

*Watervliet Elementary School*  
*Junior Cannoneers*  
**Parent and Student Handbook**  
2008 - 2009

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**AT WATERVLIET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**



*“Every child enters the classroom with a different set of experiences, beliefs, and strengths. With this in mind, it is our goal to provide students with opportunities to develop to their highest potential.*

*To achieve such **excellence**, we as educators strive to create a safe, positive, and engaging environment. We believe that all children should be literate citizens, ready to be active and successful participants in their community.”*

**WELCOME MESSAGE**

On behalf of the Watervliet Elementary School staff, welcome to the 2008 -2009 school year. This handbook provides general information on important topics related to your child’s experience at our school.

We are a community dedicated to providing excellence in your child’s educational experience. Our staff, parents, and students have built a partnership in order to benefit each and every child. On this foundation, we are confident we will surpass our past accomplishments. We welcome your participation in our exciting learning community.

Mrs. Theresa O’Brien  
Principal

**STUDENT PLEDGE**

I promise to be respectful  
I promise to be responsible  
I promise to be safe  
I promise to be honest  
I promise to be peaceful  
I promise to be a problem solver  
I make these promises because I am committed to learn all I can,  
To try my best  
And be all I am.

*This Agenda Belongs To*



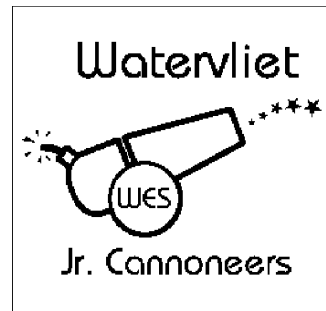
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

“I have read and reviewed the handbook with my child.”

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



## **Watervliet Elementary School**

The Watervliet Elementary School is a UPK – 6 learning community located at 2557 10<sup>th</sup> Ave., Watervliet, New York. Our school building is organized in 5 wings. Our kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grades are organized by grade level teams. Grades 1 – 5 are organized in mini-schools with 1-2 sections of each grade level. The student agenda is used as a tool by teachers to communicate with parents and guardians. Biweekly News and Notes are sent home to keep families informed of happenings in the school. Our district website, [www.watervlietcityschools.org](http://www.watervlietcityschools.org), district newsletters, and local television station, WVLT, provide general information about our schools.

## **Watervliet Elementary School Elementary Instructional Program**

At Watervliet Elementary School, the New York State Standards are the basis for our academic program. The instructional program offered includes study in these major areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Health, Social Studies, Art, Music, Library Skills, Technology Skills, Physical Education, and Character Education. As a Reading First school, our students receive direct and explicit reading instruction with the support of reading specialists and a building reading coach. Our staff works collaboratively to develop literacy skills in our students in all academic areas.

## **Student Expectations and Character Education**

The Watervliet Elementary School has the goal of establishing an atmosphere where children feel safe and secure and have the opportunity to learn. An integral part of our students' education is learning to be responsible citizens. Character education emphasizes these traits and is the foundation for how we expect students to act. Each month, our Kids of Character program recognizes students who are leading examples. We work in partnership with our parents to develop these traits.

In this effort, we have established school-wide expectations for all of our students. We teach students these expectations and the appropriate ways to behave in all areas of the school.

Our school expectations are:

- Be Safe
- Be Honest
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

Our students understand how they are expected to behave in all settings around the school. Our staff models how we expect students to behave in the classroom, hallways, the cafeteria, restrooms, assemblies, on the bus, and on field trips. We use a common language throughout the school to send messages of appropriate behavior. You will hear students and staff saying phrases such as "Level 1 voice in the classroom," or "We walk in hallways."

Our program recognizes students daily, weekly, and monthly for appropriate behaviors. Students who demonstrate the expectations may receive Gotcha Slips daily from staff throughout building. Students are also recognized weekly and monthly with raffles and school-wide celebrations.

A separate **Student Code of Conduct** defines expectations and consequences for our students in all school areas. Each child and parent is required to read, sign, and return the WES Code of Conduct. Students will be held accountable for their actions. If students choose to disrupt the climate of the school or violate our school wide policies they should expect and accept consequences.



Our matrices list our expectations and give several examples of the behaviors students should demonstrate. There is a matrix for each expectation. **Below is an example of the matrix for “Be Responsible.”**

**Responsible**

<b>Classroom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Be prepared and have materials ready</li> <li>➤ Be on time</li> </ul>
<b>Cafeteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Get all food and utensils first time through the line</li> <li>➤ Use Level 1 and Level 2 Voices</li> <li>➤ Clean up your own area</li> </ul>
<b>Bathroom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Good hygiene; wash hands</li> <li>➤ Keep water in sink; trash in the bins</li> </ul>
<b>Hallways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 0 level voices in the hallway</li> <li>➤ Stay to the right</li> </ul>
<b>Playground</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Take care of the equipment and grounds</li> <li>➤ Stay in designated areas</li> <li>➤ Keep playground area clean</li> </ul>
<b>Bus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Always face forward</li> <li>➤ Follow directions of the bus driver</li> <li>➤ Level 1 and Level 2 Voices</li> <li>➤ Walk to your assigned bus</li> </ul>
<b>Assemblies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use audience manners; “Watch, Listen, and Learn”</li> <li>➤ Allow little children in the front rows</li> </ul>
<b>Field Trips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Always stay with the chaperone in charge</li> <li>➤ Wait for arrival and dismissal signals</li> <li>➤ Use good manners at all times</li> <li>➤ Follow the rules of the adults in charge</li> </ul>

**Watervliet Elementary School Contact Information**

**Watervliet Elementary School Numbers**

Main Office: 629-3400  
 Nurse’s Office: 629-3402  
 Food Supervisor: 629-3261  
 Transportation: 629-3202  
 School Support Services: 629-3202

**Watervliet District and Building Level Administration**

Superintendent: Mr. Paul Padalino  
 Director of Curriculum: Mrs. Kirsten DeMento  
 Director of Pupil Services: Mrs. Janelle Yanni  
 Elementary Principal: Mrs. Theresa A. O’Brien  
 Elementary Assistant Principal: Mr. Benjamin Roberts

**Watervliet City School District Board of Education**

Ms. Donna Neary-Hart, President  
 Mrs. Christine Chartrand, Commissioner  
 Mr. Frank McGrouty, Commissioner  
 Ms. Virginia Mullaney, Commissioner  
 Mr. Mark Scully, Commissioner  
 Mr. Paul Padalino, Superintendent of Schools

The Board of Education meets at 7:00 pm the second Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held in the Watervliet High School auditorium.

\*\* Pursuant to Section 3 of Project SAVE: Safe Schools Against Violence Act, all policies and procedures set forth in this Agenda are taken from the Watervliet City School District wide “Code of Conduct”. A copy of the “Code of Conduct” and all district policies is available in the Principal’s office in the Watervliet Elementary School.

# GENERAL INFORMATION A TO Z

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## ABSENCES

Please call the nurse's office @ 629 -3402 by 9:00 am if your child is going to be absent from school. For any absence, a note stating the reason is due on the day your child returns, stating the reason for the absence. Any absence without the note is considered illegal.

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## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Parents have the right to view any and all documents in a child's permanent record. Please call the office for an appointment if you would like to review the material.

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## ACCIDENT

Accidents that occur during school hours or school sponsored activities must be reported immediately to the teacher, school nurse, moderator, or coach in charge.

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## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

There are a number of after-school programs in which children may participate on a voluntary basis. Activity period is from dismissal until 3:30 pm. Children may also be invited to stay after school for extra help from the teachers.

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## AFTER-SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Students must have prior permission for parents to remain after school. The following procedures are adhered to:

1. Long-term permission slips for activities and clubs are completed and signed by the parent. Transportation home is listed on the slip.
2. A parent note is sent to school giving student permission to stay after school. The note describes student transportation home. This is all based on a teacher request to stay after school.
3. An administrator, teacher, or teacher assistant may request parent permission via telephone.
4. Any change in after-school schedules requires a note from a parent/guardian.

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## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Only school buses will drop off and pick up students in the bus loop on 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. All parent drop off and pickup will occur at the parking lot entrance according to staff directions. If a parent

chooses to escort a child, we ask that you park in a designated spot, and cross in front of the pick up and drop off area, not between the cars. Arrival is 8:35 am and departure begins at 2:35 pm.

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## ASSESSMENT

Teachers continually assess student performance through observation, examination and review of student written work, student conferencing, and classroom tests.

Our students also take a variety of standard assessments which includes:

DIBELS for grades K - 3,  
Terra Nova tests 1 - 2, and New York State Assessments in:

Grades 3 - 6 NYS English Language Arts

Grades 3 - 6 NYS Mathematics

Gr 5 NYS Social Studies Assessment

Gr 4 NYS Science Assessment

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## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is extremely important to the academic growth of children and the development of sound attitudes toward school. Student attendance in school is mandatory. Please make every effort to have your child attend school on a daily basis. Attendance is closely monitored and guided by our Watervliet City School District attendance policy. Stage letters are sent home when attendance becomes a concern. The stage letter informs the parent of the attendance record and the consequences for the student if days continue to be missed. Copies of all district policies are available in the main office.

It is also important that your child arrive to school on time each day. Any child entering the building after 8:50 am is considered tardy. Instruction begins by 9:00 am.

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## BREAKFAST / LUNCH PROGRAM

Students are offered a variety of breakfast and lunch foods. A full breakfast, hot lunch, deli sandwiches, ala carte items, milk, juices, and fruit are available daily for student purchase.

A menu with food prices is sent home at the beginning of each month.

Free or reduced priced meals are available to students whose family income falls below a federally designated level. For more information, contact the cafeteria at 629-3261.

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## BOOKSTORE

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Books, pens, pencils, and other general school supplies are available at our school bookstore. Items can be purchased at a nominal fee as our store is subsidized by staff donations. Student Gotcha Bucks can also be redeemed for certain items.

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## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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If you change your address or telephone number while enrolled at Watervliet Elementary School please notify the main office immediately.

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## CLASS TRIPS

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In order for children to participate in class trips, parents/guardian must sign and return a permission slip giving approval. Students not attending the trip are expected to attend school, where an appropriate program will be provided. In order to ensure the safety of our children on class trips, it is essential that each student listens and is responsive to adult direction. Any student that has not shown this level of responsibility may be restricted from a trip.

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## COMMUNICATION

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On-going communication between home and school is critical to your child's success at school. Formal conferences are scheduled in November. Should you need another conference, contact your child's teacher.

The agenda is your daily tool of communication. Look each night for homework assignments, important information and notes from the teacher. The Go-Home Folder may have important letters as well.

If there is an issue that needs to be addressed, you should first contact the classroom teacher. If further clarification or explanation is needed, then contact the principal's office.

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## COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET

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Use of computers and the internet in school requires student responsibility and a signed Acceptable Use policy by parent and child. Surfing the web is not allowed. The school has

filters which help limit access to inappropriate sites.

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## CLASSROOM PARTIES

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Parent helpers will be contacted by teachers if assistance is required for any classroom parties. If you are bringing in supplies, please sign in at the welcome desk and then report to the main office. For certain school wide celebrations, drop-off tables will be set up in the main lobby.

It is important to contact your child's teacher if you plan to send in treats for your child's birthday.

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## DRESS CODE

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We expect that students will come to school in a manner that promotes an orderly, respectful, and safe atmosphere for learning. In the event your child comes dressed inappropriately we will contact you. Clothing may be provided for your child for the remainder of the school day. Please see the district dress code policy for additional details regulating student attire.

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## DRUG FREE POLICY

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The Board of Education is committed to the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and substance use/abuse. The Watervliet School District is a Smoke Free/Drug Free School District. This includes all school functions anywhere on school grounds.

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## EMERGENCY CLOSING

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Announcements will be made on local area television stations when school is closed due to inclement weather or an emergency. The stations designated by the Superintendent of Schools are as follows:

WVLT, WRGB(TV-6), WTEN(TV-10), WNYT(TV-13)

In the event of delays, the elementary school day will begin at:

1 hour delay 9:35 am

- Breakfast will be served

2 hour delay 10:35 am

- Breakfast **will not** be served

**There is no before-care program when a school delay occurs.**

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### **GO HOME FOLDERS**

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Student folders are sent home weekly. Check them for your child's schoolwork, homework sheets, and important notices.

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### **LOST AND FOUND**

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Please be sure to label all personal items with your child's name. All items found on school grounds will be stored in the lost and found area in the main lobby. At the end of each month, unclaimed items will be donated to a needy cause. Announcements will be made on a regular basis for students to check through the lost and found.

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### **HOMEWORK**

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Homework is designed to give children the opportunity to practice the skills they have learned in class, to develop the habit of organizing and using time effectively, to apply knowledge learned in school, and to prepare for further learning. Parents are urged to support children by providing a quiet and well-organized place to work, be positive and assist your child when necessary. Each child is responsible for recording their assignments in their agenda. The following is a recommended guideline for homework:

Kdg – Gr 2: Minimum of 10 – 30 minutes  
Gr 3 – Gr 4: Minimum of 30 – 45 minutes  
Gr 5 – Gr 6: Minimum of 45 – 65 minutes

In addition, children are strongly encouraged to read for at least 20 minutes a night.

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### **LIBRARY**

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If a student loses a book, parents pay for the replacement cost if the book is new or partial replacement cost if the book isn't new. Partial replacement cost is based on how many school years the book has circulated. Sixth graders who lose library books must turn in their payments prior to graduation.

Payments are turned into the Business Office by library staff. Students will be given a receipt for parents.

Parents can support their students by reminding them to pack their library book on "library special" day.

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### **MEDICAL PROCEDURES/PHYSICAL EXAMS**

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In an effort to insure the correct administration of medication and to protect all children, school personnel may administer medication to school children when provided the following:

1. The written request from the physician which indicates diagnosis, name of medication, the frequency and dosage of the prescribed medication.
2. The written request from the parent to administer the medication as specified by the doctor.
3. The medication should be delivered to the nurse by the parent or guardian. Under no circumstances should the medication be delivered by the student.
4. The family must provide the medication in a pharmacy container that clearly indicates the date, name and address of the student, name of the physician, dosage, and frequency.
5. Physical examinations: All students must have a record of physical exams in grades K, 1, 3, 7, and 10. If documentation from the family physician is not recorded, the school physician will provide the examination.

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### **PTA**

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The Watervliet Elementary School Parent Teacher Association is comprised of individuals who are vitally concerned about the educational program and are advocates for our children's needs. Members meet monthly to discuss educational matters and plan functions for the school community. Regular communication informs parents of dates and topics of the monthly meetings. All parents are encouraged to become active members.

Meetings are tentatively scheduled for:

September 9 <sup>th</sup>	February 10 <sup>th</sup>
October 14 <sup>th</sup>	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
November 11 <sup>th</sup>	April 14 <sup>th</sup>
December 9 <sup>th</sup>	May 12 <sup>th</sup>
January 13 <sup>th</sup>	June 9 <sup>th</sup>

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## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

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Students who need to be released early from school must be dismissed from the main office. A note should be sent to school indicating that your child will be leaving early. To help ensure their safety, they will be released only to custodial parent /guardian or someone designated by the parent/guardian. The names of those people must be listed on the Student Data Sheet. It is the parent's responsibility to update changes to this official card. Please note, this procedure is not to be used as a regular manner of dismissal.

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## **REGISTRATION**

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Parents/Guardians wishing to register a child new to the school district must do so through our school guidance counselor. Students will be registered on school days between 8:00 - 9:00 am. A birth certificate, Social Security card, and proof of residency are required at the time of registration. This includes a mortgage and/or property tax statement, a lease agreement, or a notarized statement from a homeowner. Please contact the main office with any questions. If you plan to transfer your child to another school, please inform us so that we can prepare to have records sent. You will need to fill out a request for records when you register your child at their new school.

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## **REPORT CARDS**

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Report Cards are issued four times a year for grades K – 6. The first report card is distributed to parents at parent conference. Parents/Guardians may sign up for November conferences at the Fall Meet The Teacher's Night.

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## **SCHOOL HOURS**

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Watervliet Elementary School regular hours are from 8:35 am until 2:35 pm. Please do not drop off your children before 8:30 am as there is no adult supervision. The Watervliet Civic Center runs a fee-based Before and After School program. For more information, contact William Sheehy @ 273-5922.

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## **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

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The Watervliet City School District is a member of the Pupil Benefits Plan, Incorporated.

Details as follows:

- Pupils are covered for benefits once they get on the bus, on the way to school until they depart the bus on their way home. Pupils who walk, drive cars, or ride bikes are not covered until they enter the school building. In addition, teacher supervised school-sponsored activities are covered.
- Benefits are available only after all other personal insurances have been used. This is excess coverage only. It is the parent's responsibility to file their claim with their own company prior to submitting any balance to the school.
- Injuries which require medical treatment must be filed with Pupil Benefits Plan, Inc. within 30 days. Non-athletic injuries will be filed with the school nurse; athletic injuries will be filed with the Athletic Director.
- All claims should be submitted as promptly as possible. There is a one year deadline.

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## **SCHOOL AND TRANSPORTATION**

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Elementary students who reside four-tenths of a mile or more from school are provided round trip transportation to school. Students are assigned specific buses, as well as bus stop pick-up and return points. These assignments are made according to a student's residence. Day to day requests for bus changes cannot be accommodated.

*Students with special needs:* Children who have been classified as students with special needs and attend school outside the district receive round trip transportation to school provided the child has been recommended for that placement by the District Committee on Special Education and that recommendation has been approved by the Board of Education. Children classified as a student with special needs and attending a district school are provided special transportation if such has been the recommendation by the CSE and approved by the Board of Education.

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## SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR

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Transportation to and from school activities is a privilege. In order to ensure the safety of students who ride the bus, the following rules must be followed:

All students shall:

- Walk when entering and exiting the bus.
- Show concern for the rights of others by not shouting, pushing, or throwing objects.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Leave windows as they are. Arms and hands must not extend out of an open window.
- Follow directions given by the driver promptly and courteously.

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## SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

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**Students who do not adhere to the rules can expect the following consequences:**

**First:** Be warned BY THE DRIVER. If a student does not comply, the driver will report to the school principal.

**Second:** The parents will be contacted by the principal and a copy of the driver's report will be mailed to the parent. A conference may be requested by either the principal or the parent. The student may be subject to a suspension from the bus.

**Third:** The student's bus privileges will be suspended for 5 days.

**Fourth:** The student's bus privileges will be suspended for 10 days.

**Fifth:** If the student's bus behavior does not improve, the student will lose bus privileges for the remainder of the year.

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## STUDENT INFORMATION FORMS

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Parents/Guardians are required to complete several forms for school records. The forms include a Student Data Sheet, Student Health Form, Code of Conduct, Civil Defense Form, Acceptable Use Form, and a Media Release Form. Please contact the office for additional copies if needed.

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## STUDENT PROPERTY AND SCHOOL MATERIALS

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Certain personal belongings such as skateboards, music/ mp3 players, cell phones, Discman, electronic games, toy weapons, etc. can be disruptive to learning and should be kept at home. Articles of this nature brought to school will be confiscated. Parents will be notified and may be required to come to school to pick up the items taken away. The school is not responsible if such items are lost or stolen.

Students are responsible for their school materials. If certain materials, such as textbooks, agendas, and Go Home folders, are lost or damaged (including graffiti), students may be required to pay for their replacement.

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## VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

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All visitors and volunteers are required to sign in at the welcome desk, sign in, leave collateral, wear a name tag, and then proceed to the main office. From the main office, you will be given further direction. If you need to drop off any materials for your child please bring them to the main office. Our staff will get these materials to your child.

You will need to sign out at the welcome desk before you leave the building. The door to the parking lot is our single entrance and exit to the building. These procedures are set in place for the safety of the students and our visitors. Details are listed in the district visitor policy.

