

# STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2015-2016



### WESTFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

#### **Abner Gibbs, K-5**

Christopher Rogers, Principal  
50 West Silver Street  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 572-6418  
[ag.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://ag.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Munger Hill, K-5**

Marcia Estelle, Principal  
Christopher Manfredi, Assistant Principal  
33 Mallard Lane  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 572-6520  
[mh.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://mh.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Franklin Ave, K-5**

Frances St. Peter-Sanft, Principal  
22 Franklin Avenue  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 572-6424  
[fa.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://fa.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Paper Mill, K-5**

Cynthia Kennedy, Interim Principal  
Dorothy O'Neil, Assistant Principal  
148 Paper Mill Road  
Westfield, MA 01058  
(413) 572-6519  
[pm.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://pm.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Highland, K-5**

Mary Claire Manning, Interim Principal  
Sandra Stephenson-Murphy, Asst. Principal  
34 Western Avenue  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 572-6428  
[hes.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://hes.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Southampton Road, K-5**

Kathy O'Donnell, Principal  
Jennifer Roux, Assistant Principal  
330 Southampton Road  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 572-6435  
[srs.schoolsofwestfield.org](http://srs.schoolsofwestfield.org)

#### **Russell Elementary School, K-5**

Alison Hamilton, Principal  
155 Highland Avenue  
Russell, MA 01071  
(413) 642-7130

**WESTFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

<http://www.schoolsofwestfield.org>

**WESTFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Mayor Daniel Knapik, Chairperson

Mr. Ramon Diaz, Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Cynthia Sullivan, Secretary

Dr. William Duval

Mr. Jeffrey Gosselin

Mrs. Diane Mayhew

Mr. Kevin J. Sullivan

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### SECTION 2– District Policies

In addition to the individual school information, please review the “District Policy” section that applies to each school.

## SECTION I – Elementary School Handbook

### **Letter to Students and Parents**

This handbook was developed by the elementary principals to answer questions concerning general policies and practices followed in the elementary schools. For more precise statements of formal school committee policies, consult the policy binder on file at each school. Frequent contact and communication between parents and school personnel are essential to your child's success in school.

### **Abuse/Neglect Reporting**

Public school teachers, principals, nurses, psychologists and counselors are mandated by law to report any signs of possible child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.

### **Dismissal**

Students should not be dismissed from school for any reasons except in an emergency. The following rules are observed in our schools, and your cooperation is requested.

1. No teacher will dismiss a student without the principal's authorization.
2. If the parent does not appear in person, a note must be presented to the principal or the principal must be personally acquainted with the situation.
3. No student will be excused into the custody of any person not properly identified.
4. Students will be dismissed at the close of the school day and parents will assume responsibility at the time.

### **Bicycles**

Bicycles ridden to school must be parked in the designated area. Helmets must be worn in accordance with the state regulations for bicycle safety. It is the rider's responsibility to secure the bicycle. They should not be left overnight or used during the school day. Parents must assume liability with regard to the use, loss, or damage to bicycle brought to school.

### **Building Utilization**

A floor plan of each building is available upon request at the individual school offices.

### **Cafeteria-Breakfast/Lunch**

Well-balanced breakfast and lunch meals are available at a nominal cost to students. Menus for the month are published and a copy sent home with each student. Those who bring a lunch from home may purchase milk. Free and reduced rates are available for those who meet the criteria.

### **Entrance Requirements**

The following must be met to enroll a child in school:

1. The entrance age for all kindergarten students shall be five (5) years of age on or before August 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. A birth certificate must be presented. This will be returned to the parent/guardian.
3. A doctor's certificate must be presented certifying that the child has been successfully

- immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, polio, rubella, and mumps, unless exempted for medical or religious reasons or as otherwise provided by law.
4. Registration forms available at school offices must be completed and submitted to the school office.
  5. A Massachusetts licensed physician must examine each child. Medical exemptions must be in writing from a physician.
  6. State law mandates a pre-kindergarten screening be conducted for each entering kindergarten.
  7. Parents of transfer students must complete a records release form except as otherwise provided by law.
  8. Changes of address, home phone numbers and emergency numbers should be reported to the school office promptly.

### **Field Trips**

Field trip notices will be sent home to advise parents of field trips and the amount of money that may be needed for transportation and admission. Parents must sign notification forms for trips outside the Westfield area. When children are on field trips they are expected to behave and follow the rules that have been set up in the classroom. A child who is disruptive or endangers the safety of other children will not be allowed to continue the field trip. The parent will be contacted to come and pick up the child. A child may be excluded from a field trip if, in the judgment of the principal, he/she has shown evidence and may present a potential safety problem.

### **Lost/Stolen Property**

Children should not bring money or valuables to school. The Westfield Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any lost or stolen items. Lost and found items are sent to the office and placed there in a box. Students should check the box for lost items. It is recommended that all articles brought to school be labeled. Parents are encouraged to look through the lost and found items at any time.

### **Parent – School Contacts**

When a question or problem arises, parents should feel free to contact the classroom teacher first. If further information or action is required, the building principal should be contacted. If a resolution is not reached, the Superintendent of Schools should be contacted.

### **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

The Westfield Public Schools issues elementary report cards three times each year. These quarterly reports, in conjunction with parent teacher conferences, are the method for reporting your child's progress to you. The reports are curriculum based, and as such, are constructed to be directly related to particular grade levels. The Kindergarten programs have three progress reports per year, the first is a social one and the other two will be reflective of all areas. Kindergarten progress reporting is handled in the parent-teacher conference. At that time, a written checklist for kindergarten conferences is given to the parent. This checklist is not intended as a report card but rather as a written reference to

the parent-teacher conference. Teachers are always willing to confer with parents when needed regarding a child's progress in school. We urge you to maintain frequent contact with your child's teacher.

### **Grade/Classroom Placement**

In general, students transferring into the system will be placed in the same grade level as in the school from which they transferred. Grade and classroom placement is made at the discretion of the principal. Retention may be considered when:

1. The child is achieving significantly below ability and grade level.
2. Retention would not cause an undue social and emotional adjustment.
3. Retention would have reasonable chance of benefiting the child.

### **Care of School Property by Students**

It is the responsibility of students to ensure that books and materials belonging to the Westfield Public Schools are returning in acceptable condition. Students responsible for lost, damaged or defaced property must pay for the property.

### **Student Dress**

Students are expected to dress in accordance with the Student Dress policy of the Westfield School Committee.

### **Bus Transportation**

The Westfield Public Schools provides free bus transportation for all eligible students in accordance with applicable laws. The authority of the school begins and ends at the bus stops, both in the morning and in the afternoon. As such, all school rules apply to student activity during these times. Students who violate school rules may have their privilege to ride the school bus revoked in addition to any standard disciplinary action. If a student is suspended from riding the bus, it becomes the responsibility of the student and his/her parents to provide transportation to and from school. Additional rules that apply specifically to riding the school bus are:

1. Abusive language is prohibited on school buses.
2. No smoking will be permitted on a school bus.
3. Horseplay of any kind will not be allowed on the bus regardless of whether the bus is standing or moving. This means that all students will:
  - a. not kneel on bus seats and talk to persons on seats behind them;
  - b. not tamper with the bus and its equipment, especially the windows.
  - c. not put arms, legs, head or any part of their body out of the window;
  - d. not move around or change seats in the bus once it is in motion.
4. No throwing of objects, regardless of whether the bus is standing still or moving.
5. No rough or disorderly physical misbehavior will be permitted on the bus.
6. Chewing gum, eating food or drinking beverages is not allowed on the bus.
7. No items may be carried on the bus except materials that will be held by the student or placed on the floor under the seat directly in front of the student.
8. The emergency doors of school buses are for emergency use only.

9. Students, when getting on and off the bus, shall cross in front of the bus and only upon the receiving of a signal to cross from the bus driver.

Students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver. The bus driver is required to report rule violations. Continued disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the bus driver is sufficient cause for a student to be refused transportation on school buses. A pupil may be suspended from bus transportation upon the principal's receipt of the pupil's third Bus Conduct Report and the receipt of any subsequent Bus Conduct Report could result in a subsequent suspension.

BUS CONDUCT REPORTS and recommendations made with respect to students for the last day of the school year will be implemented in the following school year. Unfulfilled disciplinary assignments will be carried forward and continued in September of the following school year.

ALTERNATE BUSES: On occasion and with prior approval of the transportation company and the principal, a bus student may be eligible to ride an alternate bus.

1. No bus will be rerouted to provide transportation for any individual or group without directions from the transportation office.
2. Buses will only stop to discharge students at regularly scheduled stops. No additional stops will be scheduled without directions from the Transportation Office.
3. The principal should receive a written request from the parent for any alternative transportation. If, in the bus company's judgment, the request is valid and there is adequate room on the bus, and items #1 and #2 above are observed, the bus company may grant this request.

### **School Insurance**

A reasonably priced accident insurance policy is available for all children. Early in the school year you will receive literature which describes the various options that are available. Children who enter school after the beginning of the year are eligible to apply for insurance by obtaining an application form from the school office. You should remember that the school department's only function in this matter is one of service. All matters relating to claims are the responsibility of the family and the insurance company.

### **School Sessions 2015-2016**

All Elementary Schools Kindergarten through Grade 5: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to adhere to the attendance policy of the Westfield School Committee. Below are set forth specific procedures applicable to the Elementary Schools.

Morning Procedures: at the elementary schools, school starts at 9:00 am. Students are not allowed to enter the building before 8:45 am unless they have school breakfast. Once students have arrived on school grounds they may not leave. The only exception is under special circumstances, when a principal may allow a student to leave the school grounds during the day.

Tardiness to school/homeroom: Students are expected to arrive to school and classes on time. Time missed from class constitutes absenteeism, whether in part or in whole. Students who demonstrate a pattern of unexcused tardiness may be subject to disciplinary measures. Students must be in their homeroom at 9:00 am. Otherwise they are tardy. If a student reports to school after 9:00 am, the parent must report to the office and sign the late sheet. Parents of students who are chronically tardy will be contacted informing them of the consequences of their child's further tardiness.

Children should not arrive on school grounds more than 15 minutes prior to school opening, when adult supervision begins.

### **Visitors**

The School policy is to accept those visitors who have legitimate business at the school. Visitors and guests must register in the school office immediately upon entering the building. All visitors and guests must display at all times the appropriate identification badge assigned by the school office. Upon completion of their business all visitors and guests must sign out in the school office, return their badge and promptly leave the building.