



Student and Parent Handbook

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Our School Rules and Regulations are based on the following *basic* expectations for students:

Attendance: Be present in school every day unless you are ill, have a doctor/dentist appointment or a family emergency.

Timeliness: Be on time for school and all of your classes.

Performance: Do your best at all times. *You* write your school record just once and it will follow you the rest of your life!

Conduct: Always act with kindness and courtesy. Treat others as you want to be treated.

Student Code of Conduct

Respect

- Maintain appropriate noise level
- Provide relevant answers and support your position
- Allow others to speak and finish their thought before you speak
- Write, draw, paint and carve only on designated/approved surfaces
- Use professional and respectful language
- Respect the personal property of others
- Respect yourself and others in thought, word and action
- Respect your body by coming to school chemical-free

Reverence

- Help, support and serve your community
- Treat others as you want to be treated
- Take care and pride in your school: the people, the building and the yard
- Show care for your body by dressing appropriately for school
- Use manners and act courteously

Responsibility

- Be prepared for class
 - Mentally: Participate, have an open mind and a desire to learn
 - Physically: Have supplies and class/homework ready
- Care for your environment by maintaining a clean and safe school
- Take responsibility for your actions and words
- Acknowledge that your success is in your control
- Attend school regularly and on-time
- Complete class work and homework

Attendance Policy

Good attendance is vital to school success. Students are expected to be in attendance when Watershed is in session. Students are expected to be on time for the start of the school day and each class. Under Minnesota Law, children must attend school everyday from the time they are seven years old until they are eighteen years old unless legally withdrawn at age 16 or 17.

Excused Absences

Parents/Guardians who have a student who needs to leave during the day for medical/dental appointments or court, etc. must communicate with the office via telephone or note or email. These students need to sign out at the front desk. When possible, please attempt to schedule appointments outside of school hours.

Absences may be excused because of illness, religious observance, family emergency or funeral. In this case, Watershed should be notified by a parent/guardian within 48 hours of the absence for any student under 18. (If a student is 18, he/she can call him/herself in.) If a student misses more than three days, a doctor's note is required for the absence to be excused. All other absences are presumed to be unexcused.

Unexcused Absences and Truancy

Three tardies equal one unexcused absence. A student who has at least three unexcused absences for three or more class periods on three or more days in high school is considered a "continuing truant" under the law. (Minn. Stat. §260.A.02, Subd. 3) A parent or guardian must compel the attendance of a child at school pursuant to Minn Stat. §120.A.22. Failure to meet this obligation may result the county or state taking legal action.

Parents/Guardians cannot excuse students who come back late from lunch or who happen to disappear for a period of time and then show up again, nor can 18 year olds excuse themselves.

Students with attendance issues will be referred to the administration. The administration may deal with the referral in one or more of the following.

1. Conference with the student.
2. Conference with the student and his/her advisor.
3. Communication with parent/guardian and other persons (or organizations) associated with the student's welfare.
4. A conference with the student, parent/guardian and other person (or organization) associated with the student's welfare.
5. The student's educational program may be changed as a result of poor attendance.

If the student continues to be truant, both a parent/guardian and a child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings. If the child is referred to juvenile court for truancy, the child may be subject to a variety of court-ordered dispositions; including, but not limited to: supervision under a probation officer, transfer of legal custody of the child, or the suspension, restriction or delay of driving privileges, pursuant to Minn. Stat. §260C.201.

Pre-Planned Absences/Family Vacation

All planned absences should be cleared through Watershed Administration before the absence occurs. Students who will be absence due to a planned event (i.e. a family wedding, reunion or vacation, etc.) can obtain an excuse by presenting a written request (paper or email) from a parent/guardian in advance of the absence.

Watershed Discipline Policy

1. Statement of Policy:

It is the position of Watershed High School that a fair and equitable school discipline policy will contribute to the quality of a student's educational experience. Without discipline in schools, learning cannot occur. Therefore, this discipline policy has been adopted.

It is the responsibility of the school board, administrators and teachers to safeguard the health and safety of each student as well as to protect students' right to learn in an environment free from disruptions.

2. General Powers of the School Board

In Minnesota, the care, management and control of each school district is vested in the school board (Minn. Stat. §123.33, Subd. 1). As part of its powers and duties, the school board has the authority and responsibility to establish reasonable rules and regulations to govern student conduct. The Minnesota Supreme Court has held that a court will not overturn the rules of a school board unless they are clearly arbitrary or unreasonable.

Minn. Stat. §120.06 provides that "Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, the conduct of all students under the age of 21 attending a public secondary school shall be governed by single set of reasonable rules and regulations promulgated by the local school board." Any due process procedures, which may be established by a board to govern suspensions, expulsions and exclusions, must be in compliance with the provisions of the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act of 1974, Minn. Stat. §127.26 to 127.39 and the changes and additions made to that law in 1983, Minn. Stat. §127.40 to 127.42.

3. Rules of Conduct

All students who attend Watershed High School have the right to learn and participate in all aspects of the school program in a secure learning atmosphere, safe from disruptive behavior or harm from other students. Disciplinary action may be taken against students for any behavior which disrupts good order or violates the rights of others.

No student has the right to interfere with another's learning.

No student has the right to act in a manner that is harmful to him/herself or others.

No student has the right to stop or prevent a teacher from teaching.

General Conduct-The following acts are unacceptable behavior subject to disciplinary actions in the school and at school sponsored events.

A) Threats and Disruptions:

1. Class or School Disruptions: Disturbance or interruption of the peace and order of a classroom, the school or school sponsored activities will be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Dangerous Threats: Threats to normal school operations or school activities, including the report or threat of dangerous or hazardous situations that do not exist.

3. Physical Assault/Fighting: Physical assault is an act which intentionally inflicts or attempts to inflict bodily harm upon another.

4. Verbal Threats/Assault: Verbal assaults are abusive, threatening, profane or obscene language, either oral or in writing.

5. Non-Verbal Threats/Assault: This behavior includes, but is not limited to obscene or threatening gestures and physical intimidation.

6. Cyber-bullying: The use of information and communication technologies including, but not limited to: email, cell phone, and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal web sites, and defamatory online personal pooling web sites, to support deliberate and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to threaten or harm others, or which substantially disrupts or interferes with the operation of a school or an individual student's ability to receive an education. Note: the school CAN discipline this kind of incident even if it happens outside of school hours. The Supreme Court has supported such action.

B) Damage to School or Personal Property:

1. Vandalism: Damage or destruction of school property or the property of others.

2. Theft: The act of intentionally and without claim of right, taking, using, transferring, concealing or retaining possession of movable property of another without his/her consent, or the finding and taking of lost property without reasonable attempt at finding the owner.

3. Trespassing: When ordered to leave school property, willfully refusing to vacate the premises. This may result in removal by law enforcement officials.

C) Chemical Use/Possession:

1. Use: Students who come to school or school sponsored activities appearing or smelling as if under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.

2. Possession: Students who are suspected or reported to be carrying illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol.

D) Additional Activities Which Constitute Unacceptable Behavior:

1. Willful conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the right of others to an education.

2. Willful conduct which endangers...other pupils, school employees, school visitors, or the property of the school.

3. Willful violation of any rule of conduct specified in this discipline policy.

4. Federal/State Laws: The violation of any federal, state or local law.

5. Failure to Identify Oneself: Failure to accurately provide your identity to school employees, volunteers or law enforcement

6. Insubordination: The refusal to obey or comply with a reasonable request of any employee or volunteer of the school.

E) Weapons Violation-See below for complete policy

Weapons Policy and Zero Tolerance

Students and visitors, including adults and visiting youth, are forbidden to knowingly or voluntarily possess, store, handle, transfer or use any instrument that is considered a weapon, look-alike weapon or item fashioned into a weapon in school, on school grounds or at school sponsored activities or upon entering or departing from school premises or events.

Watershed High School takes the position of “**Zero Tolerance**” on the following objects:

1. All firearms and items that look like firearms (loaded or unloaded)
2. Other guns of all types including pellet, airsoft and bb guns
3. Metal pipes or crowbars
4. Metal chains
5. Metal knuckles
6. Cross bows, bows, arrows (except if in an authorized class)
7. Knives (3” blade or longer), daggers, swords
8. Black jacks, clubs, nunchuks, throwing stars
9. Explosives, smoke bombs
10. Items that have been modified to act as a weapon

Disciplinary Action for Unacceptable Behavior (A-E)

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:

1. Meeting with teachers, social workers or the administration
2. Detention
3. Referral to mental health professionals
4. Loss of school privileges, exclusion
5. Parent conference
6. Modified classes or removal from classes
7. Suspension
8. Expulsion
9. Involvement of law enforcement

Student Dress Code

We take pride in the appearance of our school and students are expected to express themselves in modest clothes suitable for school activity.

1. Students are not to wear very low cut or midriff-baring tops to school.
2. Students are not to wear excessively short skirts or shorts.
3. Clothing, Shoes or Accessories that advertise, display or symbolize products banned from school (such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, weapons) and clothing with profane or obscene language or insinuations are not allowed.
4. Clothing, Shoes or Accessories that are gang related or have gang symbols on them are not allowed.

Students who do not follow these guidelines may be sent home to change, be given something appropriate to wear, be asked to remove or cover up the article in question or to turn it inside out.

Cell Phone Policy

Students are NOT permitted to use cell phones for calling or texting during classes or passing time unless given express permission by school staff. Cell phone use is only permitted before or after school and at lunchtime. ***Students in violation of this rule will have to check their phone in/out daily with the administration.***

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices such as game systems, laser pointers, MP3players, iPods, etc. are not allowed during class or passing time. Such items may be used before or after school and during lunchtime only. ***Students who abuse this policy will have their electronics confiscated and kept in the office until the end of the school day. Repeated offenses may lead to checking the item(s) in/out daily at the office and/or a parent conference.***

Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Policy

Minnesota State Law expressly prohibits the use of tobacco by any person under the age of 18. Students of any age are not permitted to smoke or chew during school hours, events, or within sight of the school building or event.

A student shall not use, possess, buy, sell, give away or be in the presence of others who are using, possessing, buying, selling or giving away alcohol or drugs, regardless of quantity or potency during school hours or events. "Drugs" as used in this rule include any controlled substance as defined by Minnesota law. (Prescribed medications that are controlled substances must be checked in at the office, see "Medication Policy".)

Violation of these rules may be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions:

1. Suspension, in or out of school for one to five days
2. Parent/guardian notification and/or conference
3. Referral to school counselor
4. Referral to outside agencies such as, but not limited to treatment centers or mental health professionals
5. Involvement of legal authorities
6. Exclusion from classes or events
7. Expulsion

<p>BASED ON THE SEVERITY OF A STUDENT'S CONDUCT, MORE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES THAN OUTLINED IN THE HANDBOOK MAY BE IMPOSED AT ANY TIME AT THE DISCRETION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.</p>
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Counseling

Counseling with staff, school social worker or local counseling centers is available to all WHS students upon request.

Medication Policy

Medications, both prescription and over the counter (i.e. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough syrup, etc.) are to be administered by the appropriate school staff in compliance with state laws and school policy. All student medications will be kept in a secure location. If medications are sent to school:

1. Prescription meds must include physician's directions for administering (on the label)
2. All meds (prescription and OTC) must be in their original, labeled container
3. The school must be given written parental consent to administer medication, prescription or OTC

Lunch Policy

All students will have an open lunch period. If a student is late returning from lunch three or more times, he/she will be required to remain on campus for the following two weeks before privileges are reinstated.

Accidents/Injuries

Students and visitors are to immediately notify a staff member if they are injured at school, on school grounds or at a school activity. An Accident/Injury Report should be filled out and turned in to the administration the same day.

School Closings

If it becomes necessary to close school due to weather or other circumstances, the announcement will be made on WCCO (Channel 4, AM 830). If Minneapolis Public Schools are closed, so is Watershed High School.

Computer Policy

We are happy to offer internet and computer access to our students at Watershed High School. Students are responsible for good behavior on school networks just as they are in a classroom. Communications using our network and/or computers are often public and the school administration has the right to monitor any and all communications, projects and postings. All students will need to complete a "Computer Usage Contract".

The school network and computers are provided for students to complete coursework and research. Access is given only to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access to the network and computers is a privilege, not a right.

Students may not be able to use the network or computers without the presence of a certified staff member. The Watershed High School policy and student responsibilities are as follows.

Students will **NOT** be permitted to:

1. Send, play or display offensive messages, pictures, songs or videos.
2. Use obscene, profane, threatening or offensive language.
3. Harass, insult, threaten, or attack others.
4. Damage computer, systems or accessories.
5. Violate copyright laws or plagiarize.
6. Use another person's password or account.
7. Trespass in, harm or destroy another person's files, work or folders.
8. Waste limited resources i.e. paper and ink.
9. Employ the network or computers for commercial purposes.
10. Any use of computer or network that infringes on the rights of others.
11. Attempt or break (hack) the security or grading system.
12. Access pornographic, profane or defamatory materials/websites.
13. Upload or download computer viruses.
14. Illegally copy software.
15. Disregard rules established by the school.

Violation of these rules will result in loss of access/use as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Visitors

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit Watershed High School. Sometimes a prospective student and his/her family may visit the school. We will often have "community experts" visit the school. All visitors must sign in at the front desk.

Graduation Requirements

Watershed High School students need to fulfill state and school graduation requirements. A school sponsor, special education staff and/or the administration will help each student to be aware of what credits have been earned and what still needs to be fulfilled. Ultimately, the responsibility for completion of graduation requirements lies with the student and his/her parent/guardian. Questions or problems should be referred to the administration.

To Graduate from Watershed High School Students Need a Minimum of:

Social Studies- 4 Years (12 Credits per year=48 Credits)
English/Language Arts-4 Years (12 Credits per year=48 Credits)
Science-3.5 Years (12 Credits 3 years, 6 credits ½ year=42 Credits)
Math-3 Years (12 Credits per year=36 Credits)
Art-4 Years (12 Credits per year=48 Credits)
Community Service-40 Hours (1 Credit/10 Hours=4 Credits)
Senior Project- 60 Hours (1 Credit/10 Hours=6 Credits)
Elective Credits-4 Years (54 Credits Total)

*Semester-length classes are worth 6 credits per semester.

*Quarter-length classes are worth 3 credits per quarter.

*Full-day J-Term Classes are worth 6 credits, half-day J-Term Classes are worth 3 credits each.

*Students entering Watershed after freshman year need 12 art credits per year they attend WHS.

Interpersonal Relationships

We are all part of the Watershed family. We all have a choice about being here. While we are here, we are part of a small community. In order for our time here to be as pleasant as possible, to be the least stressful as possible, we all need to consider how our behavior and attitude affect those around us.

- **Respect Yourself:** When you respect yourself, you CARE about yourself. You treat yourself well and are concerned about your health, hygiene and your future. Self-respect and self-esteem are closely tied together.
- **Respect Others:** Put-downs, racial or sexist comments, etc. do at least two things. First, they cause hard feelings, friction and a negative atmosphere for others. Secondly, they announce to the world your own insecurity. People who feel truly okay about themselves do not need to put others down to make themselves feel okay. Think about throwing negatives as mudslinging. When you are throwing mud (put-downs, negative comments), you always get some splash-back. In the end, everyone loses.
- **Respect Environment:** This is pretty straightforward. We are all on the Watershed property and everything in and on it deserves careful treatment and use. This includes other people's property, the building and its contents as well as the yard. Pick up after yourself and help others remember to do the same. If you see something lying around-even if it's not yours, pick it up.