



**Middle School
Community Handbook**

2025-2026

Worcester Academy
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Introduction

August 2025

Dear Worcester Academy Middle School Students, Parents, and Guardians,

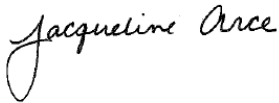
We believe that the core values of Worcester Academy - Honor, Respect, Community, Personal Growth, and Challenge - guide our decision making and behavior. It is essential and equitable for us to articulate clearly what those expectations are and what they should look like in practice.

The Worcester Academy motto, "*Achieve the Honorable*," enjoins us to act with integrity, to do what we know is right, whether or not someone else is looking or anyone gets credit for it. Sometimes that's difficult to do, and sometimes it helps to have clear rules and guidelines set forth that explicitly state what is or is not acceptable behavior. That is the goal of this handbook: to clarify the expectations, policies, and protocols that reflect our values and help us to uphold our commitment to the community and to one another.

The Middle School at Worcester Academy has many opportunities to offer to you. Take advantage of these many opportunities and new experiences throughout the year. Welcome to all new and returning members of the Middle School student body. We look forward to engaging and sharing in a productive year with all of you!

Please read through the entire handbook and direct questions to your advisors, teachers, or me.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline Arce". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Warm regards,".

Jacqueline Arce
Head of the Middle School

WORCESTER ACADEMY GUIDING DOCUMENTS

HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY

In 1834, a group of Worcester citizens established the Worcester County Manual Labor High School. Under the guidance of Isaac Davis, who would serve as President of the Trustees for thirty-five years, and Silas Bailey, the school's first Principal, the institution began as "a school for the education of youth in the languages, arts and sciences, for promoting habits of industry and economy, and inculcating the principles of piety and virtue." In 1846, the name was changed to Worcester Academy, and in 1869, the school moved to its present site on Providence Street. Worcester Academy, which now stands on Union Hill, is primarily the product of Daniel Webster Abercrombie, Principal from 1882-1918; under their leadership historically significant buildings still in use today were constructed.

As with most independent schools in existence for over one hundred years, there have been times of both difficulty and prosperity. Nonetheless, through the years the school has remained true to its mission as well as its traditional approach. For example, in the 1890's, to meet the needs of a changing society and to complement the Academy's strictly classical education, Dr. Abercrombie introduced courses in science patterned after those he saw taught in Europe. Other significant events include the readmission of girls in 1974 and the establishment of a middle school in 1987. (The latter was an administrative reorganization since seventh and eighth graders had been enrolled for many years.) The addition of grade six in 1996 constitutes another significant change in the composition of the Academy. Recent physical improvements include the addition of Rader Hall, the New Balance Athletic Fields, Morse Field at South Campus and the renovation of the Kingsley Laboratories and Walker Hall.

THE ACADEMY HYMN

To you O home of learning, Our voices now are raised;
We sing to you dear Worcester this hymn of thanks and praise.
You teach the good of knowledge, and wisely guide our way;
We thank you, Alma Mater, for truth revealed each day.

Sustain your youth, O Worcester, in honor keep us true,
And when we tire or falter, our courage please renew,
Help us in every conflict to champion what is right,

And in the hour of darkness, let knowledge be our light.
Confirm in us the union of mind and hand and heart,
And make us firm in friendship when time our ways shall part.
Wherever life may lead us, we ask that we your youth,
Well taught by you, dear Worcester, may honor peace and truth.

L.J. Smith (revised by D. Irving, 1999)

MISSION STATEMENT

Worcester Academy exists to instill in its students the desire to learn throughout life, to engage passionately with the world around them, and to be honorable persons of strong and resourceful character.

CORE VALUE STATEMENTS

We are a community – curious, thoughtful, generous, and thriving in our diversity. We embrace each of our core values as essential to the mission of Worcester Academy and as testimony of our beliefs and commitments.

Honor

Integrity, honesty, respect, fairness, and responsibility inform our actions and beliefs. These attributes are the foundations for “Achieving the Honorable” in both our public and private lives.

Respect

We believe in the inherent worth of every person, celebrating difference in a community rich with diverse gifts and talents. We seek commonality in our relationships regardless of title, background, or individual abilities and challenges. We also accept responsibility for sustaining the world around us, from the campus to the global environment.

Community

The act of learning brings all members of this community together. We share a belief in the importance of serving others through both leadership and generosity. A respectful and compassionate approach to citizenship guides our actions on this campus and in the wider world.

Personal Growth

Personal growth may be measured in many ways; the most authentic, however, is when we are true to ourselves. We seek to fulfill our potential by building habits of mind and body that promote growth in knowledge and understanding, ability and confidence, poise and leadership. By doing so, we nurture a desire for lifelong learning and a commitment to excellence in all phases of life.

Challenge

Attaining excellence in a changing global environment requires adaptability, creativity, and intellectual courage. We seek relevance in our work, and provide a rigorous yet nurturing environment in which we all may thrive. We value hard work and the disciplined application of knowledge and skills in our learning and institutional practices.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Worcester Academy celebrates the individual and collective diversity of our School community and respects, affirms, and protects the dignity and worth of each person in it. Our commitments are reflected in our mission and core values, in our curriculum, and in the policies, programs, and practices of the School. Given the long history of systems of oppression in the communities that Worcester Academy students, faculty, and alumni navigate, we must reconcile this, and prioritize thoughtful, supportive engagement of the lived experiences of individuals. Additionally, we will work to eliminate all oppressive language and practices that target any identity and lived experience.

- We strive to create accountability for diversity, equity, and inclusion and cross-cultural humility, in our learning community and beyond.
- We strive for life-long learning that elevates diverse interests and perspectives and engagement as global citizens.
- We strive for empathetic leadership, and making equitable and honorable decisions.

Learning Principles

The Learning Principles inform the conditions that generally improve learning. These are informed and supported by research, based on what is known about learning, not what is believed. They serve to guide curriculum planning, instruction and assessment. They also provide a shared understanding across our community to discuss best practice, and can function as criteria for a variety of school actions such as making professional development decisions, resource selection, professional goal-setting, environment design and hiring. The Learning Principles are an important component of our Guiding Statements (Mission, Core Values, Portrait of a Learner, Equity Statement).

Learning is enhanced when students...

- find interest and meaning in what they are learning through connecting learning to context and allowing for real world application.
- recognize that effort, focus, and hard work yield growth.
- connect new information to prior knowledge and use it multiple times in varied ways over time.
- are intrinsically motivated to learn, have autonomy, and take ownership of the process.
- engage with timely, actionable, and constructive feedback prompting them to reflect on and revise their work.
- are physically and mentally healthy, prepared to learn and in an environment that is safe and inclusive. Students learn best when they belong to a community that practices cultural competence.
- collaborate. Social interactions result in deeper processing and the construction of knowledge.
- use higher level thinking skills to think critically about, reflect upon, and transfer their learning.
- are instructed utilizing a variety of teaching strategies that combine content knowledge with skills development.

PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

Worcester Academy believes that we are a community of learners, that learning takes place in and outside the classroom, and that it is through the act of learning that we build and create community.

All learners at Worcester Academy:

- Are independent learners who ask questions, engage in critical and creative thinking, and use a variety of problem solving skills.
- Embrace a growth mindset, understand their personal learning styles, and engage in lifelong learning.
- Continually develop and practice the cultural competencies needed to expand their social and professional relationships in a diverse world.
- Actively collaborate and engage as both leader and member of a team.
- Practice effective and interactive communication; and
- Apply their knowledge, skills, and competencies to the world beyond the classroom.

HEAD OF SCHOOL & DIVISIONAL LEADERSHIP

Head of School - Kevin Breen

Associate Head of School- Marnie Kut

Head of Middle School, Assistant Head for Teaching & Learning - Dr. Jacqueline Arce

Head of Upper School - James Young

Assistant Head for Student Life- Mackenzie Kuiper

Director of Residential Life - Zak Johnson

COMMUNITY INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

The guiding principles of the Middle School described in this Handbook are based on the documents shared in previous pages.

INCLUSIVE SAFE SPACES

At Worcester Academy, an inclusive and safe classroom and overall school environment refers to spaces where all students feel supported and are extended a sense of belonging that includes psychological and social-emotional safety, regardless of identity, learning preferences, and educational differences. Inclusive and safe spaces are sustained when instructors are culturally responsive and students work together for thoughtfulness, empathy, respect, and academic excellence, and are key to the academic success of all students.

Instructors should consider a variety of areas to promote inclusivity, including the syllabus, choices in assigned reading, images and artifacts in spaces, civil discussions, social-political views, personal ideologies and style.

PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES

Parents and guardians trust Worcester Academy to provide an excellent education for our students, and our mission and core values provide anchors for community members' relationships in classrooms, on campus, in rehearsals, on courts and fields, and at special events. Because parents and guardians are partners in the WA community, their participation and contributions are a vital part of our students' education.

Worcester Academy hopes parents and guardians...

... learn about the community, mission, and Core Values in service of supporting their students' education and community membership.

... communicate respectfully about concerns and partner with the Academy to solve problems and address issues constructively.

... participate as members of the Worcester Academy community of learners by asking questions and being open to new ideas and perspectives.

... familiarize themselves with this handbook and support their children in upholding the expectations for their academic work and behavior.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to working effectively as a community to support each other and the students. Faculty and staff make every effort to respond to emails and phone calls in a timely manner, with the understanding that the "day-to-day" life of a school doesn't always correspond to regular business hours. Responses within 24 business hours are a goal, and we encourage parents, guardians, and students to follow up if you haven't heard back from a staff member within that time frame.

SCHOOL & FAMILY COMMUNICATION & WHOM TO ASK

ADVISOR as a POINT PERSON

Each Middle School student is assigned a faculty advisor who is responsible for overseeing the student's academic program and providing individualized support for the student. Advisors are resources for their advisees, and they work to understand the needs and aspirations of each advisee and help students fulfill their potential. Advisors meet with their advisees regularly, review academic and social progress to date, discuss issues related to our core values, keep the Middle School Student Support Team informed about advisees in academic difficulty, and in the Spring help their advisees choose their academic schedules for the coming year.

The role of Middle School advisors is addressed throughout the handbook; their role is essential for the positive experience and growth of Middle School students at the Academy.

Advisories meet several times a week as a group to build community, learn social and emotional skills, and discuss academic goals and progress. Advisors are the primary point of contact for their advisees and their advisees' parents.

In the Middle School, students have a different advisor in each grade level. Individual advisor assignments are made by the Division Head and Student Support Team to ensure a healthy complement of advisor/advisee pairings as well as a balanced advisory group as a whole.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION OFFICE

The Middle School Office is located on the third floor of Rader Hall. The office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30AM-4:00PM. The Office will be closed daily from 11:00AM-11:45AM for lunch.

Please for all emails that related to daily attendance or those that need attention or a response within the school day, please email msoffice@worcesteracademy.org

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE	Title	Email Address @worcesteracademy.org
Ms. Jacqueline Arce	Head of the Middle School	Ext. 105 jacqueline.arce@
Mrs. Mei Welcom	Administrative Assistant, Middle School	Ext. 155 mei.welcom@
	After School Program	From 3-6:00pm call or text (774) 823- 0151. If before 3:00pm you should call the Main School Phone 508-754-5302, ext 155

WHOM TO ASK

	MIDDLE SCHOOL
Academic Policy	
Academic Schedules	Dr. Arce
Advisor System	
Athletic Policy	Ms. Berberian (ext. 159)
Daily Attendance	Mrs. Welcom
Center for Learning	Ms. Murray (ext. 460)
Counseling Office	Ms. Oikle (ext. 241)
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Ms. Kuiper (ext. 122)
Health Office	Mrs. Rzy (ext. 166) Ms. Alicandro (ext. 126) Ms. Sullivan (ext. 126)
Information Services / Technology	Mr. Carilo & Mr. Masumboki (ext. 157)
Reporting Extended Absences	Dr. Arce
School Store	Ms. Budzinski (ext. 118)

Student Activities	Dr. Arce
Student Finances	Ms. Savage (ext. 136)

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
English 6	English 7	English 8
Science 6	Science 7	Science 8
Social Studies 6	American Studies 7	Global Studies 8
Math 6	PreAlgebra, Algebra I	Algebra I, Foundations of Algebra, Geometry
World Language Explorations	French A or B Spanish A or B	French B, Latin B, Spanish A or B
Computer Science-integrated into Science	Computer Science 7	Computer Science 8
Visual Art 7, Theater 7, Music 7	Visual Art 7, Theater 7, Music 7	Choice of Visual Art 8, Theater 8, Instrumental Music 8, Vocal 8
Physical Education and Health 6	Physical Education and Health 7	Physical Education and Health 8
Electives	Electives	Electives
Advisory 6	Advisory 7	Advisory 8

Requirements for Promotion

To be eligible for promotion to the next grade level - including recommendation to the ninth grade in the Upper School - each student must successfully fulfill the requirements listed below. The requirements listed below apply to a student's academic program and performance in grades 6-8.

The Head of School retains the right to make changes to the following regulations as need arises and may seek the input of faculty and administration in doing so.

1. Students must achieve a grade of D- or better in all required graded courses at their grade level and pass all Pass/Fail courses.
2. Students must complete the Advisory curriculum in a satisfactory manner which includes any grade-level relevant requirements such as the Passion Project in 8th grade and summative tasks for the cultural awareness unit.
3. Students must be involved in a Service Learning group and complete all expectations for this program including the end of year showcase.
4. Promotion to World Language levels in the Upper School (ninth grade) is contingent on the

recommendation of the World Language department (including current teacher and World Language department chair). Recommendations are typically for Level 1 or Level 2 in the chosen World Language, regardless of the completed level in Middle School

Extracurricular Requirements

While middle school students are not required to complete a specific number of extracurricular activities, they are strongly encouraged to do so. Middle School is about trying new things and identifying new interests and passions. In addition, when students transition to the Upper School, they will be expected to earn two extracurricular curricular credits each year. Participation in extracurricular activities in the Middle School will help them identify how they want to participate when they go on to the Upper School. Participation in an interscholastic athletic or academic team, participation in a theater or music production, or participation in a club at Worcester Academy connects students to one another and to the community.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

GRADING

Grading System

Achievement grades are given on a letter scale. Generally speaking, categories of grades may be interpreted as follows:

A	90-100	Student shows excellent knowledge of the material
B	80-89	Student demonstrates good recall. Student can use facts and make connections in solving challenging problems
C	70-79	Student shows satisfactory knowledge
D	60-69	Student is passing, but quality of work is unsatisfactory.
F	0-49	Minimal understanding of the material is shown

More specifically, grades appear in the gradebook and on progress reports and report cards with + and - distinctions. Report cards and transcripts do not carry numerical values; grades are reported using letter grades.

Letter Grade	Minimum	Maximum
A+	97	100.00
A	93	96.99
A-	90	92.99
B+	87	89.99
B	83	86.99
B-	80	82.99
C+	77	79.99
C	73	76.99
C-	70	72.99
D+	67	69.99

D	63	66.99
D-	60	62.99
F	0	59.99

Narrative grade reports and comments are available for viewing on-line throughout the year through the myHILLTOP parent portal accessed through the Worcester Academy website.

ACADEMIC WARNING

When the Middle School Student Support Team considers a student's overall academic performance inadequate, the student is placed on Academic Warning. This status can be determined at the end of each marking period or at another time during the year, if deemed necessary. Students may also be placed on Academic Warning due to chronic absences or consistent failure to complete work. A letter will be sent home informing the parents of the concerns and supports that may cultivate improved student success. The Student Support Team may make a range of suggestions, including but not limited to: extra help sessions, check-ins with the student's advisor or with a member of the Student Support Team, and conferences with the Student Support Team and the student's parents. If a student's academic performance does not improve, it can lead to a student being placed on Academic Probation.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

When the Middle School Student Support Team considers a student's overall academic performance significantly below expectations, the student is placed on Academic Probation. This probation can be determined at the end of each marking period or at another time during the year, if deemed necessary. In general, a student with two grades of D+ or below will be placed on Academic Probation. A student on Academic Probation will be required to follow a plan of action specified by the team. A letter will be sent home informing the parents of the required action that the student must take.

The student's progress will be periodically reviewed. Any student on Academic Probation during the spring semester may lose the right to return in the fall. The Student Support Team will meet at the end of the spring semester to evaluate each student on Academic Probation. At this time, the team will determine the student's eligibility to return in the fall.

Middle School End-of-Year Evaluation of Academic Probation Cases – At the end of the school year, the Student Support Team meets to review the student's status. The process below will focus on the student's growth and commitment to the values of Worcester Academy and the Middle School.

- (1) The reasons why the student was placed on academic probation are reviewed.
- (2) The student's year-end grades are reviewed. Any mitigating or extenuating circumstances are discussed.
- (3) Motions accepted for action:
 - Dismissal
 - Recommended withdrawal
 - Continued probation with required action plan
 - Removal from probation to return with conditions
 - Removal from probation to return in good standing
- (4) Vote, which may constitute a recommendation to the Head of School.
- (5) The Head of Middle School sends a letter to the student's parents informing them of the outcome and if appropriate, detailing specific conditions.

If a student is on both Academic and Disciplinary Probation, the student's academic standing is reviewed first. If the student does not qualify to return based on academic standing, there is no requirement to review Disciplinary Probation. If the student does qualify to return based on academic standing, Disciplinary Probation status is reviewed for a final recommendation to the Head of School.

COURSE WORK & ASSESSMENT

Homework

Tests, Quizzes, Papers, and Exams

- In concert with both grade-level and school-level initiatives, teachers design projects or performances that engage students to collaborate, articulate, and engage with an essential question. These student-centered, real-world projects and performances stand as major assessments and are intended to promote lifelong learning.
- Students may expect “pop” quizzes in any subject on any day. Sometimes quizzes will be announced; full period tests will always be announced at least two class periods in advance of the test day.
- Tests are composed of various types of questions including essay, short answer, multiple choice or completion. Students should plan ahead for tests and confer with the teacher if they are not sure about the material to be covered.
- Some teachers assign papers. Students must follow the format required by the individual teacher. A laboratory report requires a different format than an English composition.
- A student may not have more than two major assessments (due) on the same day. Major assessments include but are not limited to tests, major quizzes, essays, and significant projects.
- Sixth graders have a transition period until October 1 of the academic year, during which no grades are entered into the gradebook. This orientation period is intended to allow students time to learn the expectations of Middle School.
- Exams in some disciplines may be administered at the end of the year to seventh and eighth graders. Sixth graders will not take final exams.

ACADEMIC MARKING PERIODS AND REPORTS

A review of a student's progress is ongoing, taking place regularly during the advisory meetings. Grades are accessible to parents of 7th and 8th graders online through the myHILLTOP parent portal at any time. 6th graders have access to the gradebook periodically throughout the year but not on a daily basis.

Only the grades generating credit at the end of each marking period are reported on a student's transcript. The information on myHILLTOP assists the Student Support Team and the Division Head, the advisor, or other student support personnel to determine action steps to improve student performance.

Grade Reports and Progress Comments are available three times a year; reminders are sent to parents in the weekly Upper School Parent e-Newsletters. Parents are encouraged to partner with both their child and their child's advisor to remain current with their child's progress. Gradebooks, feedback, assigned work is available on myHILLTOP and can be accessed at any time.

Questions or concerns regarding academic progress should be addressed to the child's advisor. If unresolved at that level, the parent may contact the Division Head.

ACADEMIC INFRACTIONS

Academic integrity is at the core of a Worcester Academy education. As a member of the Worcester Academy

community, a student's work must represent their ideas and ideals, and be just that, their own work. As such, instances of cheating and plagiarism are among the most serious offenses at the Academy and students will not receive credit for work that is not their own.

See *SCHOOL RULES, DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES, AND CONSEQUENCES* section for further information.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

The Middle School Student Support Team (SST) meets weekly to discuss middle school students. The goal of the team is to put student concerns in the context of the 360-degree student experience, and create action steps and plans. The MS Student Support Team includes the Head of the Middle School, the Middle School Learning Specialist, the Middle School Counselor, and the Director of Equity and Inclusion. The SST also hosts regular Student Update Meetings to discuss individual students with pertinent adults on campus such as the student's teachers, coaches, and advisor.

ACADEMIC RECORD RETENTION

The Worcester Academy Registrar manages all academic records for current and former students. Please see *Appendix XIII: Record Retention Policy* for further information about transcript request and record retention.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance in class is vital to academic success, and the good habits learned through daily commitment yield long-term benefits. Parents are expected to support the school by helping to hold their children accountable.

In the Middle School, a total of 60 class absences (individual classes, the rough equivalent of 15 school days), excused or unexcused, may jeopardize a student's academic standing and enrollment. Any student who misses a total of 15 days of school, or a total of 60 classes, may lose credit for the year and forfeit the right to return in the fall.

Once a student surpasses 30 total class absences, future absences may only be excused with a doctor's note (not just a parent call).

The Middle School Office will initiate conversation with the student and parent/guardian if a student's class absences become a concern. Appropriate support will be recommended or required as needed. This support may be geared toward academic matters through constructing a mandatory schedule for making up work for teachers. Accumulation of excessive class absences, excused or unexcused, also may be indicative of a wellness issue. Concerns that an unidentified physical or mental health issue is affecting a student's attendance may lead to our referring a student for a medical or mental health evaluation. In extraordinary situations, a student may need to spend extended time away from school. Please see the *Appendix XII: Student Leave and Re-Entry Policy*.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Prompt and consistent daily attendance is an expectation of the Academy. This includes all class days, as well as assemblies and special programs. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for all commitments.

We recognize that, on occasion, students may be tardy or absent from school but these absences should be limited. Planned absences should be scheduled to minimize disruption to school commitments. If a child will not be at school for any reason, parents are responsible for calling in to inform the school of the nature and duration of the absence by 9:00AM. To do so, parents should contact the Middle School Office at 508-754-5302, ext. 155. If a student is absent and we have not heard from their parents by 9:00AM, the Middle School Administrative Assistant will attempt to contact the parents.

Parents of a student departing school before normal dismissal must contact the school by phone or in writing. If a student is dismissed early from classes by a parent, the student must first check out in the Middle School Office prior to leaving campus. Students will only be released from campus when the responsible adult comes to or calls the Middle School Office to indicate their arrival to pick up the student.

If a student is late to school, they must first come to the Middle School Office to sign in and receive a tardy slip. **Students should always bring a note from home for tardiness, early dismissal, or any other special circumstances.**

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences from classes and other appointments are *excusable* in the following cases:

Illness

Students must present a note to the Middle School Administrative Office from their parents. Parents may also call the Middle School Office as early as 7:00AM. Any student excused from the school day due to illness cannot participate in extracurricular activities.

Medical or dental appointments

Every effort should be made to schedule appointments so as not to conflict with classes or other school activities. In the event of an unavoidable conflict, a parent must call the Middle School Office no later than 9:00 AM on that day to excuse the student, though we prefer that the school be notified in advance. Students absent for a medical appointment must bring a doctor's note to the Middle School Office. When a student arrives on campus after being excused by a parent, the student must first check in with the Middle School Office prior to attending class or other Worcester Academy commitments. Students will not be allowed to attend class until the office has heard from a parent.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

Planned extended absences must be discussed in advance with the Head of the Middle School. During the summer months, families receive a calendar for the upcoming year giving dates when school is in session and are expected to make plans accordingly. In the event of unavoidable conflicts, permission may be requested, well in advance, from the Head of Middle School. The Academy reserves the right to not grant excused absences for academic or disciplinary reasons. Students granted a planned absence are responsible for their assignments. Students who have not been granted permission for a planned absence will face both academic and disciplinary action if they choose not to attend school.

If a student is going to be absent for a school-sanctioned event (trips, conferences, off-campus performances, etc.), prior approval and documentation of participation is required by the Middle School Office.

Family emergencies should be reported to the Head of the Middle School so that the school can offer support and arrangements can be made concerning the length of the absence and any class work that will be missed.

If a student needs to take a leave of absence from school, there is a formal policy and process. Attendance requirements are suspended during an official leave of absence. See *Appendix XII: Student Leave and Re-Entry Policy*. Students will work with their advisor and the Head of the Middle School during their absence, as appropriate, and upon their return to school, to be sure the student completes outstanding work in a timely manner.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

If a student is not excused in advance, the absence or tardy is considered unexcused. Unexcused absences are published to students and parents at the end of each academic day via email & myHILLTOP.

Unexcused absences refer to both missed classes and commitments for reasons other than those listed above or without following the prescribed process above. Work missed due to unexcused absences cannot be made up. Disciplinary responses to such absences may include detentions or suspensions. Repeated unexcused absences will result in a conversation between the Head of the Middle School and the student's parents/guardians to discuss the student's status at the school.

UNEXCUSED TARDIES

Tardies must be excused in advance or as they occur by a parent or an appropriate school official. (i.e.: a parent brings a student late or a meeting with a teacher runs late). If they are not excused in advance, the tardy will be considered unexcused.

- Students missing half or more than half of a class automatically receive an unexcused absence for that class.

- For any unexcused tardy for a class with an assessment, students may either receive a grade penalty or forfeit the time missed on the assessment, at the discretion of the teacher.

Students with excessive unexcused tardies will be disciplined according to an escalating schedule of consequences. For disciplinary purposes, all tardies are “reset” to zero upon the start of the second semester; nevertheless, for record-keeping purposes, they remain in the student’s attendance record.

Unexcused Tardy Total	Consequences
3	Student meeting with advisor and Grade Team Leader, and call to parents from Grade Team Leader
4	Student meeting with the Head of Middle School and 30-minute after-school detention
6	60-minute after-school detention, and conference with parents, advisor, Grade Team Leader, and Head of Middle School
8	Sitting for a Core Values Committee for additional disciplinary follow up, including suspension or academic probation could take place.

COMPLETING MISSING WORK FROM AN EXCUSED ABSENCE

Students with **excused absences** due to illness, religious observances, or other legitimate circumstances are allowed to make up missed work in a timely fashion; generally, all missed work, including tests, papers, and quizzes should be made up within one week of returning to school. Students are expected to prioritize the completion of their work over other school and personal commitments and work closely with their advisor and the teachers to create a plan for work completion. Students should check their course pages on myHILLTOP for assignments during absences to complete work as absence allows. Students are encouraged to directly email their teachers.

A student returning to school after an absence is responsible for the following:

- Handing in all homework as soon as possible.
- Scheduling makeup quizzes and tests. If a student misses a quiz or test on the day that they are absent, it is expected that the student will make up that assessment on the day they return to school (unless other arrangements have been made between the teacher and the student).
- Obtaining notes from a classmate. The original author of these notes should receive credit in the borrower’s notebook.

Any student receiving an **unexcused absence** receives a zero for the day in that class, including a zero on any quiz, test, or examination administered that day at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the Head of the Middle School. Additionally, a student may receive a grade penalty on any papers or presentations that are due the day of the absence. Any student leaving early for or returning late from a school vacation (or break) may not be allowed to make up missed work and will incur a significant grade penalty as a result.

It is the student or their family’s responsibility to arrange for the pick up of books and assignments from the school or to arrange for them to be sent home with another student if classes are missed. **Please email or leave a voicemail for the Middle School Administrative Assistant to make these arrangements after first checking the assignment online.**

Attendance and Extracurricular Activities

If a Middle School student misses most of the academic day due to illness or other reasons, the student is not eligible to participate in after school activities (athletics, arts, social events, etc.) on that day. Middle school students must arrive at school by 11:30am to be eligible for after school participation. Eligibility to participate in weekend activities will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of Excused and Unexcused Absences

- Excused – illness, family emergency, religious holiday, medical appointment, college visits, injury, or academic conflict (e.g.: retreats or class trips)
- Unexcused – missing practice time to finish academic requirements, detention, transportation issues, attending out of season recruiting showcases

A student participating in a theater production must discuss attendance and potential conflicts before they arise with the director.

SNOW DAYS

In cases of snow or other inclement weather, it may be necessary for the Academy to cancel classes, offer asynchronous work, or hold remote classes. These decisions are announced via our emergency alert system, web site, and voice mail system as well as the local television and radio stations listed below.

SCHOOL WEBSITE	www.worcesteracademy.org
TV STATIONS	WBZ – CBS4 WCVB – ABC5 WHDH – 7 News WBTS – NBC10 WFXT – Fox 25 NECN
Emergency Alert System	Automated call to either a cell or home phone number

For more information about coursework on snow days, see Appendix XVI: Snow Day Homework Policy.

SCHOOL RULES, DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES, AND CONSEQUENCES

Achieving the Honorable assumes that each member of the Worcester Academy community upholds the mission and values of our school, behaves in a socially mature and responsible manner, respects the rights and property of others, and adheres to the guidelines of our school’s mission and core values. Worcester Academy asserts that mutual respect, collaboration, and safeness are prerequisites for any student to access our educational experience.

Major School Rules

Major School Rules are set forth below. Infractions of these rules result in a meeting with the Core Values Committee (see process below). Because infractions of these rules result in the endangerment of others, they will often be met by an in-school suspension. Alternative consequences include detention and a formal disciplinary warning. If a student needs to attend more than one Core Values Committee meeting, the school can review that student’s fit for the school community.

1.	Theft, destruction and vandalism that violates our school values
2.	The use and/or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, nicotine, marijuana, THC, and any other illicit drugs is prohibited (that is not medically prescribed).
3.	The possession and/or use of any weapon or weapon-like device is prohibited.
4.	Blatant and repeated physical/sexual abuse, intimidation, threat of violence, harassment, online bullying, or overt act of racism/discrimination is prohibited.
5.	Fighting or any form of physical assault is prohibited.
6.	Creation of a fire hazard, for example the use of an open flame in a building or the misuse of fire extinguishers, is prohibited.

Subsequent School Rules

In the Middle School we acknowledge that violations of rules and the subsequent consequences can provide a rich learning opportunity for students to reflect on their behavior and work towards improvement through adult support. The rules below are not as grave in nature as the major school rules and therefore have scaffolded consequences to support reflection and growth. The infractions of these rules when students reach Upper School will be treated more seriously.

- Initial infractions will result in a teacher meeting and reflection.
- Second infractions will result in a meeting with parents and the Grade Team Leader, a reflection, and a formal disciplinary warning
- Third and subsequent infractions will be treated as a violation of a major school rule and will be addressed by the CVC.

	Rules	Notes
1.	Maintain integrity. Lying, cheating, plagiarism or any form of academic dishonesty, theft, hacking, misrepresenting one's identity in person, on- or off-line, or any other dishonest behavior is prohibited.	Students will be allowed to re-do the task for their first infraction but for second infraction and beyond, will receive a zero for the work.
2.	Treat school property and others' property with respect.	All infractions include a letter of apology.
3.	Treat others with respect. Instances of harassment, bullying, hazing, written/ verbal intimidation, or the like towards any member of the community are prohibited. Jokes or comments deemed by the school as in conflict with community values (ex. Racist, homophobic, sexist, bigoted, violent) will be handled as discipline.	All infractions will include a letter of apology and an educational component.
4.	Responsible device usage is expected. Students should not misuse their devices, phones, or watches during the day for activities outside the educational experience.	Devices will be taken away and handed over to the MS office. Repeated usage of laptops could result in reduced access to the device.

Core Values Committee Process

1. The student will select a trusted adult to serve as their advocate on the committee
2. The Head of Middle School will ask two of the grade level leaders (not the grade of the student involved) to join the committee. The two leaders have an opportunity to self-declare bias related to the student or incident. If this is the case, they will be replaced by a teacher who is not connected to the student. The Head will brief them with a factual account and context information of the incident.
3. The committee will convene with the student and trusted adult.
 - a. Brief factual overview of the incident
 - b. The student will read or say a prepared statement about the incident.
 - c. The committee can ask clarifying questions.
 - d. The trusted adult has an opportunity to make a statement to advocate for the student.
 - e. The trusted adult and student are excused and the committee deliberates. They make a recommendation to the Head who approves or amends the recommendation. This process can take up to 24 hours so the decision is not rushed.
4. The Head writes up a letter indicating the consequences and meets with the student and parents to share it.
5. The committee will either decide that it was an intentional violation of the rules and will result in an in-school suspension, or that the violation was unintentional/ accidental and the consequences will involve any of the following: a detention, a reflection, an apology, an educational component.

Additional School Rules

- **Balloons** – Due to allergies to latex, latex balloons (inflated or water) are NOT permitted on campus.
- **Locked Doors** – No two people should be behind a locked door on campus at any time.

- **The Quad** – In order to preserve the beauty of the Quad and to avoid the creation of worn pathways, all members of the WA community are expected to refrain from cutting across the Quad.
- **School Dance Expectations** – Students should dress appropriately for a school function. Refreshments are provided. No outside beverages or food may be consumed at the dance.
- **Snowballs** – At recess, an area will be designated for snowballs and supervised by an adult on recess duty. Outside of that place and time, snowball throwing is prohibited so that community members can travel safely between buildings and classes.
- **Dormitory visitation:** Visitation in the dorms by Middle School students is prohibited.
- **Campus boundaries:** Students are not permitted to leave the main campus at any time before, during, or after school unless accompanied by a school-affiliated adult.

Academic Infractions Descriptions

Academic integrity is at the core of a Worcester Academy education. As a member of the Worcester Academy community, a student’s work must represent their ideas and ideals, and be just that: their own work. As such, instances of cheating and plagiarism are among the most serious offenses at the Academy and students will not receive credit for work that is not their own.

Cheating – It is expected that all student work will reflect the individual's academic efforts, and that students will refrain from any type of cheating. Cheating includes the use or possession of another student's notes, copying another student’s work, or overtly permitting a student to copy from another student.

After meeting with the teacher, the Middle School student will be required to meet with the Head of Middle School. The student’s advisor and parents/guardians will also be notified. Penalties for cheating may result in a grade reduction for the particular assignment, test, project, or quiz and may also include detention, suspension, or, in the most serious or repeated cases, dismissal from the Academy.

Plagiarism – It is expected that all student work will cite sources used in its preparation properly and follow the specifications of the teacher assigning it. Any student who submits written work which is not their own and is not properly cited is guilty of plagiarism. This includes copying, paraphrasing, using quotations from another source without proper referencing, and the unauthorized use of online translators or translating applications. Individual work must always be submitted, even in the case of collaborative assignments such as laboratory reports. It is the rare exception that a teacher expects the same exact assignment to be turned in by two or more students. Care must be taken while collaborating on course work. After meeting with the teacher, the student will be required to meet with the Head of the Middle School. The potential penalties are the same as for cheating.

An important bit of advice: If a student is in doubt about when or if to cite a source, the student should ask a teacher. If a parent provides assistance on a given assignment, the copy of the paper on which the parental suggestions were written or a note explicating the nature of parental assistance should be submitted with the final draft so that the teacher may better understand the process by which the assignment was completed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE RESPONSES AND PROCESS

Discipline is handled in a manner that aligns with our mission, core values, and supports student growth and personal responsibility. We encourage students to familiarize themselves with our Core Values of Honor, Respect, Community, Personal Growth, and Challenge, as these values inform our expectations of student behavior. Additionally, students should also review the Major School Rules as outlined in the handbook.

When a student demonstrates behavior that is inappropriate or dangerous to others we will approach the situation from a position that students must accept responsibility for their behavior, understand how that behavior does not align with our Core Values, and consider more honorable courses of action moving forward. Depending on the age

and stage of a Middle School student, a variety of strategies will be employed to help the student understand what happened and look for ways to avoid any future repetition of the behavior.

The safety, well-being, and values of the community at large are also taken into account throughout any disciplinary response. The consequences for violation of school rules policies as stated herein or for any act which contravenes our Core Values include but are not limited to: warning, detention, restriction, loss of technology, loss of recess, supervised lunch, supervised transitions, restoration plans, probation, suspension, and dismissal. Any student involved in a disciplinary process may be placed on Dean’s Leave. The School makes every attempt to make our disciplinary response reflect the seriousness of the infraction.

Learning opportunities in Middle School come from conversations and follow up conversations with students and adults, including when difficult situations arise. Therefore, when disciplinary issues arise, every attempt will be made to gain a thorough understanding of what happened through conversations with relevant or connected students. As conversations proceed, the appropriate Grade Team Leader or the Head of Middle School will contact parents/guardians to update them about the situation and any significant conversations and consequences for their child.

RESPONSES

In the Middle School, our chief response for restoring a student to the community after inappropriate behavior is to ask the student to reflect both verbally and in writing. This reflection will be part of the response to the behavior no matter the offense. Students may also be asked to work with the Head of Middle School, the Grade Team Leader, or their advisor to create a plan of restoration of the community agreements and community membership.

Additional disciplinary responses could include:

Logical Consequences	Depending on the offense, the student may be required to take action to resolve the situation so that the consequence is closely tied to the behavior and rebuilds the community that was damaged by the infraction. For example, a student who does not keep their phone turned off and put away may be required to keep their phone in the Middle School office during the day for a set amount of time.
Educational Component	A student may be asked to actively participate in some form of educational experience related to the offense. This may include, but is not limited to, reading assigned articles, writing a paper, completing research, or attending a presentation.
Supervised Lunch, Transitions, etc.	When a student violates the trust placed in them by their classmates and teachers, they may lose the privilege of sitting with classmates at lunch, walking to class without adult supervision, or making independent choices at recess. During the After School program, this may also mean staying in close proximity to the After School supervisors, and not being allowed to visit the café or Upper Quad.
Afternoon Detention	Hour- and half-hour-long detentions will take place after school, as soon as possible following the infraction. As part of the detention process, the student will examine what led to the consequence, reflect on future choices, and create a plan to rebuild. Detentions will take place from 3:00-4:00PM, and may require the student to miss athletic practice or theater rehearsal as part of the consequence.
Formal Disciplinary Warning	Parents/guardians will be contacted for most disciplinary concerns that result in one of the other listed consequences. Formal Disciplinary Warning entails a formal written notice to the student’s parents from the Head of Middle School stating that the behavior has been unacceptable and that subsequent offenses will have more serious

	consequences, usually involving sitting for a Core Value Committee session (see below).
Loss of Leadership Position	All student leaders on disciplinary probation or who conduct themselves in a manner that diminishes their character and status as a campus role model will be required to forfeit their leadership position. Any student placed on disciplinary probation will not be permitted to be a candidate for a student leadership position (BoM, Ambassador, etc.) for at least one year.
Suspension	<p>Suspension from school results from serious breaches of conduct, and range in duration according to the severity of the infraction. Students are expected to keep current with missed work while they are suspended from school. In-house suspensions are approved by the Division Director and are only allowed in certain circumstances.</p> <p>Students returning to school from suspension will be placed on Disciplinary Probation (see below). Once the suspension is complete, before reentering the Middle School community, the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet with their advisor, the Head of Middle School regarding their return to school.</p>
Disciplinary Probation	Disciplinary Probation entails a formal written notice to the student's parents/guardians stating that the student's behavior has been unacceptable. Violation of a Major School Rule while on probation may result in dismissal from the Academy.
Dismissal	All students are expected to adhere to the school's disciplinary policies and behaviors expected of Academy students; failure to do so may result in dismissal from the school. Grounds for dismissal from the Academy are outlined in this handbook.

Dress Code Violations

Middle School Students out of dress code will first be referred to the Grade Team Leader for consultation. Students out of dress code for a second time will be sent to the Middle School Office to record the violation. In any case, the student will be required to change into something more appropriate, even if that means calling parents/guardians to bring a change of clothes to school. Students are subject to detention after the second violation; continued violations will result in stricter penalties, up to and including suspension.

Middle School End-of-Year Evaluation of Disciplinary Probation Cases – After the last class day of the academic year, the Student Support Team meets to review Disciplinary Probation Cases.

- (1) The reasons why the student was placed on Disciplinary Probation are reviewed.
- (2) The Committee discusses whether there have been any further disciplinary infractions during the probation period. Any mitigating or extenuating circumstances are discussed.
- (3) Motions accepted for appropriate action:
 - Dismissal
 - Recommended withdrawal
 - Continued probation
 - Removal from probation to return with conditions
 - Removal from probation to return in good standing
- (4) Vote, which may constitute a recommendation to the Head of School.
- (5) The Middle School Head sends a letter to the student's parents informing them of the outcome and, if appropriate, detailing specific conditions.

If a student is on both Academic and Disciplinary Probation, the student's academic standing is reviewed first. If the student does not qualify to return based on academic standing, there is no requirement to review Disciplinary

Probation. If the student does qualify to return based on academic standing, then Disciplinary Probation status is reviewed for a final recommendation to the Head of School.

STUDENT SERVICES

ADAMS HALL & THE MEGARON DINING HALLS

All meals are served and are to be consumed in the Megaron (lunch only). All Middle School students are entitled to lunch in the dining hall Monday through Friday. Middle School students are welcome to attend breakfast on campus for a daily fee. Breakfast is available from 7:00-7:50AM for a fee, which will be charged to the student's account.

No food or drink is to be removed from the dining hall unless there is a sanctioned event or meeting. All dishes and flatware must be returned to the dining hall in a timely manner. Students are expected to return leftover food, utensils, and other items to the dish room window after eating.

Dinner is for boarding students only. Occasionally, Middle School students may stay for dinner when they are involved in an evening event on campus. In these cases, the expense of the meal will be covered by the Middle School Office. The faculty or staff member who is responsible for the event must communicate to Sage Dining with at least a 24-hour notice with the anticipated number of Middle School students who will be staying for dinner.

STUDENT PICK UP AND AFTER-SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Parents/Guardians should pick up their children in a pre-arranged area for early dismissal and at 3:00PM. If a student is participating in a school-sponsored after-school activity, parents/guardians should arrange to pick up their child at the completion of that activity or by 6:00PM, when the daily After-School program concludes.

Any student who is remaining after school past the 3:00 PM pickup but not involved in a school-sponsored, supervised activity must report directly to after-school supervision located in the foyer of the first floor of Rader Hall by no later than 3:00PM.

After School Supervision

The Middle School After School Program provides extended day supervision of students from the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m. There is no charge for the After School Program. All Middle School families are required to fill out the After School Enrollment form so that it is available to you even if you don't anticipate needing to utilize it on a regular basis.

All middle school students who are staying on campus past 3:00pm are required to sign in with the After School Coordinators before going to their organized activity or taking a break. Between 4:00-5:00pm, all middle school students who are still on campus are expected to be in after school study hall in Rader Hall. Everyone who signed in with the After School Coordinators must officially sign out when they are picked up by a parent or guardian to leave campus. All MS students should be picked up by 6:00 pm unless arrangements are made in advance for their supervision after 6:00pm. In order for after-school supervision to work effectively, all students **MUST** remember to sign in and sign out. Those students who forget to sign out consistently will be subject to disciplinary action.

The policies and guidelines set forth in this handbook apply to Middle School students who stay after school in the After School program as well as during the academic day. While the vast majority of students make good use of their time in after-school, it is important to make clear that participation in after-school supervision is offered as a resource to families for students whose behavior meets the standards. Any student who regularly misuses it by not following school rules, not being respectful of the adult coordinators, or failing to inform the After School Coordinators of their destination/location will lose access to this resource and will be required to leave campus immediately after school dismisses, even if this creates a hardship for the family.

Below is a chart that may help to understand the After School check in/check out process better.

	Students going home at 3:00 PM	Students with an extracurricular activity that begins at 3:00PM	Students without an extracurricular activity but are staying on campus
3:00PM	Sign out on the sign out sheet before leaving.	Head to your extracurricular activity. Upon return to Rader Hall, sign back into After School or sign out to go home.	Sign in to After School.
3:00 – 4:00PM	Not applicable	Extracurricular activity	Down time - student may sign out to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library ● Common Room ● Study Hall Room or another classroom with teacher supervision ● Lower Quad ● Rader patio ● Student Center Cafe
4:00 – 5:00PM Study Hall	Not applicable	Upon completion of extracurricular, sign back into After School and attend Study Hall or sign out to go home.	Study Hall
5:00 – 6:00PM Supervised free time	Not applicable	If still on campus, supervised time in the Student Center.	If still on campus, supervised time in the Student Center.

KELLNER STUDENT CENTER

The Student Center is available as a place of recreation and relaxation for Middle School students who have signed in with the After School Coordinators and asked their permission to visit the Hilltopper Cafe or spend time in the common area. Sometimes, Middle School events are held in Kellner or offer the opportunity to visit the Cafe. Students abusing this privilege will be restricted in their use of this facility. Middle School students are not allowed in Kellner before or during the academic school day.

MILDRED H. McEVOY LIBRARY

The mission of the library is to provide student-centered resources and to offer services, opportunities, and programs that promote a life-long love of reading and inquiry. We are looking forward to seeing you in the library!

Library Hours: Monday through Thursday 7:30am-6:00pm, Fridays 7:45am-4:30pm

Middle School students must have permission from a teacher or staff member in order to go to the library to do work or use the resources during the school day. After school, the After School Coordinators can give students permission to work in the library.

Library Rules & Guidelines:

- Keep your voice down; show respect for those who are studying or reading.
- Do not “save” space in the library; if you are leaving the library for longer than a bathroom break, take your belongings with you.
- Magazines may be used only in the library so everyone has access to them.
- Check out your books. When books are not checked out, they may as well be lost or stolen. The librarian may purchase a new copy, spending money that could be spent on more books!
- Clean up after yourself, be careful with food, and drinks should be in tightly covered containers. If you need cleaning supplies, an adult in the library can help you.

TECHNOLOGY & INFORMATION SERVICES

The IT Offices are located in McEvoy Library in Rader Hall and are open from 8 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday. If issues arise outside of that time, we ask that students, faculty and staff email techhelp@worcesteracademy.org and someone from the IT Offices will be in contact with you within 24 hours during the week and within 36 hours on the weekends.

Please refer to the laptop policy for specifics regarding your assigned device.

EMAIL: All students, faculty and staff are assigned an email account upon arrival at Worcester Academy. **It is essential that students check their email and myHILLTOP twice a day during the academic week to receive class assignments, campus memos, and announcements.**

myHILLTOP: The myHILLTOP portal provides members of the Worcester Academy community with the content and information they need regarding classes, gradebooks, schedules, forms, student billing, college counseling, and much more. When you visit <https://worcesteracademy.myschoolapp.com>, you can log onto myHILLTOP using your username and password to search the directory, view the school calendar and access important Academy resources. We encourage all members of the Worcester Academy community to use myHILLTOP as your direct way of staying informed and obtaining the information you need throughout the year.

THE CENTER FOR LEARNING

Middle School Learning Specialist at Worcester Academy

The Middle School Learning Specialist is a resource for students, teachers, and parents. Recognizing that students have different learning styles and strengths, along with different timetables for academic development and growth, the learning specialist works with students and teachers within the context of the classroom, providing academic support as necessary. The learning specialist has regular interaction with all students and teachers to help enhance learning strategies. These interactions include in-class support, CCL time, as well as after school at homework club.

If a student has a formal neuropsychological or psycho-educational evaluation, we ask the family to provide us with an official copy so that we can provide this information as well as the recommendations made by the evaluator to the teachers. The learning specialist will use the educational evaluation to develop a Learning Profile, which identifies a student's individual strengths and challenges. If the accommodation for extended time is warranted, the learning specialist will make arrangements to provide this. Worcester Academy reserves the right to use student evaluations only as informational tools and does not guarantee the implementation of all recommendations and accommodations as specified in a student's evaluation and/or IEP/CAP/504 plan. The WA Middle School will implement only those recommendations that are deemed reasonable within our academic program.

Middle School students will have the opportunity to meet with a learning specialist within a one-on-one, fee-for-service model in the Center for Learning if their formal educational evaluation supports the need for individualized support. The frequency and length at which students meet with a learning specialist will be determined by the CFL director based on the students' learning profiles. This support will be provided in place of a world language in 7th and 8th grade or Computer Science in 6th grade.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

The Middle School Counselor supports the Worcester Academy community in addressing emotional problems that might be interfering with a student's academic and social progress. The counselor is available to evaluate such situations and to make recommendations to students and parents for support and treatment, including referrals to outside mental health providers. In addition, the Academy retains both a consulting psychologist and a consulting psychiatric nurse practitioner who work closely with the School Counselor, Head of Middle School, and the Health Office.

Although the Academy provides this service, it must be stressed to students and parents that this counseling help is available only to aid the student in coping with problems that interfere with normal academic progress and social development. These services are not intended to remedy learning disabilities, serious psychological disturbances, or other problems requiring extensive or long-term attention. If such conditions are determined to exist, the School Counselor will refer the family to appropriate services outside of the Academy. All psychological information shared between students, parents, and the Academy's school counselors is private and is treated confidentially within the limits of the law.

In addition to counseling duties, the Middle School Counselor teaches the Middle School Health and Human Development classes in grades 6-8 as part of the Core Values Seminar.

HEALTH OFFICE

The Worcester Academy Health Office provides care for all boarding and day students. The Health Office is staffed with professional nurses Monday through Friday and a school pediatrician by appointment on Wednesdays. There is an on-call nurse for all evenings and weekends when students are on campus.

The Worcester Academy Health Office observes a Coordinated School Health Model defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention; health education, health services, social and physical environment, physical education, guidance and support services, food service, school and worksite health promotion, and integrated school and community health promotion.

Programs and Services:

- Care for acute and chronic medical conditions
- Partnership with parent/guardian/PCP/counselors/athletic trainers in the development of student health plans
- HIPAA Compliant Health Office
- Preventative health care including immunizations and epi-pen emergency response protocol
- 5-bed inpatient unit for students requiring rest and/or medical observation
- Linked with community primary care, mental health and dental health providers, local youth and family service agencies, local and state Departments of Public Health and emergency providers
- Nutrition counseling with special emphasis on helping students develop a healthy body image
- Act as liaison to hospital/patient/family/school for student with health care providers
- Health education pamphlets, videos, and other resources
- Coordinate trainings and speakers on various health topics for faculty and students
- Collaborate with WA Health Team, student support team, WA faculty, coaches and athletic trainers for the promotion of individual academic and athletic success
- AHA CPR/AED certification for instruction and training
- Management of WA AEDs
- Emergency Response Team

Location:

The Health Office is conveniently located on the first floor, north end of Dexter Hall. It is a locked and secure area. A WA issued ID key card is needed for entry.

Hours:

Monday through Friday 7:30AM-4:00PM

On-call nurses are available 24 hours a day when school is in session for residential students.

Clinic hours with the school physician Dr. Malkani are Wednesdays 11:30AM-12:30PM. Routine and non-emergency visits to the Health Office should be made during the student's free period or between classes. Emergencies will be handled by the school nurse while on duty and/or in consultation with residential faculty/athletic trainers/coaches.

Illness While at School:

Routine and non-emergency visits to the Health Office should be made with the Middle School Administrative Assistant. Emergencies will be handled by the school nurse while on duty and/or in consultation with residential faculty/athletic trainers/coaches.

Day students who become ill while at school will be evaluated by the school nurse. The school nurse will communicate with the parent/guardian. Arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up from school or cleared with a parent/guardian that the student is safe to drive home. The nurse will excuse the student from any

remaining classes for the day.

Health Insurance:

All students at Worcester Academy are required to be covered under a health insurance plan for the entire academic year. A comprehensive student health insurance plan and/or a separate dental plan are available through Worcester Academy for international students only. International students are automatically enrolled in the health plan as part of the international student fee. A separate dental plan can be purchased at an additional cost and families should contact the Worcester Academy Health Office if interested. Parents/Guardians of all out-of-state students should confirm with their individual health plans that services will be covered if needed when a student is out-of-state. Any uncovered medical expenses are the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

Management of Student Health Records:

Student medical records (SMR) are managed in the Worcester Academy Health Office via the online database, Magnus Health. As a web based system, parents/guardians have continuous access to their student's health record and the ability to make updates as necessary. Families have the option to take their digital health file upon leaving Worcester Academy.

Individual Magnus Health SMR accounts for every student are accessed through the myHILLTOP account. Parents/guardians are required to upload annual physical examination reports and complete required documentation for each academic year. ***Health information is required within individual Magnus Health SMR accounts for every student attending Worcester Academy by July 1 for the upcoming academic year.***

Magnus customer support can be reached by phone at 877-461-6831 or by email at service@magnushealthportal.com.

All health information in the Worcester Academy Health Office is confidential. It is shared on a need to know basis with permission from the parent or guardian, except in the case of an emergency or life-threatening condition.

Worcester Academy is in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and therefore requires the annual completion of the HIPAA compliance for exchange of information form, *The Authorization for Release of Health Information* for each student. Completion of additional Authorization for Release of Health Information may be requested by the Worcester Academy Health or Counseling office for students with health issues that impact their functioning at Worcester Academy such as but not limited to; class attendance, academic and athletic participation, and as part of the student re-entry processes following a Medical Leave of Absence.

For Magnus Health Privacy Policy consult the Magnus Health Privacy and Security page at www.magnushealth.com/privacy-and-security.

Further Health Office Policy can be found in the Appendix - Requirements for Participation, Management of Student Medication, Fever Policy, and Concussion Policy

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT LIFE

RECESS

Middle school students have a 20 minute recess after lunch. Students may play foursquare on the Dexter Patio or sit on the benches outside Kellner. Games that involve throwing or kicking a ball should be played on the Lower Quad. No punting or dropkicking is allowed. Students should wait until they are dismissed from lunch by an adult on duty. They can play on the Main Quad or sit at a table or on a bench to socialize or read. Middle School students should stay in one of the designated areas until it is time to return to classes. They are not allowed to go back into Rader until recess is over. Recess is not for doing homework or last minute studying. Laptop use is not allowed during recess.

Alternative plans will be made if the weather is too rainy, snowy, or cold to be outside. Recess is a privilege that can be withheld if students use class time or other inappropriate times to play or be off task.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Worcester Academy believes that having students in positions of leadership is a highly valuable experience for them and the Academy. These students make important contributions to the daily operation of the school, they help bridge the gap between students and adults, they represent the student body's interests and concerns, and they have the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Student leaders must embrace and embody the mission and values of the school, uphold school rules, and model exemplary behavior. Appointed or elected student leaders who do not meet these standards may lose their positions and/or may not be permitted to run for or otherwise pursue leadership roles at the school.

Worcester Academy offers a wide array of opportunities for students to be involved in student leadership. Below are some examples of leadership groups on campus.

BOARD OF MONITORS

"On a time-honored tablet in the Megaron are engraved the names of the Head Monitors of the school. Since 1887, when Dr. Abercrombie first dispelled the distance between faculty and student by placing authority of student life into the hands of the students, this traditional office has been an Academy honor, and none so honored has failed their trust." Headmaster S. F. Holmes, 1929

Founded in 1886, the Board of Monitors (BOM) is our most distinguished level of student leadership. Monitors embody the highest level of student leadership in the school, and the Middle School elects and convenes its own BOM for matters pertaining to the Middle School.

The Board of Monitors consists of conscientious and dedicated students who serve the Academy Community and uphold its traditions. New and returning seventh and eighth graders who are in good academic and behavioral standing are eligible to run. Interested students self-nominate and secure a certain number of student signatures to affirm the nomination. Candidates then submit a platform sheet that outlines their ideas and initiatives should they be elected, followed by a brief interview with the Middle School Office. The final step is a speech given before the Middle School community. Based on their speeches, new members are elected by the student body in the fall.

The Board serves the entire Middle School community by upholding school traditions, perpetuating long-standing school activities, and serving as a liaison between students, faculty, and administration. Throughout the year, the BOM tackles projects related to student-run clubs, works to bolster the sense of community within the school, and plans major student events such as spirit weeks, dances, and friendly competitions.

AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors play an important role in welcoming and orienting prospective students and families to the Worcester Academy community and representing the Academy at special events and functions. Ambassadors represent the Middle School by working with the Office of Admission and the Middle School Office to welcome and orient people who are visiting campus as guests, prospective students, or prospective employees.

Being an ambassador requires students to miss class occasionally to give tours, so ambassadors are required to be in strong academic standing throughout the year. Applications to be an ambassador are distributed in the fall, and students applying must attend training sessions after school and prepare a sample tour. In addition, ambassadors are expected to commit to assist at Admissions Open Houses, which are held on two Sunday afternoons in the Fall.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

ELECTIVES

The Middle School years are a perfect time for adolescents to explore new interests, discover new talents, and make new friends. The Middle School Electives program provides opportunities for students to try new activities and to reach beyond their comfort zone. No experience is necessary for participation in Electives, and students are encouraged to try something outside of their past experiences.

Electives are ungraded courses, and most of them are one-semester options. The Elective period is part of the academic day, and all middle school students will be enrolled in an Elective course. Students will have an opportunity to choose which elective they would like to pursue.

Choices for electives can vary year-to-year depending on the schedule and teacher availability.

In the past, we have offered Electives such as:

Band	Exploring Mythology
Ceramics	Model UN
Chorus	STEAM (Makers)
Computer Science	Video Production
Digital Photography	Yearbook Production

Elective choice sheets will be sent out before the start of the school year, once we have confirmed the offerings.

CLUBS

In the Middle School, clubs are student-driven. Students are expected to participate in a club during the regular schedule. Other clubs can meet at various times during the week, e.g., before or after school, at lunch, so that students can join multiple clubs if they so choose.

Club offerings change from year to year based on student interest. At the start of the year, some faculty will propose a club and invite students to come to meetings. Students can propose the development of a new club, provided that it is aligned with our mission and core values and that a faculty member agrees to sponsor that club. A student with an idea and initiative can fill out a club proposal to confirm that there is student interest and faculty sponsorship. In past years, the Middle School has hosted clubs like Anime, Ultimate Frisbee, Knitting, eSports, Open Art Studio, A Cappella singing (“WAcappella”), Ukulele, and Chess. Middle School Clubs are formed at the beginning of each semester.

ATHLETICS

Middle School Athletic Philosophy – Worcester Academy’s Middle School Athletic Program focuses on giving student-athletes a positive experience and providing them the opportunity to develop and exhibit their skills to the best of their abilities.

Goals of the Middle School Athletic Program

- Have fun.
- Promote concepts of teamwork and sportsmanship.
- Provide opportunity for both personal and social growth.
- Teach new skills and refine those previously learned.
- Develop positive self-discipline.
- Provide each student-athlete as much playing time as possible while taking in to account commitment, attitude, effort, safety, and game situations.

Team Selections – We would like to have every student who tries out for a team to have a spot on that team. Unfortunately, this is not always possible. Due to constraints on practice facilities, team size, and student interest, it may be necessary to limit the numbers of players on a particular team or program. Since "cuts" are difficult at any age, the coaching staff will make every effort to handle these situations with sensitivity.

Eligibility- A student’s ability to participate in extracurricular activities may be suspended by the Student Support Team if any of the following conditions are present:

- Excessive absences in either or both school and the extracurricular activity
- Academic probation
- Consequences as outlined by a Core Value Committee
- A student demonstrating a lack of engagement with the academic programming
- Failure to thrive

Playing Up – Sometimes situations arise in which middle school students would like to play for an upper school sports team. If we do not offer the sport in MS, 7th graders can try out for a JV team and 8th graders can try out for a JV or Varsity team. However, if we do offer the sport in middle school, middlers are expected to play for that team. This is to prioritize and protect our MS sports programming. Exceptions can be made in the following circumstances:

- An 8th grader may be invited to try out for Varsity but will only be accepted on the team in the event that they would be a significant contributing member
- 7th and 8th graders who are interested in practicing with a JV team can contact the MS Division Head and Athletic Director to discuss. It should be noted that this would be practice only (not playing games) and that the student must be playing for a MS team

Additionally, we do not allow “playing up” on club sports because they offer less structure and supervision than formal sports teams.

Due to the different daily schedules between Middle School and Upper School, it is often difficult for a Middle School student to attend practices and games on an Upper School team. In particular, Wednesday afternoon classes will be given priority over Upper School athletic competitions for Middle School athletes who are participating on Upper School teams.

If a Middle School student is cleared to participate on an Upper School team, they must abide by the following guidelines:

1. The student will continue to practice and compete as a member of their Middle School team.

2. It is our recommendation that Middle School students should strive to avoid bus rides with Upper School students due to the difference in age and maturity levels between the students.
3. The student will maintain high academic performance standards such as completion and regular timely submission of schoolwork, no grades in the D range, demonstrated effort and motivation for academic success.
4. Prior approval on a game-by-game basis is required for a Middle School student to miss class for Upper School athletics.

INJURIES AND RETURN TO PLAY (RTP) PROCEDURES

Return to activity and play is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, physicians, the school's Health Office and teachers as appropriate. Please see the appendix for information specific to return to play following concussive injuries.

Appendices

APPENDIX I: DRESS CODE

The Worcester Academy dress code is intended to support an equitable, inclusive and professional academic environment where adults and students are encouraged to express their individuality while instilling a professionalism and appropriateness of dress in an academic setting. Adults and students must be conscious of how clothing choice can be representative of our community and core values. Therefore, it is important to wear clothing that is respectful, sensible and appropriate at all times. Everyone is expected to achieve the honorable of following the dress code.

In the case of attire for special events, such as sports, academic assemblies or performances, the faculty, staff or coaches responsible have the authority to set the standards of dress for the occasion in accordance with the dress code standards listed in this handbook. To facilitate an academic environment, the following clothing standards will apply to students of all genders.

The academic day dress code applies whenever classes are in session, regardless of whether a particular student has a scheduled class. Students are expected to be in proper dress during lunch and free periods until classes are over for everyone for the day. In general, dress during the academic day should be neat, clean, modest, and in good repair. Students can expect to be told to change when they are wearing articles of clothing or a style of dress that fits the letter but not the spirit of the dress code. As in any community, there are appropriate ways to dress for different occasions. We expect students to understand and demonstrate this in the ways that they dress for class, casual activities, and extracurriculars after the academic day.

Please note:

Clothing or body art with references to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence, graphic/derogatory pictures or offensive language or are otherwise offensive to an individual or group are never allowed on campus.

Academic day dress code

The following meet dress code during the academic day:

- Clothes that are neat, clean and in good repair with no rips or tears
- Collared shirts, polo shirts, tailored shirts, dress blouses, sleeveless tops; sweaters, turtlenecks; neckties and blazers are optional. Shirts are expected to be on the shoulders and cover midriffs.
 - Button-down shirts must be buttoned up to at least the top three buttons. Button-down shirts that are longer than three inches below the pant or skirt waistline must be tucked in.
 - All shirts must have a full back and must cover the waistband of a student's skirt, pants, or shorts.
- Pants, Shorts, Skirts: khakis, chinos, corduroy, denim
 - Skirts, shorts, and dresses, including slits, must fall at least mid-thigh, at a minimum. Students should be able to move comfortably through their day, including up and down stairs, without undergarments being exposed.
- Sneakers, shoes, boots, dress sandals, leather or leather-like flip-flops, and heels. Shoes must be worn at all times on campus
- Worcester Academy sweatshirts with an approved shirt underneath

The following items do not meet dress code the academic day:

- Sweatpants, including Worcester Academy sweatpants
- Athletic wear, including sweatpants, athletic shorts, athletic slides, non-Worcester Academy sweatshirts
- Extremely short, revealing, faded, ripped, or distressed clothing, soiled, frayed, or ripped clothing
- Beach attire
- Pajamas or slippers

- Shirts that do not have a full back, cover midriff, or cover the waistband of a student's skirt, dress, pants, or shorts; Spaghetti strap shirts or tank tops are not allowed. T-shirts are not allowed even if worn under an approved WA sweatshirt
- Clothing with inappropriate or offensive messages. This includes, but is not limited to, clothing with messages advocating violence, alcohol, or drugs; clothing expressing obscenities; and clothing that is derogatory to one's self or others
- Hat or head coverings, unless worn for religious or medical purposes, must never be worn in buildings
- No undergarments should be exposed including underwear, boxer shorts, undershirts, bras, and bralettes
- Hooded sweatshirts that are not WA must be in WA colors (maroon, grey, white, black) and can only have a small logo

Dress code after the academic day and during the weekends

Outside of the academic day and school functions, students are permitted to dress casually, as long as clothing maintains a level of necessary respect, as a reflection of the standards of the school community, Core Values, and school mission.

Dress Down Days, Field Trips, or other special events:

Occasionally, as announced, students may be allowed to "Dress Down" in more casual clothes for a school day or school function. The Dress Down days and/or school function and the appropriate attire for those dress down days are determined by the Head of the Upper School/Middle School and the Upper School Dean of Student Life.

APPENDIX II: ATHLETIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Worcester Academy requires all students to submit a health form with an updated physical exam report annually. No one will be allowed to participate in athletic contests, and practices without the health form on file.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

We believe that athletics are an extension of the classroom, providing countless opportunities for students to learn more about themselves through the experience of sport. Athletes are encouraged to work together towards common goals, to make commitments to teammates and their coaches, to respect themselves and others, and to proudly represent Worcester Academy and its athletic traditions. As we strive to teach our athletes the values of sportsmanship, integrity and discipline, we ask that parents reinforce these values by supporting individuals and teams in a manner consistent with our motto to “Achieve the Honorable.”

TEAM PRACTICES & GAMES

Students are expected to attend all team practices and games unless excused by the coach or the athletic trainer. For a daily medical excuse, students must obtain a note from the school nurse and present it to the coach or athletic trainer. Students excused from practice by the nurse or trainer must report to and remain at practice and for an extended absence a doctor's note is required. Emergencies notwithstanding, student-athletes and families must identify potential conflicts for absences with the head coach at the outset of each season.

Representing the school in an athletic activity is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, any Worcester Academy student participating in a sport may be subject to disciplinary action for missing practices or games, unsportsmanlike conduct, or breaking team rules and regulations. Similarly, failure to fulfill classroom obligations, i.e. attendance, tardiness may result in the loss of athletic privileges. A coach has the right to oversee the training and discipline of team members, subject to the approval of the Director of Athletics. Students who are "in season" and are disciplined by the Academy for violating the school's alcohol and drug policy will be subject to a minimum of a one-week probation from athletic competition. If the student's discipline includes a suspension, the student-athlete's probation will start upon the student-athlete's return to campus. The student will be required to be at all athletic obligations during that week and will be allowed to practice, but will not be allowed to participate in games for the seven-day probationary period. Once the seven-day probation ends, the coach has the right to determine the athlete's playing time as indicated by their attitude and effort.

APPENDIX III: NETWORK & INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Worcester Academy Communication and Information Systems exist to support the educational mission and program of the School. Use of the Worcester Academy information technology network is for educational purposes only. Network usage is a privilege, not a right. Users are expected to exercise responsible behavior and will be held accountable for maintaining the integrity of all aspects of the network.

Student Responsible and Acceptable Network and Internet Use Policy (AUP)

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The School provides certain communications and information equipment, systems, networks, software, and other related devices and resources, including computers, Internet access, email, and telephones (collectively, “Communication/Information Systems”), to aid students with the performance of their academics. All Communication/Information Systems are to be used only in connection with a student’s duties as a student of the School, unless otherwise noted, in accordance with the following policies. Each user is personally responsible for all uses and contents of their account. Giving out personal passwords, access codes, login procedures, or misrepresenting one’s identity in electronic communication are not permitted. Unauthorized copying, removing, or distributing software violates copyright laws and software license agreements and are prohibited. Modifying, manipulating, or otherwise tampering with applications, files, and data on the network, or any attempt thereof, are not permitted.

SCHOOL EMAIL

All students will be provided with a School email address (Google), and it is their responsibility to check this account regularly, including during the summer vacation and other School breaks. Further, all School related matters, including communications with teachers and staff members should be conducted using the student’s School email, and not using a personal email address.

RESPONSIBLE USE

Students should use the Information Systems primarily for school-related reasons. Information Systems have been installed by the School for use in the conduct of School business. The School recognizes, however, that students may desire to use these systems, and the email system, occasionally for personal purposes. The School will permit such occasional, personal use of the Communication/Information Systems, provided that:

- Such use is kept to a minimum during school hours;
- Such use does not result in additional costs to the School;
- Such use is not excessive or abused by students; and,
- Students understand (and are hereby informed) that all messages transmitted or received on the email system, of whatever nature, remain fully subject to all of the provisions of this email policy (thus, for example, even personal messages on the e-mail system constitute the School’s property in which students have no right of privacy and which may be stored, monitored, or disclosed at any time by the School).

Students may not use the Communication/Information Systems for any inappropriate or unauthorized use, including but not limited to the following:

- To post, view, or access social networking sites (such as Facebook) during school hours, unless authorized by the Director of Technology;
- For any illegal, fraudulent, or unauthorized purpose;
- To solicit or to address students regarding commercial, religious, political, or non-School fundraising causes, except when done with explicit permission from an Academic Division Head;
- To knowingly send, receive, download, store, or post any messages, files, or other materials that are defamatory, discriminatory, obscene, pornographic or otherwise inappropriate and/or harass,

- threaten, or intimidate another person or to violate any other School policy;
- To disseminate or print copyrighted materials, including articles and software, in violation of copyright laws; and,
 - Post a “home page” or otherwise disseminate information that suggests the School as the source or that relates to the School unless authorized in writing.

ACCESS

The School has the right to restrict and/or terminate a student's access to Communication/Information Systems, including network privileges and/or access to the Internet, at any time for any reason.

EQUIPMENT

The School provides standard equipment for use by students. This equipment, including but not limited to telephones, computers, laptops, iPads, etc., is and remains School property. When a student leaves, or at any time prior if requested by the School, it is their responsibility to return all School equipment to the Technology Department. All content generated and/or stored on the equipment is considered School property. Students should have no expectation of privacy with regard to any material created, stored, sent, or received on such School equipment. Deleting, cleansing, wiping, or resetting to factory settings is expressly prohibited.

Student Use of Social Media

The school’s core values, motto and handbook guidelines extend to the electronic world. Students are also expected to exercise responsible behavior online. When a student presents themselves publicly (such as on a social networking website), they must know that any inappropriate behavior, references or photographs (including but not limited to alcohol or drug use and sexual behavior) and/or inappropriate use of language (including but not limited to foul, profane, and/or derogatory) is in violation of School rules.

APPENDIX IV: GENDER IDENTITY POLICY

The following Gender Identity Policy exists in our evolving efforts to create an inclusive, safe and supportive learning community, where all students have equal opportunity to learn, thrive and succeed, regardless of gender identity. The responsibility for determining a student's gender identity rests with the student, or in the case of middle school students not yet able to advocate for themselves, with the parent/guardian. When students are at school, we will respect, support, and adhere to how each student self-identifies, including the gender that they identify as. We will also support students to our best ability (given possible family constraints), in adhering to the usage of their preferred names (via email address, documentation, diplomas, awards, etc.) if different from their legal name.

Gender Identification at Worcester Academy:

“Gender identity” shall mean a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth. Gender-related identity may be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held as part of a person's core identity; provided, however, that gender-related identity shall not be asserted for any improper purpose.

Transgender Identity

For those students who undergo gender transition while attending Worcester Academy, we will develop a plan for initiating use of the chosen name and pronouns consistent with the student's gender identity.

Transgender students will have access to restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities that are safe and adequate so they can comfortably and fully engage in their school program and activities.

Physical Education Classes, Intramural and Extracurricular Athletic Activities

Most PE classes are coed, so the gender identity of students should not be an issue with respect to those classes. Where there are sex-generated classes or athletic activities, intramural and interscholastic athletics, all students will be allowed to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity. We will proactively discuss the needs with individual students.

Affirming Students in their Gender Identities: Policy and Practices

The following policies for supporting and affirming our students' gender identities exist in our evolving efforts to create an inclusive, safe and supportive learning community, where all students have equal opportunity to learn, thrive and succeed. When students are at school, we will respect, support, and adhere to how each student self-identifies.

When a student discloses information about their gender identity or their process of undergoing a gender transition to an adult employed by Worcester Academy, WA commits to proactive conversations with the student about how to support them in their identity and/or transition, as the student feels ready for these conversations.

Conversations should include, but not be limited to:

- Name used in email address, myHILLTOP databases, diplomas, awards, graduation program, WA publications, and other documentation.
- Pronoun use by adults employed by WA and when referring to the student in communication with parent/guardian.
- If, how, and when teachers, coaches, and other WA employees who interact with the student should be informed of gender transition and pronoun use.
- If a gender marker within the school's databases should be changed or removed.
- Plan to ensure access to restrooms, locker rooms, changing facilities, and dormitories that correspond with the student's gender identity, and to ensure the student feels safe accessing them.

- Access to support systems such as the counseling office and affinity spaces.
- A documented course of action for the student to take if they feel their needs are not being accommodated.

Before beginning these conversations, the adult WA employee will ask the student’s permission to initiate the discussions. The WA adults involved in facilitating conversations will commit to confidentiality about the discussion of the student’s gender identity until and unless the student decides they want information to be shared.

WA commits to maintaining ongoing conversations with the student where needed, acknowledging that gender transitions can require different accommodations over time. These conversations will be consistent with and in accordance with Massachusetts law and DESE guidelines.

Finally, WA also commits to educating its employees about gender and gender identity as part of its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, and to ensuring that WA employees are compliant in supporting student’s identity and elected course of action as discussed with the school.

For reference, the following information is directly from “*Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment*” (<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/lgbtq/GenderIdentity.html>)

Definitions:

Understanding the terminology associated with gender identity is important to providing a safe and supportive school environment for students whose rights are protected under the law. These are the most commonly used terms, and students may prefer other terms to describe their gender identity, appearance, or behavior. The term "gender identity" is specifically defined in the Mass. General Laws, as amended by *An Act Relative to Gender Identity* (the gender identity law).

- **Sex:** is the sex that the medical community labels a person when they are born (usually based on perception of genitalia). If your gender identity matches the sex assigned to you at birth, then you are cisgender. For example, if you identify as a girl and you were assigned female at birth, then you are cisgender. People whose gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth may be transgender.
- **Gender:** Gender is much more complex than “boys” and “girls,” but not too complicated for students of any age to learn about. All students have a gender, express that gender each day, and are affected by gender stereotypes. You can use [GLSEN’s Gender Terminology Visual](#) to explain these basic gender terms.
- **Gender identity:** as defined in part at G.L. c. 4, § 7, is "a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth ..."
- **Gender expression:** the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- **Transgender:** an umbrella term used to describe a person whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth.

APPENDIX V: POLICY AGAINST BULLYING, HARASSMENT, HAZING AND RETALIATION

Bullying, Harassment and Hazing Prevention and Intervention Plan

Overview

Students, faculty, staff members, and others connected with Worcester Academy should expect to be treated with respect and consideration. As stated in our Inclusive Safe Spaces section of the Upper School Handbook, at Worcester Academy, an inclusive and safe classroom and overall school environment refers to spaces where all students feel supported and are extended a sense of belonging that includes psychological and social-emotional safety, regardless of identity, learning preferences, and educational differences. As a community enriched by its diversity, we recognize and celebrate differences in characteristics such as culture, race, age, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic level. It is extremely important, and a condition of every individual's employment, to ensure that no student experiences any of the behaviors defined in this policy. Employees, in particular those having regular contact with students, are required to become familiar with these policies. Failure to report any evidence of these behaviors involving a student, whether based on first-hand knowledge or otherwise, will be grounds for disciplinary action.

While this policy sets forth our goals of promoting an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and retaliation, it is not designed or intended to limit the Academy's authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the Academy deems unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definitions above.

Definition under the law

The following definitions are drawn from the Massachusetts law against bullying (M.G.L. c.71, s. 370). Note, however, that stricter standards of behavior may apply under the School's policies in order that we may prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under law. For example, although the law defines bullying as "repeated use" of certain expressions, acts, and/or gestures, the School reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in the case of even a single expression, act or gesture, if the School determines it to be of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action or that the repetition of such expression, act, or gesture might reasonably result in bullying as defined by law.

- Aggressor. An aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.
- Bullying. Bullying is defined as, the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
 - causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
 - places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
 - creates a hostile environment at School for the target;
 - infringes on the rights of the target at School; or
 - materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the School.

Bullying may include conduct such as physical intimidation or assault, including intimidating an individual into taking an action against their will; oral or written threats; teasing; put-downs; name-calling; stalking; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; unkind rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Under Massachusetts law and at Worcester Academy, bullying carried out in electronic form is considered bullying, but is nonetheless given a separate term "cyber-bullying".

Cyber-bullying: Cyber-bullying is bullying carried out through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying also includes:

- the creation of a web page or blog (including all forms of social media such as Facebook, MySpace, etc.) in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated above in the definition of bullying; and
- the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if such distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated above in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting on websites or disseminating embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others.

Hostile Environment. Hostile environment is defined as a situation in which bullying causes the School environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s educational experience.

Retaliation. Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Target. Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Bullying, Harassment and Hazing Prevention & Intervention Plan

Leadership

The Head of School and members of the administrative team have taken responsibility for developing this Plan and all associated tasks related to creating a community free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and retaliation. This Plan is designed to coordinate with Worcester Academy’s existing Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Hazing and Retaliation (“Policy”).

Training and Professional Development

- Worcester Academy will conduct annual training for continuing and new employees to help employees understand how the school can prevent, identify, and respond to discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and retaliation at Worcester Academy.
- The final Plan and the Policy will be posted on the school’s intranet and in employee and student handbooks.

Access to Resources and Services

- Members of Worcester Academy’s administrative team will identify training, counseling, safety planning and other services appropriate for members of the community or the community as a whole.
- In many situations, these services will be provided on campus. Where appropriate, these services will be provided off campus for convenience or where a conflict of interest may occur.
- In the event that complainants, alleged aggressors and/or their family members require services Worcester Academy is unable to provide, the Director of Counseling will provide referrals to external counselors.

Academic and Non-academic Activities

- Worcester Academy will conduct annual training for students on the forms discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and retaliation can take, the ways in which their participation in these prohibited behaviors are antithetical to the mission and core values of the school, and steps they must take to respond to incidents of these prohibited behaviors.
- The annual training will present approaches to preventing and responding to these prohibited behaviors.

Reporting bullying or retaliation :

Anyone who believes they, or a student they know, is being subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing or retaliation must immediately notify a member of the Compliance Team: The Upper or Middle School Director, the Upper School Student Life Office, the Director of Counseling, the Associate Head of School, the Director of Human Resources or the Head of School. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of these individuals, they must ask their advisor, another adult including a parent/guardian, a student leader, or a student friend to help them contact one of the above individuals. The report may be documented by using the Worcester Academy reporting form available on Employee Connect.

Each employee is a mandatory reporter who must contact a member of the Compliance Team if they become aware of a possible incident of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing or harassment.

A report of bullying of a student or retaliation relating to a report of student bullying may be made anonymously.

School response, resolution, follow up :

School response

Before fully investigating a report, where appropriate the Head of School or their designee will take steps to restore a sense of safety to the complainant and or to protect the complainant from possible further incidents. The Head of School or their designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and/or retaliation students who have reported, witnessed or provided information about the incident. The Head of School or their designee will notify the parents or guardians of the complainant and the alleged aggressor of the report and of the Academy's procedures for investigating the report. An investigation will be initiated, during which relevant community members will be interviewed. The school reserves the right to require the involved students to be off campus during the investigation. If the reported incident involves students from another school, the Head of School or their designee will contact, by phone, the Head of School of that school so that each school may take appropriate action. At any point after receiving a report, including after an investigation, if the Head of School or their designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the alleged aggressor, the Head of School will notify the Worcester Police Department.

The Head of School or their designee will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the report as the particular circumstances warrant. If deemed necessary, the investigation will be done by someone trained in Title IX law. Generally, an investigation will involve at a minimum interviews with the individual making the report, the complainant who may be a different person than the reporter, the person who allegedly perpetrated the reported behavior, and with persons identified as witnesses or otherwise having knowledge of the incident or conduct. All employees and students are required to cooperate with and participate fully in the investigation of a report of prohibited behavior. While Worcester Academy cannot promise strict confidentiality, all persons will be instructed to treat the investigation as confidential and not to discuss the allegations with other persons at the school. Although information must be shared to conduct an effective investigation, the school will only release information on a legitimate need-to know basis. All persons will be informed that retaliation against an individual who has complained in good faith is unlawful and will result in discipline. The Head of School or their designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Resolution and follow up

The Head of School or their designee will make a determination based on the facts. If after investigation, the report is substantiated, the Head of School will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the complainant is not restricted in participating in school

or benefitting from school activities. After an investigation the report is substantiated, appropriate remedial or disciplinary action will be taken. Following this, the Head of School or their designee will promptly notify the complainant, the alleged aggressor, and the parents or guardians of the complainant and the respondent about the results of the investigation and, if the report was substantiated, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of prohibited conduct. The Head of School or their designee will adhere to confidentiality laws protecting student records in determining what information he can report to each parent or guardian.

Upon the Head of School determining that prohibited conduct occurred, Worcester Academy may require a wide range of skills-building approaches, educational activities, behavioral supports and/or behavioral plans to teach appropriate behavior. Worcester Academy may take whatever disciplinary action it deems appropriate. If the Head of School determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hazing and/or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action. The Head of School or their designee will make adjustments in the school environment to enhance the complainant's sense of safety. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the implementation of responses to the prohibited conduct, the Head of School or their designee will contact the complainant to determine whether or not there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and will take action as appropriate.

Student Safety Reporting Requirements

Please see Section 5 below for a summary of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Student Safety Reporting Requirements. Employees should always be cognizant that they are entrusted with the care of minors. Safety is of primary importance on school grounds. Student well-being must be at the forefront of each employee's responsibilities.

Massachusetts law requires schools to file a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted that causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse, neglect, or malnutrition. Worcester Academy employees thus have an affirmative duty to report any suspected negligence and/or abuse immediately to the Head of School so that a determination can be made as to whether or not a report should be filed with the DCF. The failure of any employee to report their suspicions shall be cause for disciplinary action. Such reports will be promptly and confidentially acted upon. Any report to state authorities will be made by the Director of Counseling.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the age of consent to any sexual activity is 16 years old. A child younger than 16 years old is legally unable to consent to any sexual activity. Therefore any student under 16 engaging in any sexual activity with a partner who is either older, younger, or the same age, is legally unable to consent to this sexual activity. If a Worcester Academy employee becomes aware of such sexual activity we are mandated to report this to DCF using the procedure above.

APPENDIX VI: ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, NICOTINE, MARIJUANA, THC, CBD, and OTHER ILLICIT DRUG POLICY

The purchase, possession, distribution or use of illegal drugs, and/or controlled substances on the Academy campus renders the student liable for dismissal. Any student found in the presence of alcohol, alcohol containers, tobacco, nicotine, drugs or drug paraphernalia is subject to immediate suspension or Dean's Leave.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AND TESTING

The presence of alcohol or other drugs on or off campus affects the entire community and threatens the psychological and physical safety of all students. Furthermore, it interferes with positive and constructive relationships between faculty and students, and among students, since the presence of illegal substances often requires secrecy, dishonesty, and deceit.

All parents/guardians must review the Worcester Academy Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy consent form with their student and sign prior to registration for classes annually. The consent form clearly defines our program and the circumstances under which testing would be appropriate.

- Suspicion of drug, alcohol or tobacco, or nicotine use and/or unusual changes in behavior, appearance or presentation will require the student to submit to testing. This includes students returning to campus suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Unannounced, random, drug testing may be initiated by the Health Office staff or Upper or Middle School Office in response to a drug or alcohol rules violation or when substantial concern is raised about the possibility of drug or alcohol use by a student. "Random" refers to the time and frequency of the test, not selection of an individual student.
- Parents/guardians will be notified at the time random testing occurs.
- Every effort will be made to notify parents/guardians of the results from the Worcester Academy Upper or Middle School Office in a person-to-person conversation.
- The cost of drug and alcohol testing will be the parent's responsibility and will be billed to the student's account.
- Any student enrolled at Worcester Academy who tests positive for drug or alcohol use will face disciplinary consequences, with exception of the Sanctuary Policy described below.
- Under the Sanctuary Policy, an initial positive test result for a student not involved in a disciplinary event will be treated as a health concern. A plan to support that student will be designed for each individual student in consultation with the Health Office, Counseling Office, and Upper or Middle School Office. It will include the *Authorization For The Release Of Health Information* parental/guardian permission form to allow for communication between the Health and Counseling offices and treatment facilities and providers. The student must comply with the support plan in order to continue their Worcester Academy enrollment.
 - ✓ Random drug testing will be administered for the next 12 months.
 - ✓ Further positive test results may initiate a medical leave, withdrawal, or discipline
- During a disciplinary event, and outside of the Sanctuary Policy, positive drug or alcohol test results will result in a suspension from school and from all campus activities, **whether the student engaged in the drug or alcohol use on or off campus.** The student will be placed on probation for the remainder of their Worcester Academy career.
 - ✓ Prior to re-entry to the academy, the student must have a drug and/or alcohol evaluation by an outside consultant. A copy of the completed report must be sent to a Worcester Academy Counseling Office and Health Office. The student is expected to follow through with all recommendations as outlined by the consultant.

- ✓ The student must attend at least one session on substance use and abuse with an approved practitioner by the Upper School Head.
- ✓ Consultant fees will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.
- ✓ The student will be subject to random testing for the following 12 months.
- ✓ The parents will be encouraged to seek further counseling for the student.

Worcester Academy uses an off-campus lab for all drug and alcohol testing. Any costs incurred is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

TOBACCO AND NICOTINE

Worcester Academy is a tobacco and nicotine-free campus. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of any tobacco or nicotine products. Smoking cessation products, including products such as Nicorette gum and patches, will be authorized at the discretion of the Health Office

Tobacco is defined as ALL tobacco-derived or containing products, including but not limited to, cigarettes (clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, vaping pens and/or cigarettes, cigars and cigarillos, pipes, hookah-smoked products and oral tobacco/nicotine products (spit, spitless, smokeless, dissolvable, chew, and snuff).

Any student in possession or use of tobacco on or off campus is under Worcester Academy's jurisdiction. Tobacco use is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. The Worcester Academy Health Office will actively assist students with tobacco dependence and tobacco-use cessation.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING CONSENT FORM

I support Worcester Academy in its commitment to provide its students with educational opportunities in a community free of drugs and alcohol. Consistent with this objective and as a condition of enrollment, I understand and accept Academy policy that authorizes the Academy, under the advisement of the Health Office to require students whose behavior raises justifiable concern to undergo a urine drug and/or alcohol screening test. It is further understood that refusal to submit to the test is grounds for dismissal from the Academy.

By signing below I agree to the terms above as well as have reviewed them with my student.

Electronic signature obtained via Magnus web portal on myHILLTOP.

APPENDIX VII: DRUG AND ALCOHOL SANCTUARY POLICY

Worcester Academy has a Sanctuary Policy to allow students to disclose alcohol or other drug use/abuse without triggering a disciplinary response to the Health Office or Counseling Office in order to access treatment services. This policy recognizes that students are often reluctant to seek care for problems related to behavior that violates a school rule. Student confidentiality is of utmost importance and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with pertinent individuals.

When a student requests treatment for use of alcohol or other drugs, the Sanctuary Policy is in effect under the following conditions:

- A student comes forward of their own accord to any trusted adult on campus who will escort them to the Health Office or Counseling Office.
- A student is brought to the Health Center accompanied by another student. The concerned student who brings a fellow student to the Health Center will not be liable for disciplinary action and their identity will remain confidential.
- The Sanctuary Policy may only be used once. All subsequent violations of school rules regarding drugs and alcohol will be subject to Worcester Academy Alcohol and Drug Policies.
- The student agrees to participate in a discussion with their parents/guardians. The student is required to undergo an evaluation by an outside Drug and Alcohol Abuse Specialist who will generate a written evaluation that is shared with parents/guardians and the Worcester Academy Health and Counseling offices.
- Two follow-up meetings with a member of the counseling staff are also required. If a student is referred for treatment, the parent/guardian or student must sign a consent form allowing communication between the providers and the Health and Counseling Offices. Failure to meet treatment expectations may affect the student's status at Worcester Academy.
- Parents/Guardians, and often the student, must participate in a meeting with pertinent school personnel to set up any necessary action plans, including treatment plans, medical leaves, and return to school protocols.
- If the severity of the medical problem necessitates hospital admission, the Upper or Middle School Office will be notified but the response will remain a non-disciplinary one. If, however, the student becomes unmanageable or disruptive, or suggests a threat to self or others, security and administrators will be called.

If a student does not adhere to these expectations, the student and parent will be notified that the sanctuary policy is no longer in place for that student. Any further issues may warrant a disciplinary response.

APPENDIX VIII: HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Required Report of Annual Physical Examination

Worcester Academy requires all students to submit a report of an annual physical examination performed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Parents who are physicians or nurse practitioners cannot perform a physical exam report on their own child for submission. Physical examination reports expire thirteen months from the date of the exam. Updated forms are due in the WA Health Office PRIOR to expiration.

All physical examinations must be completed in English.

All WA students must have a report of a current annual physical examination on file in the WA Health Office for athletic and academic participation.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to inform the WA Health Office of medical, emotional concerns, new diagnosis or changes in health. If the school health professionals identify a student at risk involving academic and/or athletic participation, parents/guardians will be contacted. A medical evaluation may be requested.

Immunization Requirements

Worcester Academy requires all students to be fully immunized per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations (102 CMR 7.09 and CMR 220.00) unless the student qualifies for a medical or religious exemption as stated in these regulations. Per State Law, all students require the following immunizations:

- 4 doses DTaP/DTP OR >= 3 doses Td
- 1 dose Tdap
- 3 doses Polio
- 3 doses Hepatitis B
- 2 doses MMR
- 2 doses Varicella vaccine OR physician documented history of disease OR documented positive serology
- FOR ALL NEW BOARDING STUDENTS –1 dose of meningococcal vaccine or signed Massachusetts Department of Public Health Waiver available in the WA Health Office

Tuberculosis Testing

The Worcester Academy Health Office requires all international students to show documentation of a recent Mantoux tuberculosis test (ppd) done within the past 3 months prior to the start of classes if you have recently traveled to an endemic country, identified by the World Health Organization, with a high rate of Tuberculosis. Positive tests must be followed up with a T-Spot (blood test) and/or chest X-RAY. Documentation must be provided.

APPENDIX IX: MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT MEDICATION

Massachusetts State law requires appropriate management of medication in the school setting. The Worcester Academy medication policy has been developed to ensure the health and safety of all of our students. These policies and procedures conform to Massachusetts regulation 105 CMR 210.000. Please notify the Health Office of all student medications, including prescribed, over-the-counter, herbal, dietary supplements, vitamins, minerals, performance enhancers, or other medications.

A Permission for Prescribed Medication Form must be completed, by both parent/guardian and prescribing physician or nurse practitioner, for any child who will need to take prescription medication while at school. A medication administration plan shall be developed before he/she enters or re-enters school for all students who will receive medication by the School Nurse.

All prescription medications should be brought to school by the parent/guardian or responsible designated adult and given to the staff in the Health Office. Medication must be delivered in a pharmacy labeled container and state the following information in ENGLISH: Student Name, Name of Medication, Strength of Medication, Dosage and Route, Time and Frequency of Dose. (Any medication that is not labeled appropriately will not be accepted.) For your convenience, ask your pharmacist to provide separate labeled bottles for school and home.

Students CANNOT carry any medication (prescription and nonprescription) with them at school EXCEPT emergency medications such as asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors that have been cleared with the Health Office.

ALL STUDENT MEDICATION must be delivered directly to the Health Office via mail, pharmacy delivery or by the parent/guardian. In the event a boarding student returns to campus with medication and the Health Office is closed, the parent must notify and hand off the medication to the AOD.

BOARDING STUDENTS ONLY CAN self-administer the following medications: topical prescribed medications and certain oral prescribed medications for the treatment of acne or other skin conditions, oral antibiotics, daily allergy medications, and oral contraceptives as well as any medication individually approved by the Health Office.

The Health Office reserves the right to revoke a student's right to self-administer medication when, in the professional judgment of the medical staff, the student has demonstrated an inability to self-medicate safely.

ALL OTHER MEDICATIONS WILL BE KEPT IN THE HEALTH OFFICE AND ADMINISTERED BY THE SCHOOL NURSE OR HEALTH OFFICE DESIGNEE.

Additionally, the Health Office is authorized by the School Physician to administer a selection of over-the-counter products to students for the relief of various ailments and complaints. These include:

- Advil
- Allergy medication
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Cough & Cold medication
- Milk of Magnesia
- Pepto-Bismol
- Tums
- Tylenol

APPENDIX X: FEVER POLICY

Protocol For Students With Fevers Greater Than 100.5°F

The Worcester Academy Health Office follows the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommended school guidelines for a student presenting with Flu-Like Illness (FLI) and fever greater than 100.5°F.

Dismissal from School for Illness

- Day students presenting with FLI and fever will be sequestered in the Health Office and cared for until a parent/guardian arrives for dismissal home.
- 5-day and 7-day boarding students living within a 90-minute commute of Worcester Academy will be sequestered in the Health Office and cared for until a parent/guardian arrives for dismissal home.
- Boarding students with longer than a 90-minute commute will be sequestered in the Health Office and excused from classes and athletics. At 4:00PM they will return to their dorm room. Residential faculty will be advised on the care of the student.
- The school nurse on call will call at 10:00PM for check-in and be available overnight via phone. The student will return to the Health Office the following morning for continued care and monitoring.
- The student will be excused from classes and remain in the Health Office until they are 24 hours with a temperature less than 100°F without the aid of fever-reducing medication and the discretion of the health care provider in the best interest of the student's well being and the Worcester Academy Community.
- The CDC recommends that individuals with flu-like illness remain at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater when measured orally), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. This recommendation is based on epidemiologic data about the overall risk of severe illness and death and attempts to balance the risks of severe illness from flu and the potential benefits of decreasing transmission through the exclusion of sick people with the goal of minimizing social disruption.

Return to School

- Students should return to school when they are at least 24 hours without a fever (oral temperature less than 100°F) without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- All students must visit the Health Office on their return to school.
- CDC recommends keeping people with a fever at home may reduce the number of people who get infected since elevated temperature is associated with increased shedding of flu virus. CDC recommends this exclusion period whether or not antiviral medicines are used. People on antiviral treatment may shed flu viruses that are resistant to antiviral medicines.
- CDC recommends fever-reducing medicines, that is, medicines containing acetaminophen or ibuprofen, are appropriate for use in individuals with flu-like illness. Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) should not be given to children or teenagers who have flu; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome. The determination of readiness to return to school should be made when at least 24 hours have passed since the sick person's temperature first remained normal without the use of these medicines.
- Sick students and staff should always be required to stay home. The CDC recommends that students and staff who appear to have a flu-like illness at arrival or become sick during the day be promptly separated from other students and staff and asked to go home immediately.

APPENDIX XI: CONCUSSION POLICY AND PROTOCOL

Worcester Academy has established this protocol to provide education about head injuries/suspected concussions for coaches, school personnel, students and families. This protocol outlines education plans, procedures for staff to follow in managing concussions, and outlines school policy as it pertains to return to play issues following a concussion. This protocol is in direct accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations on head injuries and concussions, 105 CMR 201.

All WA students will be bound by the WA Concussion Policy, whether or not the head injury occurred during a WA sponsored activity. The Concussion Policy and Protocol in its entirety can be found in the Appendix.

In the event a student is dealing with long term symptoms, requiring academic accommodations for greater than three weeks, the student's parents will be advised to seek the consultation of a healthcare provider that specializes in the field of head injury and concussion management (typically a physician or neuropsychologist). Authorization to share healthcare information from consulting physicians must be given to the WA Health Office.

Dismissal from School for Concussion:

- Day students presenting with a concussion will be sequestered in the Health Office and cared for until a parent/guardian arrives.
- Boarding students will be sequestered in the Health Office and cared for until a parent/guardian arrives.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) a concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a fall or blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump can be serious.

<http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion>

Worcester Academy has established this protocol to provide education about head injuries/suspected concussions for coaches, school personnel, students and families. This protocol outlines education plans, procedures for staff to follow in managing concussions, and outlines school policy as it pertains to return to play issues following a concussion.

This protocol is in direct accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations on head injuries and concussions, 105 CMR 201:

<http://www.lawlib.state.ma.us/source/mass/cmr/cmrtext/105cmr201.pdf>

Worcester Academy seeks to support athletic and academic success for all students following any injury, but particularly after a concussion. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, procedures have been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed students are identified and treated appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, including academic accommodations if necessary, and are fully recovered prior to returning to activity.

Worcester Academy has designated a committee composed of the Director of Athletics, the Health Office medical staff, and the athletic trainers to oversee the implementation of policies and protocols regarding the prevention and management of concussions.

This committee shall be responsible for:

- 1) Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, training and reporting outlined in this policy.
- 2) Assuring that all documentation is in place.
- 3) Reviewing the policy every two years and including updates in annual training.
- 4) Assuring that the policy is available in the school handbook and on the school website.

Worcester Academy uses ImpACT[®], (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing), a computerized cognitive testing tool, to aid in management of concussion and return to play decisions.
<http://www.impacttest.com>

Each student must have a physical examination on an annual basis within 13 months of the student's last physical examination (to allow for insurance coverage of the examination). Any student athlete who does not have a current physical on file on *Magnus Health*, prior to the first day of tryouts/practice, is not eligible until a new/updated physical is turned in. If the student's physical examination expires during the sports season, they must have an updated physical examination to continue to participate in the sports season. All physicals are to be uploaded via the *Magnus Health* portal on myHILLTOP.

All students and parents/guardians are required to disclose a complete history of concussions via the "Worcester Academy Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Interscholastic Athletics" available in the *Magnus Health* portal prior to the start of the school (academic) year. Parents/guardians must also notify/disclose any head injuries that occur outside of a Worcester Academy sponsored program during the year. Written consent for the sharing of healthcare information will be provided to the WA Health Office.

The Athletic Training Staff will, prior to each athletic season, review all pre-participation forms and discuss those forms indicating a history of head injury or concussion. The Athletic Training Staff will communicate, as necessary, with the coaching staff, Director of Athletics, Health Office staff, the student and parents/guardians, as to whether a history of head injury/concussion will allow continued participation in athletics or whether to modify the conditions of such participation.

Education

All faculty, athletic staff, and coaches will complete the National Federation of High Schools' (NFHS) online training course, "Concussion in Sport – What You Need to Know."

All parents or legal guardians and students will be provided educational material in the *Magnus Health* portal and must sign an acknowledgement verifying that they have reviewed the written materials.

Common signs and symptoms of a suspected concussion

These signs and symptoms following a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body are indicative of probable concussion.

Signs (observed by others):

- Student appears dazed or stunned
- Confusion
- Forgets plays, score
- Unsure about game, opponent
- Personality change
- Moves clumsily, poor coordination
- Balance problems
- Responds slowly to questions
- Forgets events prior to hit
- Forgets events after the hit
- Loss of consciousness

Symptoms (reported by student):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting

- Double vision, blurry vision
- Sensitive to light or noise
- Feels sluggish
- Feels “foggy”
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering

Any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion will be immediately removed from the contest, practice or activity and shall not return to play/activity until cleared by an appropriate health care professional in coordination with the Worcester Academy Athletic Trainers. The athletic trainer will record the signs and symptoms using a “Standardized Assessment of Concussion,” a “Graded Symptom Checklist,” and the “Worcester Academy In Season Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Interscholastic Athletics.” Students, and parents/guardians, if present, will be provided with the written documentation about concussion treatment, “Concussions - Treatment Guidelines for Worcester Academy Students”

Second Impact Syndrome

Avoid any activity that could result in a second head injury. Receiving another concussion before a brain injury has healed can lead to acute brain swelling, resulting in further injury to the brain.

Emergency Medical System will be activated in the event that/of:

- Loss of consciousness at time of injury
- Headache continues to worsen
- Impaired memory
- Changes in level of consciousness, alertness or personality
- Blood or other fluids draining from ears or nose
- Convulsions or seizures
- Neck pain
- Tinnitus (ringing in ear)
- Increased dizziness, loss of coordination or balance
- Disturbances in vision, hearing or speech
- Continued vomiting
- Unusual drowsiness or inability to awaken
- Cannot recognize people or places

Coaches should seek assistance from the host site athletic trainer, if available, at an away contest.

Management

The athletic trainer is responsible for notifying the student’s parents/guardians of a head injury and depending on the severity of the injury, either an emergency vehicle will transport or parents/guardians will pick the student up at the event. **Students with suspected head injuries will not be permitted to drive home.**

In the event that a student’s parents/guardians cannot be reached, and the student is able to be sent home, the athletic trainer should ensure that the student will be with a responsible adult who is capable of monitoring the student and understanding the home care instructions before allowing the student to go home. The athletic trainer should continue efforts to reach parents/guardians. If there is any question about the status of the student, or if the student cannot be monitored appropriately, the student should be referred to an Emergency Department for evaluation. A coach should accompany the student and remain with the student until a parent/guardian arrives. After speaking with a parent/guardian, the athletic trainer will notify the school Health Team of the suspected concussion. The athletic trainer will document the injury via the “Worcester Academy In Season Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Interscholastic Athletics.”

- Parents/Guardians will be instructed to have the student stay home from school the day following

suspected concussion and to report to the Health Office on return to WA Campus and every morning as directed by the Health Office.

- The student and/or parents/guardians or residential faculty will be provided with written documentation: pamphlet “CONCUSSIONS: Treatment Guidelines for WA Students” will be given to residential faculty on call.
- Boarding students will be instructed to report to the WA Health Office the morning following a suspected concussion for assessment and cognitive and physical rest. Day students will report to the Health Office upon their return to campus prior to attending classes daily until otherwise instructed. All students on campus will also report to the Athletic Training Room daily for evaluation.
- The school nurse, in consultation with the school physician and athletic trainer, will evaluate any boarding student requiring overnight observation in the Health Office. The parents/guardians of boarding students who require long-term cognitive rest and who live greater than a 90-minute commute from Worcester Academy will be notified of urgency to arrive or send a custodial provider/consultant within 48 hours and assume care responsibilities of a concussed student. The parent/guardian of boarding students who live within 200 miles of Worcester Academy and who are determined to require long-term cognitive rest will be advised to pick up their student (by last residential check-in at 11:00 p.m.). The student will remain with a responsible adult until parent/guardian arrival.
- Any student seeking medical care outside Worcester Academy will have documentation from physician/ER submitted to the WA Health Office.
- The faculty, Student Life Office, athletic trainers, coaches, and the WA Health Office will coordinate to support the student’s academic and athletic success.
- NO sports practice or games, **including observation**, until otherwise instructed. Appropriate personnel will be notified.

Following a concussion, many students will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short- and long-term memory, concentration, and organization. In many cases, it is best to lessen the student’s class load early on after the injury. This may include staying home from school for 1-2 days while symptomatic followed by a lightened schedule for a few days, or longer, if necessary. Decreasing the stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time. Upon return to school, students must first report to the Health Office for evaluation. At that point, a member of the Health Office staff will re-evaluate the student utilizing a graded symptom checklist and provide a plan based on the student’s current condition, initial injury information and additional information provided by the parent. In the coming days, the Athletic Training Staff can administer a post-injury ImPACT[®] test.

Sharing of Information

Informal collaboration occurs on a temporary, as-needed basis. There may be circumstances in which there is a need to share information in the student health record with authorized school personnel, either to enhance the educational progress of the student or to protect their safety or well being. This type of disclosure should be made only to those authorized school personnel who work directly with the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity. Finally, authorized school personnel will be instructed not to re-disclose the information. Federal regulations permit information in the student health record to be seen by authorized school personnel on a need to know basis, and the basis for such sharing seems even more compelling when necessary to protect the well being or safety of the student. See Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive School Health Manual for further discussion of this issue. (<http://files.hria.org/files/SH3001.pdf>)

Notification procedure for student with suspected concussion:

- After speaking with a parent/guardian, the athletic trainer will communicate suspected concussion to the WA Health Team via email.
- Once the student returns, the WA Health Office will be responsible for notifying the student’s Division Head, advisor, faculty and residential faculty of the student’s status and needs via email.
- Athletic Trainers and the WA Health Office will document every student visit in *Magnus Health* in a

timely manner.

Parents/Guardians of any student treated for a suspected concussion sustained outside the WA community **MUST** notify the WA Health Office prior to the student's return. Documentation from treating physician/ER must accompany or precede a student's arrival to campus.

Follow Up ImPACT Testing

The athletic trainers can administer a post injury ImPACT test(s) as part of the student's recovery assessment and will notify the Health Office of test results.

Return to Learn Procedures After Concussion

Worcester Academy institutes a gradual return to academics after being diagnosed with a concussion. It is strongly recommended that students remain home from school immediately following a concussion to avoid unnecessary stimulus that can affect symptom resolution. Once symptoms begin to diminish, students are allowed to return to school with approval from the WA Health Office. The Health Office Staff along with Coordinator of Academic Support, the student's advisor, and the teaching faculty will work together with the student's family to develop and implement a plan that gradually returns the student to full participation in academic activities.

Return to Play (RTP) Procedures After Concussion

Return to activity and play is a medical decision. The student must be asymptomatic at rest and with both cognitive and physical exertion. Once the above criteria are met, the student will be progressed back to full activity following the step-wise process detailed below. The athletic trainer will closely supervise this progression.

Progression is individualized, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Factors that may affect the rate of progression include: previous history of concussion, duration and type of symptoms, age of the student, and sport/activity in which the student participates. A student with a prior history of concussion, one who has had an extended duration of symptoms, or one who is participating in a collision or contact sport may progress more slowly.

Stepwise progressions as described below:

1. Complete physical cognitive and rest. This would include staying home from school 1-2 days and perhaps limiting school hours (and studying) for several days. Activities requiring concentration and attention may worsen symptoms and delay recovery.
2. Return to school full-time.
3. Light exercise. This step cannot begin until the student is no longer having concussion symptoms. At this point the student may begin walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight lifting.
4. Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
5. Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight training can begin.
6. Full contact practice or training.
7. Play in game.

If post-concussion symptoms occur at any step, the student must stop the activity. The student may be told to rest for 24 hours and if asymptomatic, may possibly resume activity at a level one step below where they was at when the symptoms occurred.

The student should have post-injury ImPACT test scores that correlate with their baseline test and/or acceptable norms.

Worcester Academy athletic trainers will be responsible for monitoring the above protocol and for making final return to play decisions. The Health Office/athletic trainers fill out the “Worcester Academy Head Injury/Concussion Clearance Form” and will notify the student’s advisor, teaching faculty, residential faculty and coaches or extracurricular advisors of concussion clearance.

Worcester Academy’s athletic department staff should enforce rules prohibiting dangerous moves (e.g., “spearing” or “horse collaring,” clothes-lining or helmet-to-helmet contact in football). In addition, staff must ensure that student athletes learn proper checking/tackling techniques that are safe and minimize the risk of head injury. Athletic department staff should encourage students to follow the rules of play and to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

All WA students will be bound by the WA Concussion Policy whether or not the head injury occurred during a WA sponsored activity.

In the event a student is dealing with long term symptoms requiring academic accommodations for greater than three weeks, the student’s parents/guardians will be advised to seek the consultation of a healthcare provider that specializes in the field of head injury and concussion management (typically a physician or neuropsychologist). Authorization to share Healthcare information from consulting physicians must be given to the WA Health Office.

Students recovering from a suspected concussion are bound by the WA attendance policy requirements.

APPENDIX XII: STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE and RE-ENTRY POLICY

Medical/Psychological Leave

We believe that a student's mental and physical health and wellness is of utmost importance. Because of this, when a significant mental or physical health concern arises for a student we partner with families and/or providers to help students get the help they require. Parents/Guardians may initiate a student leave, in addition to the school initiating the process.

Worcester Academy reserves the right to make decisions regarding any student who needs to separate from school for a specified length of time. This decision is made in consultation with our on-campus professionals including but not limited to the Upper School or Middle School Director, Director of Health Services and Director of Counseling, the Associate Head of School, and the Head of School. A leave is indicated if the level of care required surpasses the scope and practice of Worcester Academy professionals, including health and counseling professionals, faculty, and residential staff. Additionally, a student may temporarily separate from the school if a student's mental or physical health compromises their own or their peer's ability to function within the school community. Finally, the intent of a leave of absence is to allow the student to receive necessary medical, psychological or other treatment where appropriate.

The student's advisor and the Head of Upper School or Middle School will work together to make sure the student has their appropriate academic assignments. The student is encouraged to contact their teachers directly, as is possible given the conditions of the leave. While on leave, the student is not to return to campus without the permission of the Head of Upper School or Middle School.

RE-ENTRY POLICY FROM MEDICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL LEAVE

Before a student begins their leave, the Head of Upper School or Middle School, with members of the Health or Counseling offices, will meet with the student and parents/guardians to delineate the request for and requirements of an off-campus evaluation, as well as the conditions of the re-entry process.

Personal Leave of Absence

Worcester Academy may grant the request by any student and family to separate from school for a specified length of time in warranted situations. This request applies to personal leave for reasons such as high level of athletic competition or extenuating family circumstances.

This decision is made in consultation with our on-campus professionals including but not limited to the Head of Upper School or Middle School, the Associate Head of School, and the Head of School. The nature of this leave is personal for reasons not limited to high level of athletic competition or extenuating family circumstances.

APPENDIX XIII: STUDENT RECORD RETENTION POLICY

The student record consists of the child's transcript and temporary record which includes, among other things, testing results, grade and comment reports, and attendance.

The student's transcript shall be maintained by Worcester Academy for at least 60 years following their transfer, graduation, or withdrawal from Worcester Academy.

Once the student is no longer enrolled in Worcester Academy upon their transfer, graduation, or withdrawal, the registrar shall periodically review and destroy the temporary records on the following timeline:

- The student's entire temporary record kept three years
- Year three the student's application to Worcester Academy and all related documents are removed from the temporary record and destroyed
- Year five the entire temporary student record is purged, and the final transcript is the only student record retained by Worcester Academy

Written notice will be given to the student and their parents/guardians of the approximate date of destruction of the records at the time of transfer, graduation, or withdrawal.

If a student/parent wishes a copy of the temporary records scheduled to be destroyed on this timeline, the request must be received in the office of the registrar no later than six months prior to the approximate date of destruction given at the time of transfer, graduation, or withdrawal from Worcester Academy.

Please note official proof of identity may be required when requesting records.

The records request form can be found on the Worcester Academy page under Academics - Upper School - Related Links <https://www.worcesteracademy.org/page/academics/upper-school> or in myHILLTOP on the Resource Board - Find It Here.

APPENDIX XIV: SNOW DAY HOMEWORK POLICY

Purpose: To recover lost learning time and maintain student engagement due to snow days using relevant and purposeful assignments.

When the Head of School makes the decision to cancel school for snow, they will designate the day as one of the following:

- **Snow Day** - no assignments or lessons added to work assigned on the last in-person school day
- **Asynchronous Learning Day** - work assigned by noon via myHILLTOP
- **Remote Learning Day** - live classes held remotely on Zoom (a special schedule will be created for this contingency)

STUDENTS WILL:

- Bring home essential materials and supplies to ensure ongoing access to required material when a snow day is anticipated.
- Check myHILLTOP and email for communication from the school and from teachers communicating assignments and expectations.

On an Asynchronous Learning Day, **TEACHERS WILL:**

- Plan and assign relevant and manageable tasks that further student learning or ongoing practice.
- Be aware of student workload; assignments should be reasonable in length.
- Post assignment expectations on myHILLTOP by 12:00PM for all class periods affected by the cancellation.
- If possible, be available to answer questions during the snow day.

On a Remote Learning Day, **TEACHERS WILL:**

- Revise and adapt their existing lesson plans to the online environment
- Create and post Zoom links on myHILLTOP, on their class page bulletin boards, by 10:00AM, for all class periods scheduled to meet that day.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- In the event of a power outage prohibiting a student from completing snow day assignments, a parent/guardian must communicate this issue to BOTH their child's teacher(s) and the advisor by 10:00AM the next day if school is in session.
- If a student does not have home internet access and is unable to connect to myHILLTOP for snow day assignments, a parent/guardian must communicate this to the Middle School Office at the beginning of the academic year.