective, and ever-improving instructional program.

There are primarily three functions involved in carrying out the instructional program:

- Operating Function
- Coordinating and Developing Function
- Evaluating Function

The operating function involves classroom instruction and building program management. The coordinating and developing function includes monitoring activities (curriculum development), in-service education, and special services. The evaluation function involves assessment, data collection and synthesis and establishing future direction.

LEGAL REFS.: 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: AD, Educational Philosophy  
ADA, School District Goals and Objectives

## **ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster a recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the State.

LEGAL REFS.:        Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
                             M.G.L. 71:2

## **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 in the spring of each year. 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 (Grades 1 through 6) will operate for a minimum of 180 days. The Superintendent 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 (Grades 7 through 12) will operate for a minimum of 180 days. The Superintendent 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.

The Weymouth primary schools will operate under the guidelines for elementary schools. The middle schools and high school will operate under the guidelines for secondary schools.

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 15:1G; 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

## **SCHOOL DAY**

The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the School 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 insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until proper supervision is available as determined by the building principal.

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

## **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 structure will consist of three levels — the Primary, Middle and Secondary levels.

The Primary level includes schools with kindergarten through grade four. The Middle level includes schools with grades five through eight, and the Secondary level includes schools with grades nine through twelve.

The organization is designed to meet the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the State Department of Education and to serve the needs of all students.

## **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is 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 and gathering input from parents, and community.

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

## ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

It is the philosophy of the District to provide programs for all its students. Where additional programs and/or environments could facilitate meeting the needs of students and the philosophy and objectives of the District, alternative programs may be established.

Some children have great difficulty coping with the conventional school program and as a result will drop out of school. Some children require more support and direct supervision than is reasonably available in conventional school settings. And, some children, along with a highly structured academic experience, require a special focus on life skills and an appropriate career involvement.

The School Committee will provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the public school system.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate academic, social, and work experience to aid these young people either to reenter the regular school system, move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

### Definition

Alternative programs are defined as provisions within the public education system which offer major choices among diverse educational environments based on student needs, talents and interests; occupy a significant proportion of an individual student's time; and meet the District's philosophy and objectives.

Approval

Alternative programs shall be approved by the Committee prior to implementation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J  
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8  
of Chapter 636 of  
the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities  
and Magnet  
Educational Programs, adopted 2/25/75

## **CURRICULUM ADOPTION**

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

The Committee will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses as they are recommended by the Superintendent.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF.:        M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E

## **BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

State law requires that schools:

“ . . shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior. . . ”

The law further states that American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

### The Fundamental Skills

The business of the schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and numeracy.

The first claim of the community's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities. School dollars, school talent, school time, and whatever innovation in program is required must be concentrated on these top-ranking goals. No student should be bypassed or left out of the school's efforts to teach the fundamental skills. Schooling for basic literacy must reach all students.

LEGAL REFS.:        M.G.L. 71:1; 71:2; 71:3; 71:13  
                             603 CMR 26:05

## **BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

### Curricula

- (1) The curricula of all public school systems shall present in fair perspective the culture, history, activities, and contributions of persons and groups of different races, nationalities, disabilities, sexes, and colors.
- (2) All school books, instructional and educational materials shall be reviewed for sex-role and minority group stereotyping. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials shall be used to counteract the stereotypes depicted in such materials.
- (3) School books, instructional and educational materials purchased after the date of 603 CMR 26.00 shall in the aggregate, include characterizations and situations which depict individuals of both sexes and of minority groups in a broad variety of positive roles.
- (4) Each school shall provide equal opportunity for physical education for all students. Goals, objectives and skill development standards, where used, shall neither be designated on the basis of sex nor designed to have an adverse impact on members of either sex.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:2; 71:3; 71:13  
603 CMR 26:05

## **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

**Weymouth High School**  
**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**  
**ADMISSION POLICY**

Approved on September 15, 2016

**1. INTRODUCTION**

An admission process is necessary for career/vocational programs in which there are more applicants than openings. All applicants to the vocational technical education programs for grades nine through twelve at Weymouth High School will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy. The Weymouth School Committee approved this policy September 15, 2016.

**2. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Weymouth High School admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or homelessness status.

For students with limited English proficiency, a qualified staff member from Weymouth High School will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist by interpreting during the entire application process and admission process upon request of the applicant. Applications, brochures, school messenger, and CTE mailed items will be made available in a specific language upon request.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations. The school will provide for reasonable accommodations to assist the applicant during the entire application and admission process upon the request of the applicant.

Information on limited English proficiency and/or disability submitted voluntarily by the applicant, for the purpose of receiving assistance and accommodations during the entire application and admission process, will not affect the applicant's admission to the career/vocational technical education program.

The Weymouth School Committee recognizes and respects the right of parents or guardians to educate their child(ren) at home. The School Committee appreciates the personal and cultural uniqueness of each family and desires to ensure that the process by which school officials approve and review home education programs is both lawful and equitable. All home schooled applicants will be evaluated according to this Admission Policy. See section III, Eligibility, for additional information.

For homeless students, the district's homeless liaison will work with homeless students and their families to assist in the application process.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY**

Any ninth, tenth or eleventh grade student who is a resident of Weymouth is eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year subject to the availability of openings to the career/vocational technical education programs at Weymouth High School.

#### **Residents of Weymouth**

Resident students will be evaluated using the selection criteria contained in this Admission Policy. Priority for admission is given to Weymouth residents.

#### **Non-Residents**

*Priority for admission is given to Weymouth High School district residents.*

Students who are not residents of Weymouth are eligible to apply for fall admission subject to the availability of openings to the career/vocational technical education programs at Weymouth High School provided they expect to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter by their current school. Nonresident students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in Section 7 of the Admission Policy and according to M.G.L. c. 74 s.8A (please see the "guidelines for Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74 located at [www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres\\_guidelines](http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines)).

*\*Lastly, final approval of non-resident applicants is based on a complete review of all student records including any and all information obtained by the sending school district via the sending school district's Memorandum of Understanding with local law enforcement no later than the start of the new school year.*

#### **Transfer Students**

Transfer students from other Chapter 74 state approved programs are eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year to the vocational technical education programs grades 9-12 at Weymouth High School subject to the availability of openings to the career/vocational technical education programs at Weymouth High School provided they expect to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter by their current school. Transfer students will be evaluated using the selection criteria contained in the Admission Policy.

Students who are formally being homeschooled may apply for admission to Weymouth High School, provided all admission policy criteria are followed. The homeschooled student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a copy of the Home School Approval Letter from the local school superintendent. Home schooled students will be accepted to The Weymouth High School according to the selection criteria contained in this admission policy. Please refer to Section 6: Application Process.

Homeless students will be evaluated using the selection criteria contained in the admission policy and as required by law. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible including vocational and technical education programs.

#### **4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Weymouth High School is a comprehensive public school accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and is committed to providing quality career/vocational technical education programs.

It is the responsibility of the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Director to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enroll applicants in conformity with the Admission Policy.

The Career and Technical Education Director is responsible for the:

- A. determination of standards for admission
- B. development and implementation of admission procedures
- C. processing of applications
- D. ranking of students
- E. acceptance of students according to the procedure and criteria in the admission policy

- F. establishment and maintenance of a waiting list of acceptable candidates.

The Career/ Vocational Technical Education Director is responsible for the dissemination of information about Weymouth High School's career and technical education programs through local school assemblies, district website and press releases, and for collecting applications from students.

Weymouth High School does not participate in the School Choice Program. The school committee votes regarding school choice participation.

## **5. RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The Weymouth High School Career/Vocational Technical Education Director disseminates information about the programs through a variety of methods.

- A. Visitations with an informational slide presentation to 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes in local schools from October to February are scheduled.
- B. Tours of the high school CTE programs by 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes in local schools in February/March.
- C. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may schedule individual visits at a mutually convenient time.
- D. Informational meeting with middle school counselors, administration and other pivotal personnel
- E. Brochures, which describe vocational technical programs including academic courses, cooperative education, and special education resources, are distributed during the 8<sup>th</sup> grade visitations and are available on the school's website [www.weymouthschools.org](http://www.weymouthschools.org) and available by request in multiple language form.

## **6. APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PROGRAM PLACEMENT- FOR FALL ADMISSION INTO THE EXPLORATORY PROGRAM**

Students interested in applying for fall admission into the Exploratory Program must:

- a. Obtain an application from the Chapman Guidance Office or the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Office. Return the completed

application form to the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Office by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- b. The local school guidance counselor will submit grades from the current year report card for English, math, science and social studies; discipline record; and attendance and tardy record for terms 1,2,3.
- c. Recommendation form to be completed by guidance department from sending school.

2. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. The applicant's parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be notified by mail by the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Director.
- b. If after notifying the parent(s)/ guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application will be voided.

**APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PROGRAM PLACEMENT-  
FOR FALL ADMISSION INTO THE TENTH, ELEVENTH  
AND TWELFTH GRADE PROGRAMS.**

3. Students interested in applying for admission to the tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade career and technical education programs for fall admission must:

- a. Obtain an application from the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Office. *The application will be considered for only those programs with current openings.*
- b. Return the completed application form to the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Office by April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- c. The local school counselor will submit grades from the previous year report card for English, math, science and social studies; discipline record; and attendance and tardy record.
- d. Recommendation form to be completed by guidance department from local school.

4. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. The applicant's parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be notified by mail by the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Director.
- b. If after notifying the parent(s)/ guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application will be voided.

**APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ADMISSION TO THE  
NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH GRADE  
PROGRAMS FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR**

1. Students interested in applying for admission to the career/vocational technical education program at Weymouth High School for admission during the current school year must:
  - a. Obtain an application from the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Office. One application is all that is needed. It will cover admission to all the technical education programs in the event that a student is interested in more than one program for students entering Exploratory. All other students will be considered for programs with openings only.
  - b. Return the completed application form to the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Office by the deadline set by the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Director.
  - c. The local school guidance counselor will submit from the current year report card for English, math, science and social studies grades; discipline record; and attendance and tardy record for at least the last 2 school terms (from current or previous year, whichever applies).
  - d. Recommendation form completed by representative from sending school.
2. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a. The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by mail by the Weymouth High School Career and Technical Education Director.
  - b. If after notifying the parent(s)/ guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application will be voided.

## **LATE APPLICATIONS**

Applications received after April 1st may not be accepted. If accepted, they will be evaluated using the same criteria as other applications and their composite score will be computed. They will be placed in rank order on the established waiting list. The wait list is valid for the current school year.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Applications from students who are enrolled in a state-approved (Chapter 74) technical education program in another school (transfer student) will be considered for admission (including admission during the school year) on a space available basis, if they relocate from their current school and wish to pursue the same program of study at Weymouth High School. Their application will be evaluated according to the selection criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

## **WITHDRAWN STUDENTS**

Students who withdraw from Weymouth High School's Career and Technical Program may reapply for admission to Weymouth High School's Career and Technical Program following the procedures contained in the admission policy and will be evaluated using the selection criteria contained in the Admission Policy.

## **HOME SCHOOL**

Students who are formally being home schooled may apply for admission to Weymouth High School including admission during the school year, provided all Admission Policy criteria as followed. The Home School student's parent(s)/ Guardian(s) must submit a copy of the Home School approval letter from the local school superintendent and if grades are not available, a representative sample or portfolio of the student's body of work in English language arts or its equivalent, math, science and social studies. Home schooled students will be ranked in their portfolio/ grades (50%), and recommendation (50%).

## **7. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING EXPLORATORY**

The Career and Technical Education Director at Weymouth High School will examine, discuss and make recommendations for action

on the applications. *\*Non-residents applicants, please refer to Section 3.*

Students are admitted into the Weymouth Vocational Technical Education Exploratory program based on the point total received on the application, comprised of: **Grades, Attendance/Tardies, School Discipline and Guidance Counselor Recommendation.**

Students initially enter the Career/ Vocational Technical Program through the Career Technical Exploratory where they will examine their interests and abilities. They will explore all career/ vocational technical programs from September thru June by rotating through each program according to an established calendar.

This full year exploratory program is designed to help students learn about their talents and interests relative to a variety of career/ vocational technical programs. Students will explore all 10 career majors for 10-13 days at a time. During the first 10-13 day cycle, students will set up a portfolio in the MassCIS system and take a career assessment evaluation to highlight each individual student's talents and interest. A career plan will begin during this time period.

Students will be rank-ordered on a 100 point scale in the following manner:

- **Grades (30 Points) – Grades (30 Points) - 0 TO 7 POINTS FOR EACH ACADEMIC SUBJECT + 2 points if passing all four academic subjects.**

Grade Averages	Points
95-100	7
90-94	6
85-89	5
80-84	4
75-79	3
70-74	2
60-69	1
<60	

- **Attendance/ Tardy (20 point)**

Number of Unexcused Absences	Points
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0-3	10
4-10	8
11-20	6
21-30	4
31-40	2
41 plus	0
<b>Number of Unexcused Tardies</b>	<b>Points</b>
0-3	10
4-10	8
11-20	6
21-30	4
31-40	2
41 plus	0

- **School Discipline/ Conduct (30 points)**

<b>Discipline/ Conduct Rating</b>	<b>Points</b>
Excellent (0 detentions/ 0 suspensions)	30
Above average (1 or 2 Detentions/ 0 suspensions)	25
Average (3 or 4 detentions/0 suspensions)	20
Below Average (more than 4 detentions/ Not more than 1 in-school suspension)	15
Poor (more than 4 detentions/ 2+ in-school suspensions )	10
Inadequate (1 out-of-school suspension)	5
Unacceptable (2 or more out-of-school suspensions)	0

- **Guidance Counselor Recommendation (20 points)**

Excellent	20
Average	15
Below Average	10
Poor	5

Maximum score is 100%. All applications will be totaled and students will be accepted according to their admission total score.

**Students are evaluated and graded by each shop teacher during a period of exploration by an established grading rubric in ten areas. Each area has a maximum point value of 10 for a total of 100 points per program.**

Students are admitted into the shop of their choice based on the **average** point total they received in all shops combined during the exploratory period. The maximum score a student could achieve is 100 points. For example, a student with a point total of 98 would be placed into the career/vocational technical education program before a student with a point total of 89. If a shop fills, based on point total, before a student gets his/her first choice, the Vocational Director then moves to the student's second or third choice depending upon whether there is an opening in the shop. Again, the student is admitted based upon overall point total. If a student's point total in all shops combined is so low that they were not placed in their second or third choice shop because the shops were filled by students with higher point totals, the guidance counselor, along with the vocational director, will meet with the student and present a list of the shops with openings that the student explored and ask the student to choose one of them. Again, student selecting shops from among the shops with openings, which the student explored, will be admitted based on their point totals. The process continues until all students are placed. Exploratory students will be notified of placements/ status **before the end of the school year for the next school year**. Students on the waiting list will be notified as openings occur and remain on the wait list for one term into the 2<sup>nd</sup> school year.

## **8. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING FINAL SHOP PLACEMENT**

The Career and Technical Education Director at Weymouth High School will examine, discuss and make recommendations for action on the applications. The Director may be assisted by the Guidance Director, Special Educator Lead Teacher, and Academic departments in reviewing the applications for permanent placement.

Students are admitted into the Weymouth Vocational Technical Education Program based on a raw score comprised of: **Grades,**

**Attendance/Tardies, School Discipline and Exploratory Program Performance** following the point system below.

Students will be rank-ordered on a 100 point scale in the following manner:

- **Grades (30 Points) - 0 TO 7 POINTS FOR EACH ACADEMIC SUBJECT**  
+ 2 points if passing all four academic subjects.

<b>Grade Averages</b>	<b>Points</b>
95-100	7
90-94	6
85-89	5
80-84	4
75-79	3
70-74	2
60-69	1
<60	

- **Attendance/ Tardy (20 point)**

<b>Number of Unexcused Absences</b>	<b>Points</b>
0-3	10
4-10	8
11-20	6
21-30	4
31-40	2
41 plus	0
<b>Number of Unexcused Tardies</b>	<b>Points</b>
0-3	10
4-10	8
11-20	6
21-30	4
31-40	2
41 plus	0

- **School Discipline/ Conduct (30 points)**

<b>Discipline/ Conduct Rating</b>	<b>Points</b>
Excellent (0 detentions/ 0 suspensions)	30
Above average (1 or 2 Detentions/ 0 suspensions)	25
Average (3 or 4 detentions/0 suspensions)	20
Below Average (more than 4 detentions/ Not more than 1 in-school suspension)	15
Poor (more than 4 detentions/ 2+ in-school suspensions )	10
Inadequate (1 out-of-school suspension)	5
Unacceptable (2 or more out-of-school suspensions)	0

- **Exploratory Program Performance (20 points)**

<b>Grade Averages</b>	<b>Points</b>
90-100	5
80-89	4
70-79	3
60-69	2
0-59	0

Maximum score is 100%. All applications will be totaled and students will be accepted according to their admission total score.

Students who enroll in Weymouth High School after grade nine may explore career/ vocational technical programs that have openings, before making a program selection.

Upper class students will be placed into the selected program according to the admission score, provided space is available in the program. A wait list will be maintained by the Vocational Director for programs that are oversubscribed. The wait list is valid for the current school year.

Students who wish to transfer from one shop to another may apply for transfer. Transfer requests will be considered subject to the

availability of openings in the requested shops. Each transfer applicant will be interviewed and counseled individually to determine the appropriateness of the transfer for the particular student.

## **9. REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESS**

The applicant's parent(s)/ guardian(s), upon receipt of a letter from Weymouth High School indicating that the applicant was not accepted or was placed on a wait list for a particular program (shop) (major), may request a review of the decision by sending a letter requesting a review to the Superintendent within thirty days of the receipt of the rejection/ wait list letter. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the letter with the findings of the review within thirty days.

File: IHAI

**Admission Application Form  
Weymouth High School  
One Wildcat Way  
Weymouth, MA 02190  
781-337-7500**

Weymouth High School admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Weymouth High School has a published Admission Policy. A copy may be obtained from the Weymouth High School Guidance Office. The policy gives the admission criteria, as well as a description of the entire admission process.

This application form must be completed and submitted to the Director of Career and Technical Education at Weymouth High School by **April 1<sup>st</sup>**. In addition to this application form, the applicant's current guidance counselor will submit transcripts of the criteria that will be used for admission that includes the applicant's grades, attendance record and discipline/conduct record. For fall admission, this would be terms 1 and 2 of the current school year.

<b>APPLICANT SECTION</b>
--------------------------

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guidance Counselor** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PARENT/ GUARDIAN SECTION</b>
---------------------------------

**Parent/ Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>GUIDANCE COUNSELOR SECTION</b>
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Please submit the transcript of grades, attendance and discipline/conduct as required by the Weymouth Admission Policy.

Name of Guidance Counselor:\_\_\_\_\_

I will submit the required information by the due date.                      Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_  
If no, please explain.

<b>SIGNATURE SECTION</b>
--------------------------

The statements and information furnished by the undersigned in this application form are true and complete.

The undersigned applicant's parent(s)/ guardian(s) give permission for representatives of the sending school to release the applicant's records of grades, attendance, conduct/ discipline to the Weymouth High School Guidance Office for the purpose of admission.

*Our signatures certify that we have read and agree with the above statements.*

**Student Signature**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Guidance Counselor:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

<b>VOLUNTARY INFORMATION SECTION</b>
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The information requested in this section is not required for admission. Submission of the information is entirely voluntary. Information submitted voluntarily by the applicant will not affect the applicant's admission to the school. The information, if supplied, will be used for monitoring equal educational opportunity in the school district. In addition, note that applicants with disabilities may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations during the entire application and admission process. Applicants who are English language learners or limited English proficient may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of receiving interpretive services during the entire application and admission process.

**Race: American Indian or Alaskan Native:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Asian or Pacific Islander**\_\_\_\_\_  
**Black:**\_\_\_\_\_ **White:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Hispanic:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Combination of two or more races.**

**Person with a disability: Yes:**\_\_\_\_\_ **If yes, do you need accommodations during the application for admission process? Yes:**\_\_\_\_\_ **No:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Person who is an English language learner or limited English proficient: Yes:**\_\_\_\_\_ **If yes, do you need language assistance during the application for admission process? Yes:**\_\_\_ **If yes, please describe the assistance needed.**

## **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. Health education will be taught in grades K through 4 and as a separate class in grades 5-8. In addition, high school students are required to complete one health course in either grade nine or ten.

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

## **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION**

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Weymouth School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our 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 education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will direct building principals to distribute such material. Parents/guardians who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

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

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent or guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instructional material 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. Materials will be available at the office of the Assistant Superintendent or with the Coordinator of Health Services.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of this 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 or guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may

send a written request to the Commissioner of education for review of the issue in dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each Principal by September 1 of each school year. All teachers should be familiar with this policy.

## **SAMPLE NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIANS**

[Date]

The Weymouth Public Schools provide a Comprehensive Health Education program. In grades K-4, the classroom teachers address health issues with their students. The disciplines of Physical Education, Family and Consumer Sciences (Home Economics), and Health together share in the responsibility of covering topics that relate to health education in grades 5-12. Required and elective course offerings provide a full range of health topics. Instruction in Science includes topics on reproduction in grade 7 and at the high school in Biology.

Student questions are answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. The approved curricula cover a variety of health topics. The Comprehensive School Health content areas are: Personal Health. Physical Activity, Nutrition, Family Life, Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Sexuality and Abstinence (8-9), Personal Safety, Mental and Emotional health, Disease Prevention, Resource Management, Healthy Relationships, Community Health and Environmental Health. We encourage students to discuss all topics presented in class with a caring adult in their family. Curriculum materials used for each course will be available for your review in school libraries, the office of the Health Grant Coordinator or with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

In accordance with Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum which primarily involves human sexual education or human issues. To receive an exemption, simply send a letter requesting an exemption to your child's school Principal.

The Health Education Advisory Committee strongly recommends that all students participate in the lessons scheduled for their grade level. Our goal is to provide your children with a firm foundation for life-long healthy decisions. If you have any questions, please call.

## **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.

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

Approved 9.15.16

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMODATIONS (PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)**

The goals of the District's Special Education Program are to provide each students with special needs with the opportunity to achieve at his/her own level, and to gain independence and self-reliance so that every student can become a functional member of society. The District is committed to educating every student in the least restrictive environment in which effective progress can be made while ensuring that the student has access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The requirements of the Federal Law (IDEA) and the Massachusetts Special Education Regulations (Chapter 28) will be followed in the evaluation and identification of students with special needs and the determination of appropriate services and educational programming. In accordance with the state regulations, all children with special needs between the ages of three and twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education services.

The School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the general education setting when provided with appropriate supports, accommodations and specialized instruction. A continuum of services ranging from full inclusion to substantially separate programs is provided within the district.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of some children are so unique that a more intensive level of programming may be necessary to ensure that all students can access the general education curriculum. In those rare instances when appropriate programs, supports and services are not available within the District, the Committee will provide students with access to out of district programs where such instruction and specialized programming are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs to students with special needs. Parents are viewed as equal partners and are encouraged to be active participants in all aspects of the special education process. In the event of any disagreement concerning evaluation, eligibility determination, program development and placement, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

Legal Refs.: The Individuals with Disabilities Act 2004 (PL 108-446)  
Massachusetts Board of Education Regulations (603 CMR  
28.00 et seq.)  
Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 71B et seq.)

**PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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

LEGAL REF.:           Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

CROSS REF.:           ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap

**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 equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to those children whose dominant language is other than English, the District shall provide suitable instructional programs for all such students in grades kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state statutes and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Foreign exchange or visiting students are not eligible for English as a Second Language programs.

## HOME SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the district, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents to teach the children,
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

**A student being educated in a home-based program within the district may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent.**

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles  
Care and Protections of Charles – MASS. Supreme  
Judicial Court  
399 Mass. 324 (1987)

## HOME SCHOOLING

In March 1987, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decided the case entitled *Care and Protection of Charles*, 399 Mass. 324 (1987). The decision sets forth the legal standards for approval of home education programs for children of compulsory school age in Massachusetts. This advisory opinion, prepared by Rhoda E. Schneider, General Counsel of the Department of Education, is intended to inform public school officials and other interested parties of the standards set forth in the decision. It supersedes the department's January 4, 1980 Advisory Opinion on Home Education, although the approval guidelines established by the court are very similar to those in the 1980 advisory.

There are four main components to the decision, which may be summarized as follows:

- I. The School Committee may enforce the compulsory school attendance law through a care and protection proceeding.

The court held that the Canton School Committee had authority to file a petition for care and protection (pursuant to General Laws Chapter 119, Section 24) with respect to three school-age children whose parents had not enrolled them in public school or an approved private school, and who had not been granted permission to educate them at home. The court noted that the compulsory school attendance law (General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1) states that "the School Committee of each town shall provide for and enforce the school attendance of all children (ages 6-16) actually residing therein in accordance here-with," and concluded that one appropriate way for the School Committee to do so is a petition to find the children in need of care and protection with respect to their educational care.

- II. The compulsory school attendance law provides adequate standards to determine a child's need for educational care and to withstand constitutional challenge.

The court held that General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1, the compulsory school attendance law, provides the standards by which a judge may determine that a child is in need of educational care, and is neither void for vagueness nor an unlawful delegation of legislative authority. In pertinent part, the statute provides:

Every child between the minimum and maximum ages established for school attendance by the board of education (6-16) . . . shall . . . attend a public day school . . . or some other day school approved by the School Committee . . . unless the child attends school in another town . . . *but such attendance shall not be required of a child . . . who is being otherwise instructed in a manner approved in advance by the Superintendent or the School Committee.* (Emphasis added.)

The court concluded that this grant of authority to the Superintendent or School Committee to approve an alternative manner of instruction for a child (specifically, home instruction) is not unconstitutionally vague, because the school officials may draw approval criteria from three sources. First, the legislatures established a general framework for public education, by mandating the subjects that must be taught in public schools and qualifications public school teachers must meet. (See General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 38G.) Second, the court stated that proposed home education programs are subject to the same standard of approval as private schools under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1: File: IHBG-E

For the purposes of this section, school committees shall approve a private school when satisfied that the instruction in all the studies required by law equals in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town; but shall not withhold such approval on account of religious teaching .

Third, the court set forth specific procedures and approval guidelines for home education programs, which are discussed in section IV of this advisory. In light of all these factors, the court concluded that the law provides reasonable standards for reviewing and approving home education programs, and therefore meets constitutional requirements.

- III. Parents have a basic right to direct their children's education, but that right is subject to reasonable regulation to promote the state's substantial interest in the education of its citizens.

Several United States Supreme Court decisions, cited by the court, have affirmed substantial state interest in the education of its citizenry, with which parents' basic right to direct children's education must be reconciled. The court agreed with the parents that "the state interest in this regard lies in ensuring that the children residing within the state receive an education, not that the educational process be dictated in its minutest detail." However, the court concluded that the approval process required under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1 "is necessary to promote effectively the state's substantial interest," and that the School Committee may use that statutory approval process to impose on home education programs "certain reasonable educational requirements similar to those required for public and private schools."

- IV. Guidelines for approval of home education plans.

Having concluded that the approval process under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1 is constitutionally permissible the court set forth guidelines for parents and school officials to follow in considering home education plans. They may be summarized as follows:

- A. Procedures.

- 1. Parents must obtain approval *prior* to removing the children from the public school and beginning the home education program.

2. The Superintendent or School Committee must provide the parents with an opportunity to explain their proposed plan and present witnesses on their behalf. A hearing during a School Committee meeting is sufficient to meet this requirement.
3. In obtaining approval from the Superintendent or School Committee, the parents must demonstrate that the home education proposal meets the requirements of General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1, in that the instruction will equal “in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town.”
4. If the home education plan is rejected, the Superintendent or School Committee must detail the reasons for the decision, and allow the parents to revise their proposal to remedy its inadequacies. If they begin the home education program without the necessary approval, the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection petition, in which it would have to show that the instruction in the home does not meet the statutory standard for thoroughness, efficiency and educational progress.

B. Approval factors.

The court listed the following factors that may be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.

General Laws Chapter 71, Section 1, 2 and 3 list the subjects of instruction that must be taught in the public schools. Section 1 allows the School Committee also to require such other subjects as it may deem expedient. In addition, the Superintendent or School Committee “may properly consider the length of the proposed home school year and the hours of instruction in each subject,” noting that state law requires public schools to operate for a minimum of 180 days.

2. The competency of the parents to teach the children.

General Laws Chapter 71, Section 1 provides that teachers shall be “of competent ability and good morals.” The court noted that parents providing education at home need not be certified, nor must they have college or advanced academic degrees. However, “the Superintendent or School Committee may properly

inquire as to the academic credentials or other qualifications of the parent or parents who will be instructing the children.”

3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.

The Superintendent or School Committee need access to this material “to determine the type of subjects to be taught and the grade level of instruction for comparison purposes with the curriculum of the public schools,” but they “may not use this access to dictate the manner in which the subjects will be taught.”

4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

The Superintendent or School Committee may properly requiresuch testing, and in consultation with the parents may decide where the testing will occur and the type of testing instrument to be used. The court noted that “where practical, a neutral party should administer the test,” and that the school authorities and parents may agree to other means of measuring the children’s progress, such as periodic progress reports or dated work samples. In addition, if suggested that on-site visits by public school representatives may be included, although “with appropriate testing procedures or progress reports, there may be no need for periodic on-site visits or observations of the learning environment by school authority personnel.”

## V. Conclusion.

The Supreme Judicial Court’s decision provides both a legal framework and useful guidance for public school officials and parents with respect to proposals to educate a school-age child at home. We recommend that Superintendents and School Committees review their procedures and approval criteria for home education plans, to assure that they are consistent with the court’s decision. As long as the school officials making the decision to approve or disapprove a home education program do so reasonably and in good faith, using the standards and procedures discussed above, it is likely that a court will uphold their educational judgments.

## **SUMMER SCHOOLS**

The school system will conduct summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding for such programs is available. The focus of the program will be remedial work in major academic areas.

Students at all instructional levels may attend approved summer schools for remedial, enrichment, or make-up purposes. Credit towards graduation requirements may be granted high school students in line with regulations of the school district.

All summer programs will be subject to annual approval by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.:        M.G.L. 71:28

## **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, 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 which 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.

## **RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES**

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion—Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies—Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity—Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a review committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities or sexual orientation.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

## TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Textbooks with a copyright date older than 10 years will not be used by classroom teachers as part of the assigned instructional program unless a waiver to this policy for a specific textbook has been granted in writing by the office of the Superintendent.

Assuming that the normal physical serviceability of a textbook is five years, any decision to rebind worn books will reflect the policy of not using a textbook past a copyright date of ten years. Exceptions to this rebinding policy must also be granted in writing by the office of the Superintendent.

Textbooks older than 10 years and/or no longer needed may be disposed of, with the approval of the Superintendent, by (1) sale; (2) giving them to students so requesting; or (3) discarding.

Selection of a new textbook, either as a replacement for an outdated textbook or for a new course, will be governed by its appropriateness to the subject being taught, the ability level of the students involved, and its fair representation of topics or subject. Whenever practicable and depending upon the type of use to which a textbook is subjected, the purchase of paperback copies will be encouraged for better dollar economy.

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be purchased shall rest with the District-wide curriculum committees in each subject area. The committee includes administrators, department chairs, and teachers who will use the texts and other staff members as found desirable.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials shall apply to textbooks. Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook support materials shall be chosen:

- To advance the educational objectives of the school system and particular objectives of the course program.
- To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum.
- To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks, as stated above, are such importance, particular care shall be taken in their selection as to content.

Although many points must be examined, the School Committee directs the staff to be mindful of the following considerations:

The needs of all learners must be provided for.  
Attention should be given to gender roles depicted in the materials.

The textbook and textbook support materials should lead the student and

teacher beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.

If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of varied points of view.

Because textbooks are selected for several years' use, special attention also shall be given their physical characteristics, durability, format and price.

A fee will be charged which reflects the value of a textbook lost or mutilated by a student. A waiver or reduction of this fee may be made by the Principal on the basis of economic hardship.

#### Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Textbooks

The continuous review of textbooks 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 which is no longer accurate nor current.
- 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 textbooks are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

LEGAL REFS.: 71:48; 30B:7; 71:50  
603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or  
Instructional Material

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee recognizes that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

The School Committee believes that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

LEGAL REF.:        603 CMR 26:05

## 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, 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.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

## 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 building administrator. In any questionable instance, the Superintendent should be informed and shall decide whether its use 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

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR COMPUTERS, NETWORKS, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE INTERNET**

It is the general policy of the Weymouth Public Schools that network services are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the Weymouth Public Schools. Users of the Weymouth Public Schools/Town of Weymouth network must acknowledge their understanding of the general policy and guidelines as a condition of using the network.

The Weymouth Public School network utilizes a content filter to restrict minors' access to materials that may be harmful to them. The employment of this filter and this Acceptable Use Policy ensure that the Weymouth Public Schools meet the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act.

The primary purpose of the Weymouth Public Schools network is to support and enhance educational programs. The network includes, but is not limited to Internet access, network storage, and electronic mail communications. Members of the Weymouth Public School community are responsible for good behavior while on the network. The use of computers and computer networks is a privilege, not a right. Violations of the rules described in this policy will be dealt with in a serious manner. School personnel and administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. Violators will lose all computer privileges, and be subject to other applicable consequences.

The Weymouth Public Schools believe connectivity to the Internet provides a valuable resource to enhance learning. Parents/Guardians should be aware that student's level of access will depend on their particular grade level. The following is a description of the way the Weymouth Public Schools will incorporate network use and Internet Access in the schools:

- a. **Grades K-4**: During school time, teachers of students in grades kindergarten through four will guide them toward appropriate materials. Internet access at these grade levels will be limited to teacher-directed and teacher-demonstrated use.
- b. **Grades 5-8**: Students at these grade levels may have the opportunity to conduct research via the Internet in the classroom, only during directly supervised instruction.
- c. **Grades 9-12**: Students in grades nine through twelve may be given individual access and may have the opportunity to access the Internet and conduct independent research on the Internet, both during classroom instruction and outside of classroom instruction.

The Weymouth Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk that users will encounter objectionable material on the Internet. However, there is no absolute guarantee that this will not happen. Through the use of an Internet content filter, supervision, and responsible use, the Weymouth Public Schools believe that the Internet can be used safely and effectively. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and the Internet.

**Provisions:**

The use of the Weymouth Public Schools network must be consistent with, and directly related to, the educational purpose of the school department. A violation of the terms in this policy may result in suspension and/or termination of network access. The Weymouth Public Schools will cooperate with law enforcement officials in any investigation relating to misuse of the Weymouth Public Schools computer infrastructure.

1. Acceptable uses of the network are activities that support learning and teaching. Network users are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual educational needs and which take advantage of the network capabilities available.
2. Unacceptable uses of the network include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Violating the rights to privacy of students or employees of Weymouth Public Schools, or others outside the school system.
  - b. Using profanity, obscenity, or other language that may be offensive to another user.
  - c. Sending "chain letters" and "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals.
  - d. Copying materials in violation of copyright law.
  - e. Overriding the Internet content filter and desktop security software.
  - f. Using the Weymouth Public Schools network for gambling.
  - g. Installing software without a current license and teacher/administrator approval.
  - h. Attempting to copy, change, read, or use files/applications that do

not belong to the user.

- i. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs and equipment, including attempts to override firewalls, servers, users' passwords, email applications, and other resources on the network.
  - j. Use of "Chat" applications for non-educational purposes.
  - k. Printing Internet material without supervising teacher permission.
  - l. Unnecessary use of printers for non-educational use.
  - m. Plagiarizing, which is the taking of someone else's words, ideas, or findings and intentionally presenting them as your own without properly giving credit to their source.
  - n. Using the network for financial gain or for any commercial, political, or illegal activity.
  - o. Attempting to degrade or disrupt system performance or unauthorized entry to and/or destruction of computer systems and files.
  - p. Accessing or re-posting personal communications without the author's prior consent.
  - q. Revealing home phone numbers, addresses, or other personal information.
  - r. Making personal purchases or unauthorized orders using the Weymouth Public Schools name.
  - s. Accessing, downloading, storing, sending, or printing files or messages that are sexually explicit, obscene, or that offends or tends to degrade others. The administration invokes its discretionary rights to determine such suitability.
  - t. Downloading or copying information on to disks or hard drives without prior teacher/administrator approval.
  - u. Use the network to access any other network via the Internet.
3. The following people are entitled to use the network:
- a. All Weymouth Public Schools staff.

- b. All Weymouth Public Schools students under the supervision of a staff member and/or parent/guardian with the proper signatures of the student handbook.
  - c. Others who request Guest Accounts from the Network Administrator. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be granted, if warranted, as needs and resources permit.
4. Weymouth Public School System makes no express or implied warranties for the Internet access it provides. Weymouth Public Schools cannot completely eliminate access to information that is offensive or illegal and residing on networks outside of the Weymouth Public School system. The accuracy and quality of information obtained cannot be guaranteed. Weymouth Public Schools will not guarantee the availability of access to the Internet and will not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties. Information sent or received cannot be assured to be private.
5. **Please note:** Students will not be issued Internet e-mail accounts. Educational use of the Internet e-mail can be accessed through the classroom teacher's account. Students engaged in a special project may obtain e-mail accounts if requested by the Principal/administrator.
6. Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Further, electronic messages sent to or from a computer owned by the school district or through a school server may be considered part of the public record.

**Web Page Policy: Guidelines/Criteria for Posting Student Work and Photographs**

All employees of the Weymouth Public Schools have the option to design a web site reflecting their classroom/administrative responsibilities/activities. Web pages shall be used for educational purposes and follow the guidelines set forth in the Acceptable Use Policy. All Web Sites are controlled by the supervising teacher/administrator, and at no time will students be granted access to publish content to the Internet. In order to have student work published on school hosted web pages, a parent or guardian must grant permission. This permission will be based on the Web Page Policy described below.

1. All Web Pages that represent the Weymouth Public School Community shall:

- a. Have educational value and reflect the goals and objectives of the Weymouth Public School System and the curriculum.
- b. Adhere to the Weymouth Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy.
- c. Provide rich curriculum based information and be content driven.
- d. Follow the rules of copyright laws.

2. Web Page Guidelines:

- a. All web pages and published work shall be dated.
- b. No advertisements shall be present on Weymouth Public Schools web pages.
- c. No student shall publish, modify, or delete web page content on a school sponsored web site. All web page modifications must be completed by the supervising teacher/ webmaster/administrator.
- d. The administration has the right to remove content if found questionable.
- e. The author is responsible to research all hyperlinks “directly” linked from their web page. It is understood that hyperlinks beyond the Weymouth Public Schools website are out of control of the author and should be viewed with discretion.
- f. In order to publish student photographs/classroom work, permission must be granted by a parent/guardian. Permission is based on the following criteria:
- g. Web site authors shall NOT use digital photographs of individual students. Images of students in a group setting are recommended (2+ students).
  - ii. Students published photographs shall NOT be referenced with their name.
  - iii. Students published work shall include First Name and Last Initial Only.
  - iv. High School students in grades 9-12 may obtain parental permission to have their full names published to provide recognition for their outstanding work. This permission is based

on a per document/assignment basis. Please note: With this permission the student photograph policy will still be in effect. (Reference section 2, bullet f.ii of the Web Page Policy)

- v. Under no conditions should a students home address, e-mail address, or phone number be listed.
- h. If replies to a student published work are appropriate, the sponsoring teacher's address should be the email address displayed.

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**This agreement is to be distributed to all Weymouth Public School students. A signed agreement form must be on file for each student who wishes to use any computer system in the Weymouth Public Schools.**

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## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips by student groups must have the approval of Building Principals and the Superintendent or designee on a form provided for this purpose.

There shall be at least two chaperones on all field trips. The chaperone to student ratio shall not exceed one to fifteen. All chaperones shall consent to a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check which must be completed prior to the field trip.

Overnight trips must have the approval of the School Committee; taking into consideration the student to chaperone ratio, in relationship to the accommodations, location and duration of the field trip. All chaperones shall complete a CORI and SAFIS (Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services) check prior to the field trip.

Supervision of students is the ongoing responsibility of those chaperoning the trip and will be maintained in a manner consistent with building policy and the student handbook.

Students who participate in a school sponsored field trip must have written approval from the parent or guardian.

The Building Principal shall be responsible for ensuring that parents or guardians receive written details of any school sponsored field trip for their child's class.

School employees may use school facilities to organize non-school-sponsored trips—subject to approval of the Superintendent and the School Committee. School Employees using school facilities for such purposes must inform parents in writing that the trip is not school sponsored. No materials will be distributed within the schools without the prior approval of the Superintendent. The material must include a disclaimer that the trip is not sponsored or approved by the Weymouth Public Schools or the Weymouth School Committee; however the student conduct will be consistent with the WPS handbook policies and procedures.

Parents should exercise careful scrutiny of non-school sponsored trips as the School Committee and Administration shall not be held responsible/liable for such trips.

CROSS REF: IJOC School Volunteers

*Date Approved by SC: 1/19/17*

## COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS

Human resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view. All requests for community resource persons/speakers must have prior approval of the building administrator.

## SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators. In accordance with Policy File ADDA, the Weymouth Public Schools will obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I) from the criminal history systems board for any volunteer(s) in the school department who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to accepting the person as a volunteer.

## **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

The philosophy of the School Committee concerning academic achievement, as well as children's social growth and development, is based on the premise that children have diverse capabilities and individual patterns of growth and learning.

Therefore, the Committee feels it is important that teachers have as much and as accurate knowledge of each student as possible in order to assess his/her needs, his/her growth, and make instructional plans for him/her. A sharing of information among parent, teacher, and student is essential.

The Committee supports staff efforts to find better ways to measure and report student progress. It will require that:

1. Parents be informed regularly, and at least three times a year as a minimum, of the progress their children are making in school.
2. Parents will be alerted and conferred with as soon as possible when a child's performance or attitude becomes unsatisfactory or shows marked or sudden deterioration.
3. Insofar as possible, distinctions will be made between a student's attitude and his/her academic performance.
4. At comparable levels, the school system will strive for consistency in grading and reporting except as this is inappropriate for certain classes or certain students.
5. When no grades are given but the student is evaluated informally in terms of their own progress, the school staff will also provide a realistic appraisal of the student's standing in relation to their peers.
6. When grades are given, the school staff will take particular care to explain the meaning of marks and symbols to parents.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS**

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

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

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.

## HOMEWORK

The term “homework” refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class. As a school community, Weymouth Public Schools regards homework as an integral part of the academic program. Homework serves a critical role in achieving instructional objectives. The purposes of homework include the following: to enhance students’ achievement; to help students become self-directed, responsible, and independent learners; and to communicate with families about what is happening in the classroom. The communication around, and understanding of, homework expectations is a shared responsibility among the student, teacher, and family.

The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest in the content on the part of the student. Homework is a learning activity that should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. This should be established through assignments that encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently and collaborate with other students on group assignments.

Weymouth Public Schools strives to ensure that teachers and/or their students establish a consistent pattern of meaningful homework. The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment. If the assignment is not clear and specific, the student and/or parent should communicate with the teacher for clarification.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual differences of students such as health, ability, conditions at home, and educational resources at home. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in the use of them. If a student does not have the needed materials or needs additional instruction in the use of those materials, the student and/or parent should communicate with the teacher.

There are many other learning activities in the life of a student besides homework. Participating in school activities, cultural events, religious observances, and family events are important for students. If a student has other learning activities that are making homework completion a challenge, the student and/or parent should communicate with the teacher. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances.

Parents and students can expect homework to be:

- Planned and well organized by the teacher.
- Consistent with the needs and abilities of students.

- Purposeful to students.
- Reviewed with varying forms of formal and informal feedback given to students in a reasonable timeframe given the nature of the assignment and need for student incorporation of feedback for the next assignment.
- Connected to learning goals.

Homework may be assigned to be completed outside of the school day for:

- Application of Knowledge: to give students the opportunity to authentically demonstrate and exhibit learned knowledge and skills.
- Practice and Review: to help students consolidate and master specific content, skills, and processes that have been presented in class.
- Preparation: to help students gain the maximum benefits from future lessons.
- Extension: to provide students with opportunities to transfer specific processes or concepts to new situations.
- Creativity: to require students to integrate many concepts, skills, and processes in order to produce original responses.
- Study Skills: to support students with skills necessary to study and self-monitor. Skills should be explicitly taught within the classroom and practiced at home. Choice should be incorporated based on the variety of learning styles students present.

SC Approved: 4/27/17

## **RETENTION POLICY**

### **PRIMARY LEVEL**

Although parental input is taken into account when considering promotion or non-promotion, the school principal, with the recommendation of the classroom teacher, has the final authority for making the decision on grade placement.

Retention decisions will be based on the following guidelines:

1. Academic concerns and possible interventions to address a child's deficiencies in meeting grade level expectations should be discussed early in the school year.
2. Students will be considered for retention based on the following criteria:
  - A child in kindergarten who has not met grade level standards in English/language arts and/or who has been recommended by the teacher for retention.
  - A child in grade 1 who has not met grade level standards in English/language arts and mathematics and who has not demonstrated continuous progress.
  - A child in grade 2 who has not met grade level standards in English/language arts and mathematics and who has scored a year or more below in these areas on standardized tests.
  - A child in grade 3 or 4 who has not met grade level standards in English/language arts and mathematics and who has scored at the warning level on state tests:
  - Other factors [may](#) be considered.

### **MIDDLE LEVEL**

Students who fail any of the four major academic subjects, (English Language Arts, mathematics, history/social studies and science), students who have not met grade level standards, and/or whose attendance does not meet state guidelines may be considered for retention. At risk students will be reviewed by a retention review committee which may be composed of a school administrator, teachers, counselor, student and his/her parents or guardians.

## **HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL**

Specific requirements for grade level promotion as well as a detailed list of the requirements for receiving a diploma for graduation from the Weymouth Public Schools is contained within the Program of Studies booklet. The contents are reviewed and approved by the Weymouth School Committee annually. In addition, all state requirements must be met to be eligible for a diploma. Students must satisfy all Weymouth High School graduation requirements to participate in the graduation ceremony. Students must pass the English Language Arts and Mathematics sections of the MCAS test and satisfy all Weymouth High School graduation requirements to receive a diploma.

## **EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. To check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Department of Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent.

## **DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS**

A district program of testing for assessment/evaluation shall be coordinated throughout the school district by the appropriate administrator who shall be responsible for scheduling, disseminating, and collecting tests and for reporting and interpreting all group test results.

Measurements of educational achievement shall be prepared so that data is consistent for comparison purposes within the school district from year to year and with other school districts to the extent required by rules of the State Board of Education.

## **TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS**

It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

## **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 and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, 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 intelligent 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 when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. 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. 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 contro-

versial 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 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 outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

The Superintendent may grant an outside 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 State 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:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

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. 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. The Weymouth 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. Students' safety, health and well-being, educational benefit, and the Americans with Disability Act will all be taken into account for approval of animals in school buildings.

SOURCE: MASC February 2011