

WILLIE ROSS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

PLEASE REMEMBER TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE FOR UPDATED SCHOOL INFORMATION:

<https://www.wrsdeaf.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/wrsd1967>
<https://www.instagram.com/wrsd1967/>

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

The parents and families of our students are our most valuable resources. The following guidebook is intended to assist you in learning about the services and programs offered at Willie Ross School. Our goal is to be as responsive to you as possible. It is my hope that this guide book will assist us in achieving that important objective.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf offers a unique instructional model which will provide your child with the best possible program. Our small classes, individual attention, and our ability and commitment to getting to know each of our students, provides a unique array of opportunities to promote your child's development.

Willie Ross is your school, whether your child's program is at the Longmeadow Campus or one of the Partnership Campus sites within the East Longmeadow Public Schools. I hope you will find the pages that follow helpful. Please remember that you are welcome to contact me at any time at 413-567-0374, or by email at bcarter@wrsdeaf.org

I'd also like to let you know that we have a website and Facebook page that I encourage you to take a look at: www.wrsdeaf.org; <https://www.facebook.com/wrsd1967>. They contain up-to-date information and announcements from the school.

Robert (Bert) Carter
President & CEO
Willie Ross School for the Deaf

VISION

We at Willie Ross School for the Deaf believe in a world in which all people who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing have every opportunity to experience full and productive lives.

MISSION

Our school provides deaf and hard of hearing students access to comprehensive, evidence-based education and support services in the classroom and in the greater community. We strive for excellence and innovation. We work to maximize each individual's intellectual, social and emotional growth.

COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY

WRSD acknowledges and embraces the right of its students and staff to have full and ongoing access to language and communication, both incidental and planned. Optimal access to all communication, utilizing a Total Communication approach, is vital to our students' academic and social development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. WRSD is a diverse, multicultural, and inclusive school where students and staff are expected to contribute to a safe and supportive environment by keeping the school free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
2. Students will apply their knowledge, experiences, and connections in order to succeed in life.
3. Individual Education Plan requirements for language, communication, and speech will be met through each student's primary mode of communication as determined by the team in conjunction with the family.
4. Students are expected to become involved with the world through hands-on learning and interactions with the community.

WRSD is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate in the employment, training, promotion, transfer, or compensation of personnel on the grounds of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or disability, as provided by law.

CONTACTING STAFF MEMBERS

You are welcome to call the school at: (413) 567-0374 OR VP 413-798-4221 to speak with:

Erika Kaftan	Education Director	ekaftan@wrsdeaf.org
Heather Robinson	Interim Assistant Education Director	hrobinson@wrsdeaf.org
Aubrey Jazwierski	Coordinator of Student & Admin Services	ajazwierski@wrsdeaf.org
Joel Skelton	Coordinator of Community Engagement	jskelton@wrsdeaf.org
Bonnie Katusich	Director of Operations	bkatusich@wrsdeaf.org
Robert Carter	President & CEO	bcarter@wrsdeaf.org

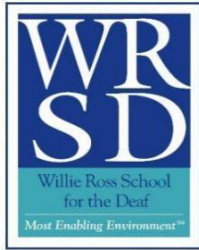
Please remember that teachers and assistants are in their classrooms during the school day and are not always available to receive telephone calls. We will gladly take a message and deliver it to the appropriate person.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

edited 4/13/2023

2023 - 2024 Willie Ross School for the Deaf

THIS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGES



JULY						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
						25
						28
						29
						30

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
4	Labor Day	3	4	5	6	7
		10	11	12	13	14
		17	18	19	20	21
27	1/2 day Professional Development	24	25	26	27	28
20		31				

OCTOBER						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
						9
						26

NOVEMBER						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
7	Full day Professional Development			1	2	3
10	Veterans Day	5	6	7	8	9
		12	13	14	15	16
		19	20	21	22	23
22	1/2 Day of School	19	20	21	22	23
23&24	No School - Thanksgiving	26	27	28	29	30
18						

DECEMBER						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
						6
						25-29

JANUARY						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
1	New Year's Day observed	1	2	3	4	5
		7	8	9	10	11
15	MLK Day - no school	14	15	16	17	18
		21	22	23	24	25
31	Professional Development	21	22	23	24	25
20		28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		
						19
						19-23

MARCH						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
15	1/2 Day Professional Development	3	4	5	6	7
29	Good Friday-No School	10	11	12	13	14
		17	18	19	20	21
		24	25	26	27	28
20		31				

APRIL						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
						15
						15-19

MAY						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
9	1/2 Day Professional Development	5	6	7	8	9
		12	13	14	15	16
		19	20	21	22	23
27	Memorial Day	19	20	21	22	23
		26	27	28	29	30
22						

JUNE						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	S
						1
						2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
						12
						19
						21

Please Note: This calendar may be changed - please check our website for updates: www.wrsdeaf.org

School Hours		
Longmeadow Campus	Regular hours	Early Release
(LC) Founders Classroom Building	8:15 - 2:45	11:45
(MV) Mountain View Elementary School	8:10 - 2:30	11:30
(BP) Birchland Park Middle School	7:30 - 2:00	11:05
(ELHS) East Longmeadow High School	7:25 - 1:45	10:50

- Red No School for Students
- Yellow First & Last Days of School for Students
- Blue Professional Development
- Half Day of School for Students

Look for us on:

- Website: <https://www.wrsdeaf.org/> IG <https://www.instagram.com/wrsd1967/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wrsd1967/>

ADMISSIONS AND PLACEMENT POLICY

Willie Ross School for the Deaf has an eligibility criterion for admission. Upon referral by the sending district, the intake team will review the referral. The chair of the intake team will then reach out to the family to set up an intake meeting and tour. This meeting does not guarantee acceptance of the student. The intake team includes the Education Director, Assistant Education Director, a teacher, Speech and Language Pathologist, Audiologist, and Counselor.

Minimum requirements for enrollment are as follows:

- Referral from student's sending district
 - While we are located in Massachusetts, we are able to accept referrals from surrounding states.
- Student is between the ages of 3 and 21 years old
- Updated immunization records and a recent physical
- An Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Current audiogram that documents hearing loss or a special education evaluation/documentated medical necessity that recommends placement at a school for communication needs
- Benefits from placement at a specialized school

Willie Ross School for the Deaf is a day school and does not accommodate residential needs. Admission to the school is at no cost to the parents. The sending district assumes fiscal responsibility for placement and transportation.

Should a student be accepted, the placement will be as follows:

- If the student is between the ages of 3 through 1st grade, the student will be placed at the Longmeadow Class in the appropriate classroom (either Preschool or Elementary 1.)
- If the student is in 2nd grade through 12th grade, the team (including the sending district and parents) will determine if placement is more appropriate at the Longmeadow Campus or at a partnership site in East Longmeadow.

The team may require an Extended Eligibility Evaluation in which they work with the student for 6-8 weeks and then reconvene to determine whether the student is in an appropriate placement and/or needs a new IEP written by the team at Willie Ross School for the Deaf with input from the parents and sending district.

To ask more questions or to learn more about WRSD, please contact WRSD at 413-567-0374 voice or 413-798-4221 videophone.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

At Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD) we recognize that a student can achieve more when parents are actively involved in the educational process. With this in mind, WRSD provides many opportunities for parent(s)/guardian(s) to become involved including: open houses, parent-teacher conferences (at least 2 per year), invitations to school plays and shows, volunteer opportunities, free sign language classes, counselor home visits, and Parent Advisory Council meetings.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

WRSD works to maintain an active Parent Advisory Council. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receive written invitations to attend meetings which are held at least two times each year. Erika Kaftan and Heather Robinson are WRSD's designated representatives although other staff members are welcome to attend as well. It is through this group that parents can most easily raise concerns and make recommendations regarding the education, health, and safety of our students.

If you are interested in being a part of the PAC please feel free to contact Erika Kaftan, Education Director at ekaftan@wrsdeaf.org or Heather Robinson, Interim Assistant Education Director at hrobinson@wrsdeaf.org. Please feel free to contact the school by video phone (VP) 413-798-4221 or our main office at 413-567-0374.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SCHOOL COLLABORATION (PSC)

For those parents who would like to be active with the school and their students but not in an advisory capacity, we have created a Parent School Collaboration group that will focus on engagement and activities for their children. Please look for flyers in your student's backpack, emails, and announcements sent in our monthly newsletter about upcoming events.

TRANSLATION

Please note that there are times when we utilize third party services for translation of documents and correspondence. We will not use your student's name in any of these third party exchanges.

Written Translation: Willie Ross will provide written translation service for all important documents such as school policies, permission slips, and other essential communication documents.

Verbal Translation: Willie Ross will provide verbal translation services, as needed, during parent-teacher conferences, individual student meetings, and any other significant school events where accessible communication is crucial.

Visual Translation: Willie Ross will provide certified American Sign Language Interpreters with all necessary and vital information. For documents, the ASL interpreter will then create a video in American Sign Language, with voice over. Appointed staff will convert video to an accessible QR code for families that would like to view a signed version of the written information that is displayed in the document.

Confidentiality: All translation requests and all communications will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and remain in compliance with the applicable privacy laws. All interpreters/translators hired by Willie Ross will adhere to a code of ethics and uphold confidentiality at all times.

CURRICULUM

At WRSD, curriculum is reviewed informally on a regular basis but formally every 6-8 years to ensure ongoing alignment with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. WRSD's curriculum matches the needs of our students and is open to adding new materials at any point during the teaching process. The curriculum is vertically and horizontally aligned to address our students' knowledge and skills in each subject across all grades. In addition, we promote a hands-on approach to learning including providing experiences that promote students' thinking and problem solving skills. The curriculum is taught based on an individual's needs whether that be whole group, small group, or 1:1 instruction. The full curriculum guide is found on the school website:

<https://www.wrsdeaf.org/wrsd-curriculum-guide>

HOMEWORK

Establish a set time and place for doing homework. Check your child's homework when they have completed it. For Middle & High School students, ask them if they want you to check their homework.

Early Childhood Parents are encouraged to read to their children daily.

Primary Homework assigned would not be more than ½ hour per day.
Parents are encouraged to read to their children daily.

Elementary Homework assigned could be up to one hour.

Middle Homework assigned could be up to 1½ hours.

High School Homework assigned could be up to two hours.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND MCAS TESTING

Similar to the public school system, all students in grades 3rd through 8th and 10th will be required to take the designated standard MCAS tests with accommodations or the alternate assessment as determined at the team meetings. In order to receive a diploma, students must pass the Grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics MCAS test. High School students must also pass one MCAS Science test and three courses of social studies, including civics, starting with the class of 2020. Students have at least five chances to retake and pass the tests. Students who choose not to take the MCAS retest(s) are not eligible for a diploma and will receive a certificate of completion if all other requirements are met.

For the classes of 2023 through 2025, students must pass the ELA MCAS with a **472** and the Math MCAS with a **486**. Students who score between **455 – 471** in ELA will need to do an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP). Students who score between **469 – 485** in Math will need to do an EPP. **220** is still a passing score for Science. For science, the class of 2023 may either take and pass the STE MCAS with a 220 or higher or successfully complete a relevant high school class.

For the classes of 2026-2029, students must pass the ELA and Math MCAS with a **486**. Students who score between **470 – 485** in ELA and Math will need to do an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP). 470 is the required passing score for Science in order to receive a competency determination.

The other requirements for receiving a Diploma are as follows:

The student must pass:

4 courses of English (4 credits each)
4 courses of Math (4 credits each)
4 courses of Science including Health (4 credits each)
3 courses of Social Studies including Civics (4 credits each)
3 courses of Physical Education (East Longmeadow students) (4 credits each)
4 courses of Physical Education (Longmeadow students) (3 credits each)
4 courses of Electives, including a Fine Arts class (such as Art,) a Practical Arts class (such as Culinary or Technology), Career Readiness (Longmeadow Campus students), Life Skills, Junior Exploratory Class, and Senior Seminar

- East Longmeadow students - Fine Arts/Practical Arts = 4 credits each
- Longmeadow students - Fine Arts/Practical Arts = 3 credits each
- Life Skills (both campus students) = 2 credits each
- Junior Exploratory Class (both campus students) = 2 credits
- Senior Seminar (both campus students) = 2 credits
- Career Readiness (Longmeadow students only) = 2 credits
- Work Study = 1 credit the first year, 2 credits the second year, 3 credits the third year, 4 credits the fourth year
- RFL / WIN = 1 credit

4 years of American Sign Language

- The full 4 year requirement begins with the Class of 2026.
- 1 credit per year / 1 day a week course
- The Language Skill Hierarchy Frameworks will be used for assessments. Both the ASL Specialist and teacher will be responsible for measuring a student's ASL skills. Fluency is not required for graduation but progression and effort should be observed in order to obtain passing grades.
- If a student/family does not want to participate, they must "test out" as evidenced by the completion of the Language Skills Hierarchy Frameworks. If the student does not test out and does not participate in classes, the student will receive zeroes for the class.

40 hours of Community Service
Completion of Civics Project

Students who are admitted to WRSD at age 19 or older, who do not have sufficient transfer credits will be eligible for a **Certificate of Attendance**.

If a student cannot pass the MCAS examinations but satisfy all other requirements, they are eligible for a Certificate of Attainment.

*Please note that unpaid library book fines will result in not receiving a diploma or certificate until the fines are paid.

WRSD TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition Overview:

As mandated by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process, transition planning starts for all students at WRSD at age 14. Our transition specialist meets with the student to ask about their vision for their future and creates a Transition Plan for the student. This plan is reviewed at the IEP meeting with the team and updated annually. Educational planning and course selection is guided in part by the transition plan.

Our transition specialist also helps to ensure that the student is making progress towards their future goals, whether that be academic goals, vocational goals, or independent living goals by working with the student and their family closely. The transition specialist will also bring in appropriate agencies to support the students.

Academic Goals:

Our transition specialist helps students prepare for graduation by helping them monitor their coursework and grades. They will discuss graduation requirements and help students set goals. The transition specialist also helps students prepare for college or training programs by helping coordinate campus visits, prepare for entry exams, applications, and essays. They work closely with families to help them navigate the post secondary education process. They also assist students with finding financing for college through financial aid, grants, scholarships and awards.

Vocational Goals:

WRSD has a School to Career coordinator that provides our work study program. Working closely with the transition specialist, the coordinator develops and instructs career readiness classes and life skills classes. In addition to coursework, the work study program also provides students with opportunities to develop job skills through work experiences. Students in the work study program spend a part of their school day working in various environments learning essential work behavior skills. Each year in high school, the student's participation in work study experiences increases in complexity and length.

Independent Living Goals:

Our transition specialist also works with students and their families to make the important connections that will assist their transition to adulthood. Students are referred to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (or another agency as appropriate such as the Department of Developmental Services) and meetings are coordinated with a counselor. These counselors work with our transition specialist to help students transition to college and career. Before graduation and typically in their last months of school, students begin transitioning to postsecondary programs provided in our area.

As part of our life skills classes, students learn how to access services and learn more about their rights as a Deaf adult. Students learn how to request interpreters, request accommodations and assistance. Through field trips and presentations from professionals, students learn how to navigate independently as a Deaf adult.

Curriculum used:

We have access to various curricula: *Attainment's Pre-ETS Pre-Employment Transition Solutions*, which covers Jobs and Career Exploration, Work-Based Learning, Workplace Readiness, Self-Advocacy, and Post Secondary Training. We also use *Brigance Transition Skills Inventory and Activities*, which covers Academic Skills, Post Secondary Opportunities, Independent Living,

Community Participation and Self Assessments. We also use assessments such as the *Transition Planning Inventory - 2nd Edition*, *Transition to Work Inventory - 2nd Edition*, and *Career and Life Explorer - 3rd Edition*, various hands-on pre-vocational kits (culinary, manufacturing, sorting, assembly, sewing, filing, data collection, and basic payroll/bookkeeping). In addition, we also teach indoor/outdoor survival signs and help students prepare for the written learner's permit test as appropriate.

SCHOOL TO CAREER PROGRAM

Internships and work-study opportunities exist for our high school students in order that they may gain actual hands-on direct experience in the workplace. These internships go from the pre-vocational level through more advanced opportunities, which are appropriate to their interests and abilities. The program is staffed by the School-to-Work Coordinator who will provide support to the students throughout their time in the program, both in the classroom and during their placements.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

All Willie Ross classroom teachers are either Teachers of the Deaf or Special Education Teachers. All teachers are fluent in American Sign Language regardless of their license.

We provide services in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that comes to the school with the student. The IEP is in effect for 364 calendar days with a new plan developed annually by the team. The student can start receiving services as early as 3 years of age until the day before they turn 22.

The IEP team consists of the parent/guardian(s), the student when appropriate, district representative, WRSD administrator, classroom teacher, counselor, audiologist, speech/language therapist, and any other therapists required by the IEP. The IEP lists the student's disability(ies) and the services required to address the student's needs.

Services include:

- Direct teaching services
- Interpreting services
- Speech and Language services
 - English grammar
 - Articulation
 - Listening
 - American Sign Language vocabulary and grammar
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Adaptive Physical Education
- 1:1 paraprofessional support
- Counseling
- Assistive technology
- Teacher of the visually impaired services
- Summer programming
- Consultation

At each annual team meeting, services will be reviewed and ensured that the student is receiving the right amount of services. During three year evaluations, specific services may be found to no longer be necessary and with the team's approval, be removed from the IEP. In addition, while WRSD is a least restrictive environment for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students due to being able to provide the least amount of language and communication barriers, placement will be reviewed annually to ensure the school is an appropriate fit for the students. In the case it is not, a plan will be developed with the ETL of the student's sending district to find a more appropriate fit for the student.

If a parent or a school professional requests an evaluation, parent consent must be received in writing for an evaluation to occur. Once the signed consent is received, the team has 30 school days to do the evaluation and 45 days to schedule and hold a meeting to discuss the evaluation results. If the evaluation results show that a student needs additional (or to reduce or to remove) services, the team will make the determination at the meeting and write either a new IEP or an amendment to update services.

In the student's IEP, it is determined whether the student has a cognitive impairment or language delay that necessitates state-required alternative assessments.

If WRSD cannot provide the appropriate services needed for a student, a team meeting will be called to determine the next steps.

Progress reports will be disseminated four times a year to show the student's progress towards each goal on their IEP.

PROGRAM FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

Students who have been identified as Limited English Proficient and referred by a public school system receive intensive language, reading and sign language instruction, often in a 1:1 or small group setting. Students of all different language backgrounds are welcome to the school. Since the majority of deaf students have limited English skills, the Willie Ross School for the Deaf teachers are well trained to use appropriate instructional materials and methodology to help LEP students develop English Language Skills. Students generally develop a manual communication system first, and this is then used as the basis for spoken English (if possible & appropriate) and written English.

Sign Language vocabulary for math, science, and social studies enables students to understand concepts in these subject areas as they develop written English skills. All students have equal opportunities to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf addresses the needs of English Language Learners as follows: All of our students are considered ELL due to their hearing losses. Teachers address the language needs of all students on a daily basis as part of their ELA instruction.

STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING POLICY

We expect our students to model responsible and appropriate behaviors. Students who come to school on time and are respectful of their classmates and staff members are considered "students in good standing." Students who consistently violate our tardy and discipline policies may lose their "student in good standing" status. Any student who has incident reports exhibiting unsafe behavior, disrespect, physical aggression, or eloping will lose eligibility from athletics and/or extracurricular activities for at least one week. Parents will be notified immediately.

Prior to the next planned activity, the student will then meet with an administrator to determine if the student should regain his or her eligibility. A plan will be put into place at that point to outline how that student can remain eligible moving forward and this plan will be communicated with all the staff involved and the student's parents. However, the meeting does not guarantee that eligibility will be restored at that point. Participation in athletic and extracurricular programs is a privilege, not a right. Students who participate in our athletic and extracurricular programs are representatives of our school and should model the values and expectations of WRSD.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our after school program is designed to promote our students' social behavior and to give them enrichment opportunities. The goal is to provide each group with one activity a month throughout the year but specific activities may meet regularly such as Dance Club, Jr. NAD, and sports. To ensure that all the students have a safe and enjoyable time, it is important to continue with the following guidelines.

If a student acts inappropriately:

- engages in unsafe behavior,
- is disrespectful to staff or other students,
- is physically aggressive,
- leaves the group without permission,

They will lose the privilege of attending the next after school activity. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the student's behavior the day of the event. This is in accordance with our Student in Good Standing policy.

It should also be noted that inappropriate behavior at school could result in your child not being allowed to attend the program. It is a **privilege** to be able to attend the After-School program.

Guidelines for picking up your child:

Children should be picked up in the bus loop at the front of the school on time.

If your child is not picked up by the time indicated on the permission slip, you will receive a gentle reminder for the first incident. If this occurs again, you will be notified and your child will lose the privilege of attending the next activity. *Our time is just as valuable as yours so please be respectful and pick your child up on time.*

We are looking to provide a safe and inviting environment for all our students and adhering to these rules will help us accomplish this.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Heather Robinson, Assistant Education Director, at 413-567-0374 or by email: hrobinson@wrsdeaf.org

FIELD TRIP POLICY

When permission forms for field trips or after-school-hour activities are sent home, the forms must be completed, signed and returned by the given date to the school for our files. **Verbal permission WILL NOT be accepted.**

On all permission forms, regarding school hours field trips, there will be a reminder that, if for any reason you do not want your child to attend, a teacher will be at school, and classes will proceed as scheduled.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Please call the school at (413) 567-0374 or VP (413) 798-4221 whenever your child will not attend school. You can leave a message in the general box on our voicemail if you call before 7:30 a.m. You will be called in the morning to verify your child's absence if the school has not been notified earlier.

If your child is being dismissed early for any reason, the Willie Ross School safety policy is as follows:

- **No student will be dismissed** to anyone other than the person(s) designated by the student's parent or guardian and whose names are on file in the Cooley Administration Building on the Longmeadow Campus.
- **No student will be dismissed** without a note or an email confirming their dismissal.
- No student may sign themselves out. The person picking up the student must come into the building to sign them out.

Should you, as parent or guardian, wish to add to or change the list of designated people on file, you must contact the Willie Ross School main office on the Longmeadow Campus. The first time the new person is to pick up your child, **they will be required to present a current driver's license** which positively identifies them as your designee. No student will be dismissed to anyone until positive identification is made.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that we have, on file, a functioning home, work and emergency contact phone number **at all times**. If you are unable to be reached during an emergency by the phone numbers provided, 911 will be called, your child will be transported to the hospital, and the police will be notified and told that we were unable to reach you.

The safety of our students is of utmost concern to WRSD. Practices such as those mentioned are, and will continue to be, followed diligently to insure an environment that is secure for your children.

DROP OFF POLICY

If you drive your child into school at the Longmeadow Campus, please abide by the following policy: When dropping off, please make sure that you arrive here between 8:00 - 8:15. If you arrive earlier or later than 8:15 you will need to park in the Administration parking lot and sign your child in regardless of their age and wait with them until it is time for them to go over to the classroom building. If you arrive during the appropriate drop-off time then please pull your car up in line with the buses. Do not get out of your vehicle. A staff member will assist you in getting your child out of the car.

This is for your safety as well as the safety of your child/children.

When you are picking up your child, please make sure that you arrive between 2:40 – 2:45. If you arrive earlier than 2:40 please pull up in the bus line, in front of the school, and wait in your car for your child to be brought to you. Please do not park your car in the driveway and get out to speak to staff. If you feel that you need to do that, then please park in the Administration parking lot, sign in, get your child and then you may go and speak to a teacher, if they are available.

Please adhere to these procedures or you will be asked to park and walk your child in daily. These procedures are set in place for the safety of the children, the staff, and you.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Regular attendance is expected at school each day.
- Parents/guardians are expected to **CALL** the school at (413) 567-0374 or VP (413) 798-4221 each morning a student will be absent.
- Students are expected to be in attendance during the school day in order to participate in after-hours school sponsored activities.

ATTENDANCE STANDARDS

- A student will be present in class each day.
- All absences will be counted. Whether an absence is excused depends on the circumstances and documentation.
 - Excused absences include:
 - Student illness (Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence length).
 - Student's observance of a religious holiday
 - Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family
 - Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).
 - Extraordinary educational opportunities
- Missing 10% of days enrolled is considered chronically absent.
- If a student is absent more than eight (8) times or tardy more than ten (10) times in a semester, a parent/guardian conference may be scheduled with either the Education Director or the Assistant Education Director.
- After nine (9) absences in a semester, the tenth (10) and each subsequent absence follow a stringent and specific set of reasons for the absence to qualify as excused as agreed upon by the Education/Assistant Education Director, parent/guardian, and possibly the sending district.
- After the tenth day of absences without extenuating circumstances or a pattern of excessive absences, WRSD will notify the student's sending town unless the town's contract requests sooner notification.
- If a student reaches thirteen (13) days of consecutive absences without extenuating circumstances, a referral may be made to DCF or the MA Court of Law to assist families/guardians with attendance.
- Absences cause students to miss instruction and curriculum. Excessive tardiness and absences could result in grade retention and loss of credits.
 - For High School students, 18 absences in a year will result in grade retention.
 - If a High School student is tardy to class, these will be counted. Three (3) will equal one (1) absence.
 - For Middle School and High School, more than twelve (12) absences will result "incomplete" for their grade as well as possible grade retention.
 - If credit is lost, WRSD will notify the student's residential town.

Please remember to follow our policy about calling in absences. It is our goal here at WRSD to help your child achieve success; with good attendance and support from our families, we can achieve that goal. We are all here to support your child's academic progress in any way we can. If you have any questions, please call your child's counselor or director at 413-567-0374.

STUDENT BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAM

Breakfast will be provided for ALL students through each Program site.

The Springfield Public School system has generously offered to supply ALL of our students a healthy and nutritious breakfast. All families with children on the Longmeadow Campus are NOT required to fill out a free/reduced lunch application form.

ALL students on our Longmeadow Campus will receive free breakfast and lunch. The students at our East Longmeadow sites will receive free breakfast AND will still need to complete the applications for lunch benefits.

For safety reasons, students may not share lunches.

Please discuss healthy food choices with your child.

At this time, we have students and staff with **severe food allergies. Absolutely no tree nuts, peanuts, fish and eggs are to be brought into school.** Any food that is brought into school needs to be in its original packaging that lists the ingredients. If you have any further questions please contact our school nurse at wrnurse@wrsdeaf.org or 413-567-0374.

STUDENT SUPERVISION

To ensure the well-being and safety of our students, Willie Ross mandates that students must be under supervision at all times, both on and off campus. The goal of this policy is to ensure the security of our students.

Students will be placed in car seats depending on their weight, age and height. Staff will follow all guidelines pertaining to car seat safety. Staff will ensure that all students who require a car seat or booster seat have one and are properly secured prior to leaving campus.

On-Campus supervision: Students must remain under the supervisor of designated faculty members, staff, and all other authorized employees while on school property. This includes classrooms, bathrooms (based on age/individual need of student), library, and any other common areas.

Off Campus supervision: Willie Ross Students will be supervised by designated faculty members, staff, or other authorized staff, whenever they are participating in school-sanctioned events, field trips, and activities off school premises.

Arrival and departure: Students will remain under supervision during their arrival and departure from school. This includes ensuring a safe transition to and from their mode of transportation.

After-School activities: Students whom participate in our after-school program must remain under the supervision of the assigned staff until parent, guardian, or any other mode of transportation that has been approved by the town, picks them up.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

This policy is to ensure the safety of transportation to and from school-sponsored events. Willie Ross School for the Deaf is committed to providing a secure and safe transportation environment. Students will always have permission from a parent/guardian prior to being transported in a WRSD van.

Approved staff drivers with a current driver's license have taken a driving test with an administrator who ensures they follow all driving laws. Failure to follow driving laws will result in loss of privilege to operate WRSD vehicles and parents/guardians will be notified.

Students will be placed in car seats depending on their weight, age and height. Staff will follow all guidelines pertaining to car seat safety. Staff will ensure that all students who require a car seat or booster seat have one and are properly secured prior to leaving campus.

STUDENT FILES

The main student files are kept in the Cooley Administration Building in the locked supply closet. The Coordinator of Student and Administrative Services oversees the student files. If you wish to gain access to them please contact their office directly.

Each student's file contains copies of their current educational program as well as relevant information from all of the disciplines involved in the student's program, including results of outside evaluations.

Medical, emergency and release forms are also contained in each file.

All reports and forms which are contained in the student records are to be placed there by the Coordinator of Student and Administrative Services or their designee not the providers. Reports will not be placed in the student's records until they have been reviewed at a team meeting.

Any material to be released must be processed through the Coordinator of Student and Administrative Services.

Any information not in the file is not considered part of the student's record. Staff members are expected to read these files at any time as often as needed. The student files can only be taken from the Administration Building by an administrator or assigned staff person.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

A Willie Ross School for the Deaf Social Worker is assigned to each class for weekly group sessions. Topics are based on age and developmental levels of the students. Individual counseling is available to all students on an as needed basis or on a regular weekly basis with parental permission. Staff monitor and support students' growth and development through classroom activities and through curriculum. Written permission will be obtained from the parent/guardian before any discussions occur regarding sex education with your child.

SUICIDAL THREATS

If a student makes a threat that appears suicidal in nature, the staff person will immediately notify an administrator and the student's counselor. The counselor will complete a checklist that includes contacting the parent/guardian. Some instances may require a safety plan or other interventions before the student returns to the classroom. If you have any concerns at any time, please reach out to your child's counselor.

SAFETY PLANS

A safety plan is a comprehensive plan of action to be used in order to keep students safe at school. The plan involves three components: 1) the actions school staff will engage in, 2) the actions the student will engage in, and 3) the actions the parents or guardians will engage in. The plan has a definite start and a proposed end date. This plan is meant to cover the entire school day, from the time a student arrives to school until they are dismissed for the day.

It would be appropriate to complete a safety plan in the following situations:

- The student is potentially harmful to themselves or others.
- The student returns to school from a long-term placement with high levels of support (e.g., hospitalization, psychiatric emergency services, suspension, etc.).
- After completion of a risk assessment, if applicable.
- Upon recommendation from a psychologist or administrator.

A safety plan should be completed by the student's team. It is also recommended that the student and their parent's input be considered during development of the plan. Once the plan has been developed by the team, the director or his/her designee will share the plan with appropriate staff members.

It is the intent of this plan that it be carried out in a way which is minimally intrusive, yet effective in maintaining safety. School layout, passing times, grade levels and configurations and availability of staff may impact the plan. It may be necessary to adapt the plan to the school building. For example, if there are locations which are known to be particularly dangerous for the student, those areas need to be identified and monitored.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT / PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES

WRSD recognizes that the best method to prevent student crises is the provision of a structured, predictable routine and a safe environment. Your child will feel more contained and safe and will be less likely to act out. All students receive 100% supervision, allowing staff the opportunity for early intervention, preventing many situations from becoming a problem.

- All students have access to a counselor for individual counseling sessions. All students meet in a group session with a counselor weekly.
- Staff members are expected to intervene before a situation escalates and are required to complete an Incident/Occurrence form which is then forwarded to the administrative staff within a 24 hour time frame.

- Whenever a staff person learns of any student with suicidal inclinations or self-injurious behavior they must immediately contact the assigned counselor. If the counselor is unavailable, an administrator should be contacted. Parents are always contacted regarding the student's behavior.
- Staff members are aware that physical restraint is only used as a last resort.
- They utilize time-outs, sensory breaks, as well as offers to leave the classroom with a staff person for a brief time to "calm down".
- A CPI trained Interventionist can be called in to de-escalate the situation.
- All staff receive training in de-escalation techniques during our beginning of the year full staff orientation. Orientation training is led by the administrative staff.
- Any time a staff member feels a student may be losing control, they may call for a member of the CPI team to come to assist.
- A minimum of 8 staff are trained annually to perform non-violent restraints when a student's behavior necessitates the need for restraint.

There will be situations when a student becomes assaultive and/or displays destructive behavior. Willie Ross School for the Deaf staff members use a variety of crisis intervention techniques designed to minimize the crisis while maintaining a respectful attitude toward the student. Willie Ross School staff members focus on developing an awareness of when assaultive and/or destructive behaviors may occur, thus preventing many of them. Additionally, the Willie Ross School for the Deaf trains its staff on how to intervene with potentially aggressive students, including safe methods for physically restraining a student if they become violent.

Your child may receive physical restraint. A restraint is physically holding a student in order to restrict the student's freedom of movement.

Physical restraint will be implemented only when the following circumstances occur:

- ❖ There is a clear and immediate danger that a student will engage in physically destructive/suicidal behavior or physically aggressive behavior towards others, or behavior which presents a serious threat to the safety of self or others.
- ❖ There is clear indication that running around the building or running out of the building will result in escalating and dangerous behaviors.
- ❖ Uncontrollable behavior indicating that a student is unable to regain control without physical intervention.

When physical restraint is used, a Physical Restraint Incident Report will be completed prior to the end of the day. A meeting with staff members involved in the incident will be held within 24 hours. The school will verbally notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of restraint as soon as possible. This will be done by an administrator's designee. A written notification of restraint will be sent within two (2) school/working days, to the home.

Willie Ross will not do prone restraints unless a doctor and parent have given signed permission if prone restraints become necessary.

SCHOOL POLICY REGARDING GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The following are guidelines and policies regarding behavior management of Willie Ross School students.

- If a student is displaying behavior that may necessitate intervention by a staff member, e.g., verbal outburst, abuse of classroom furniture, etc., the staff member in charge at the time should request that the student be escorted from the classroom to a more therapeutic area.
- Rule of thumb: **No** student should be placed in a situation where they do not have an outlet from which to go. The last situation in which any staff members want to put themselves is in direct confrontation with a student, without the student having the opportunity to remove themselves from the classroom under the supervision of another staff member. More often than not, the student will choose to remove themselves from the immediate situation.
- No staff member should verbally challenge a student.
- In the event that a student does not conform to the wishes of a staff member to either calm down or dispense with verbal abuse, the staff member should ask another adult or student to report the incident immediately to the individual in charge.
- In the event of a student displaying behaviors that may warrant a therapeutic hold, it is imperative that the other students are removed from the room immediately and assistance is obtained from another staff member to document the situation and conversation.
- A CPI trained interventionist is the only person to use a therapeutic hold and only as a last resort when the student in question could do bodily injury to themselves or to other student(s) and/or staff member(s). There will always be another staff member present to record the situation and conversation.
- A staff person who is not CPI certified should **NOT** attempt to therapeutically hold a student, **unless** the situation is such that the student could likely do bodily injury to themselves or to other student(s) and/or staff member(s).
- Discipline and Guidance:
 - No student shall be subjected to cruel, hazardous or abusive treatment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
 - No student shall be subjected to corporal punishment.
 - No student shall be denied food as a form of punishment.
 - No student shall be secluded in a locked room.
 - No student shall be denied opportunities for daily physical exercise or recreational activity for an extended period of time, as appropriate to the age and interests of the student.
 - No student shall be denied access to water.
 - Bathroom facilities shall not be unreasonably restricted.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf implements a behavior modification program to assist students in managing their behavior. These could include positive reinforcement, time out, natural consequences, counseling, etc.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Teaching staff for Elementary through High School will review the Discipline Policy with their students.

The behaviors below will result in a consequence as listed in our Continuum of Consequences spreadsheet. The disciplinary action will be guided by the severity and frequency of the behavior. WRSD prioritizes restorative practices and will make every effort to exhaust all options to remedy the situation before assigning serious consequences.

Students who have to serve internal or external suspensions will be expected to complete the same academic work as their peers and will not be allowed to attend any extracurricular school activities for the same day(s). Students who are serving internal suspensions will be monitored by a school staff member in a designated location.

*****This list is not intended to be complete or exhaustive.*****

- Assaultive behavior by a student.
- Breaking and entering
- Bullying of any form; Our Bullying Policy will be given to you in a separate handout.
- Causing a false bomb threat.
- Causing a false fire alarm or arson.
- Classroom disruptions which result in the loss of teaching time for other students.
- Dishonesty and forgery.
- Extortion.
- Failure to respect the rights and privileges of others.
- Fighting or aggressive behaviors.
- Harassment of a student coming to or going home from school or during school.
- Hazing of any form; The Hazing Penalties will also be included in the Bully Policy handout.
- Indecent exposure.
- Insubordination to staff.
- Leaving school grounds without permission from parent/guardian and the school.
- Lighting matches or flammable objects unless specifically directed by a staff member.
- Obscene behavior or communication
- Playing or tampering with fire extinguishers.
- Possession and/or detonation of an incendiary or explosive device, including firecrackers.
- Smoking or use of tobacco including vaping, on school grounds.
- Sexual offenses
- Theft, destruction or defacement of school property or property belonging to another individual.
- Threats--verbal or written.
- Trespassing
- Unsafe behavior
- Use, possession, sale or distribution of illegal drugs, alcohol, and pornographic material.
These items are not to be brought into the school area. This includes the school grounds

property, parking lots, playing fields and buses.

- Vandalism or destruction of school or personal property
- Violation of attendance policies
- Weapon possession.

Following an infraction, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called and informed of the situation. Written notification of the incident will follow within 24 hours. Depending upon the severity of the offense, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be required to meet with the program administrator within 24 hours to discuss the disciplinary action.

In cases of more serious infractions, Willie Ross School for the Deaf maintains the option to require a Psychiatric Evaluation to determine if the student is likely to injure themselves or others upon return to their placement.

EXTERNAL SUSPENSION UNDER 10 DAYS

Whenever a student is externally suspended, Willie Ross School for the Deaf will immediately notify the student's parents or legal guardians both via verbal contact and written notification.

Within twenty-four (24) hours of suspension, the program supervisor will provide a written statement explaining the reasons for the suspension to the student's parents or legal guardians (including the Department of Children and Families, if that organization is guardian), the LEA and any human service agency responsible for placement.

No student will be sent home unless a responsible adult is there to receive the student.

Students that serve external suspensions will be required to participate in a re-entry meeting with school administrators along with their parent/guardian(s). Delaying the re-entry meeting at the parent's request will convert to unexcused absences.

Once a student has been suspended for three (3) consecutive school days or five (5) non-consecutive school days in a school year, the school, parents, and public school district, consistent with federal requirements, shall explore together all possible program modifications within the school in an attempt to prevent more lengthy suspension of the student from the program.

A record to track the number and durations of suspensions, including suspensions from any part of the student's IEP program will be maintained in the Coordinator of Student and Administrative Services office.

10+ DAY SUSPENSIONS

Willie Ross School for the Deaf implements the following procedures when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days.

- A request made by the student's sending school district to convene an IEP Team meeting, which includes representation from Willie Ross School for the Deaf, prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities.

- Willie Ross School for the Deaf participates in the Team meeting:
 1. to develop or review a functional behavior assessment of the student's behavior and to develop or modify the intervention plan.
 2. to identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s); and to decide if the disability and the behavior are related. Determination would include review of IEP; review of any behavior plan and its implementation; and review of placement options.
- If the Team determines that the behavior is **NOT** a manifestation of the disability, the school may suspend or terminate the student consistent with policies applied to any other student in the program. The Local Education Agency must, however, offer an appropriate education program to the student with disabilities that may be in some other setting.
- If the TEAM determines that the behavior **IS** a manifestation of the disability, the Local Education Agency, in coordination with Willie Ross School for the Deaf, will take steps (with the consent of the parent) to modify the IEP, the behavior intervention plan, and/or the placement.

TERMINATION

Willie Ross School for the Deaf terminates students only when all attempts to provide appropriate educational and behavioral standards have failed. These include change of IEP, change of setting, and provision of additional services.

Planned Termination

Planned termination of students attending Willie Ross School for the Deaf will be conducted in conjunction with the referring Local Education Agency, family, and when appropriate, the student. Planned terminations of Willie Ross students will include, but not limited to, graduation, turning twenty-two years old during the academic year, or progress suitable to return to their home school.

For planned termination, Willie Ross School will notify the referring Local Education Agency of the recommendation for termination and the need to conduct an IEP review meeting. Such notice will be sent to the Local Education Agency at least ten days prior to the intended meeting date. The review meeting proceedings will develop the termination plan for the student. The recommendations will be implemented in no less than thirty days. The time span may be changed if all parties agree to an earlier date.

Unplanned Termination

Unplanned termination will occur upon recommendation of the Willie Ross School for the Deaf. Such unplanned termination may be delayed up to two weeks if the referring Local Education Agency makes such a request after the notification of the termination. If the LEA requests such notification, they will then, within that time period, convene an emergency team meeting to conduct appropriate transitional planning prior to the student's discharge from Willie Ross School. If all parties agree, discharge may be delayed for longer than the two-week period.

Emergency Termination

Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD) will consider emergency termination a set of circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. In the event of the recommendation for an emergency termination, WRSD will contact the DESE. WRSD will make every effort not to terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, unless the enrolling public school district is informed and assumes appropriate responsibility for the student. At the request of the referring LEA, WRSD shall delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the LEA the opportunity to convene an emergency team meeting, or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's emergency termination from WRSD. If Willie Ross School and the LEA agree, the termination of the student may be delayed longer than two calendar weeks. WRSD shall make every effort to develop a program which responds to the behaviors and/or actions that resulted in the recommendation for emergency termination.

SEARCH OF STUDENTS

Willie Ross School for the Deaf reserves the right, without notice, to inspect backpacks, lockers, desks, pockets, jackets etc. at any given time, by a school administrator whenever there is a safety or suspected issue, to ensure a safe environment.

LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS

WRSD is not responsible for any personal property that is lost or stolen within our classrooms and buildings.

RUNAWAY POLICY

Willie Ross School for the Deaf considers a student leaving school property without permission, to be a serious offense.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf staff will attempt to discourage students from leaving school property by helping them deal with issues appropriately and by clearly explaining the consequences of their actions.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf defines a runaway as follows: any time a student leaves the Willie Ross School property or grounds without authorization and is unable to be located within ten (10) minutes. If a student is seen leaving the building without authorization, a staff member will follow the student and work with the student to encourage them to return. Common sense is a large factor in determining the most immediate and effective process to utilize and depends upon the individual circumstances.

ANTI-HAZING POLICY: Middle and High School Students

Willie Ross School for the Deaf prohibits hazing of any kind, at all times.

The Education Director will issue a copy of M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17 through 19, to every student enrolled full-time, and every student group, student team, or student organization, including every unaffiliated

student group, student team, or student organization, and a copy of the school program's anti-hazing disciplinary policy approved by the program's Board of Directors.

Willie Ross School for the Deaf will, at least annually, file a report with the Department certifying:

- a) Its compliance with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations, and every full-time enrolled student, of the provisions of M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17 through 19;
- b) Its adoption of a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing;
- c) That the hazing policy has been included in the student handbook or other means of communicating school program policies to students.

Consequences for failure to comply with the anti-hazing law:

1. First offense:
 - The student will be suspended from the club or team for one month.
2. Second offense:
 - The student will be dismissed from the club or team for one calendar year.

Consequences for Club Advisor or Team Coach's failure to prohibit hazing activities by club members or team members:

- The staff member will be dismissed from that position and will not be eligible to reapply for the position.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

Immunization Regulations & Yearly Physicals:

All students entering Willie Ross School for the Deaf must meet the Mass DPH Immunization Requirements under state regulations. **Current and new students must present a physician's certificate verifying their immunizations and yearly physical.**

The School Nurse and Administration have the authority to refuse school admittance and/or exclude a student from school for non-compliance with the immunization requirements. Religious or medical exemptions may apply if requested documentation of such exemption is provided. However, in situations when one or more cases of disease are present in a school, all susceptible students, including students with medical or religious exemptions, are subject to exclusion.

Mandated Screening

Postural screening will be administered to students yearly in grades 5 through 9. No parental permission is required for this screening however, you will be notified in advance of when the screening will take place.

Vision screening shall be performed in the school by a school nurse on every student, each school year. Hearing evaluations are performed annually by our audiologists on staff.

SICK CHILD POLICY

For the health and safety of Willie Ross School community please read the following guidelines when deciding to send a sick child to school:

PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF THEY HAVE:

1. **Fever** – If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, they must be kept home until fever free (**without medication**) for 24 hours. Liquids should be encouraged as tolerated.
2. **Diarrhea or vomiting** – If your child has repeated episodes of either, they must be kept out of school until the illness passes (24 hours after the last episode).
3. **Rash** – If your child has an unexplained rash they may return to school with a note from the doctor stating the child does not have a communicable disease.
4. **Sore Throat** – Severe sore throat could be strep, even if a fever is not present. Other symptoms of strep can be headache and stomach ache. If a throat culture is positive for strep, your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.
5. **Communicable Diseases** –No child should be sent to school if they have a communicable disease. Large numbers of young people and adults are brought together in school, creating ideal circumstances for transmission of a variety of diseases. Exclusion is necessary when the student's illness requires a greater degree of observation or care than the school staff can safely provide, poses a threat to the health or safety of others, or precludes any benefit of attending school because of inability to focus and learn. Responsibility for the care of the individual student rests with the family and their source of medical care.
6. **If they have Head Lice** – see Head Lice Policy below

HEAD LICE POLICY

Lice are a common problem among school age children. Please remember to check your child's head periodically and prior to starting school. Head scratching and complaints of an itchy scalp are good indications of head lice.

If your child has head lice, treat them and notify the school.

Identification:

1. Students referred by staff, parents or self-referred will be screened.
2. Siblings (if they are also students at WRSD) of the identified student will also be screened.
3. Parents of students who are identified as having head lice will be informed. Information will be provided, as needed.

Students suspected of having "LIVE LICE" will be dismissed from school immediately to receive treatment.

Treatment:

1. Medicated shampoo or cream rinse prescribed by M.D. or products recommended by pharmacist. Apply as directed.
2. Removal of nits with a metal fine tooth comb. It may even be necessary to use tweezers or even fingernails. A rinse of a vinegar solution may be helpful to loosen the nits.

Return to School: WRSD has a “NO LIVE LICE” protocol.

1. Student may return to school the morning after treatment.
2. Student must be screened by the nurse or an administrator before they can return to the classroom.
3. If nits remain, parent/guardian will be asked to re-comb hair at home until nits are removed and child will be re-screened by the nurse or an administrator.
4. The student will be re-screened for 10 – 14 days after they return to school.

Two or more reported cases within 10 days in a classroom then:

1. The entire class will be checked for lice.
2. Dismiss students suspected of live lice, until the morning after the first treatment.
3. If the same child is infected twice within a 1 – 2 month time frame, we will require an evaluation by their PCP and a note from the doctor deeming that the child is non-infective and okay to return to school.
4. Letter to parent/guardians of students in class with two or more cases of head lice.

FRAGRANCE-FREE POLICY

Due to the potential medical issues that could occur, because of employees and students being exposed to a strong odor, we have determined that Willie Ross School for the Deaf is now a fragrance-free school. Employees and/or students that arrive, with a strong scent, that will physically affect others, will be asked to eliminate the odor by washing it off or will be sent home. A strong scent could be from the application of a perfume based product, poor hygiene, or other similar issues.

To ensure that Willie Ross School for the Deaf is a fragrance-free school, employees and students are prohibited from bringing / wearing onto the premises natural or artificial scents that could be distracting or harmful to others. This includes personal fragrant products (fragrances, colognes, lotions, powders, body washes and other similar products) that are perceptible to others. Other fragrant products (scented candles, potpourri and similar items) are also not permitted on school grounds or vehicles.

Employees/students required by medical necessity to use medicinal lotions or skin creams or other products that contain odor perceptible to others, as substantiated by a qualified licensed provider, may request a reasonable accommodation from their supervisor/school nurse.

Any employee or student with a concern about scents or odors should contact their supervisor, teacher and/or nurse.

EMERGENCY CARE PROCEDURES

If a student becomes ill or has an accident, the procedures listed will be followed:

- The school will contact you to report the situation, or if unable to reach you, will call the emergency numbers that you have provided.

- In cases of suspected communicable ailments, a doctor's note will be required before your child may return to school.
- Whenever any first aid is administered to a student of a serious nature, or whenever a child is injured, teachers or individuals in charge must make every effort to call you and notify you directly. You will also receive written notification of the occurrence.
- In case of a serious accident, you will be contacted immediately and if necessary, the school will contact the Police Department (911) for an ambulance.
- **It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s)** to ensure that we have, on file, a functioning home, work and emergency contact phone number at all times. If you are unable to be reached by the phone numbers provided, 911 will be called, your child will be transported to the hospital and the police will be notified and told that we were unable to reach you.

POLICY AND GUIDELINES REGARDING THE DISPENSING OF MEDICINE TO STUDENTS AT WILLIE ROSS

No medications can be administered at any time, under any condition, by any staff member of Willie Ross School to any student of the school.

- In the event that a student has been prescribed medication, a permission slip must be obtained from their parent(s) or guardian(s) and the attending physician in order for the school nurse to dispense the medication. Forms are available upon request.
- **Under no circumstances should a student bring their own medication to school.** Only the parent(s) or an adult designated by them should bring the medication to school, and it should be in the original container.
- **NO** medications are kept in the classrooms. All medications are stored in a double-locked, metal box in the Nurse's Office/First Aid Station designated for this purpose.
- A registered nurse is the only individual who dispenses medication to any Willie Ross School student unless self-administration orders from the doctor have been approved.
- Whenever a student is taking prescription medication at home, the parent(s) are asked to notify the school. They are also asked to inform the school when prescription medication taken at home is changed or stopped.
- All written correspondence regarding medication(s) should be on file in the school's Main Office **AND** in the Nurse's Office/First Aid Station.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

WRSD employees are **mandated reporters** and **must report ANY QUESTIONABLE EVENTS SEEN OR REPORTED BY YOUR CHILD**. All incidents will be documented by one of the school's social workers and/or an Administrator who will file a report (51-A) with the Department of Children and Families.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONICS POLICY

ALL STAFF WILL EXPLAIN THE POLICY THE FIRST DAY IN EACH CLASSROOM.

A recent report by the Surgeon General outlines a profound risk of social media to adolescent mental health. In addition, there has been a detriment to student learning, social relationships, student behaviors, and academic outcomes directly related to the use of cell phones and other electronics during the school day and outside of school.

In order to create a safe learning environment in which all students can succeed, our policy is as follows:

Willie Ross does not allow the use of personal electronic devices (including but not limited to cell phones, portable gaming consoles, smart watches, and earbuds) during academic periods. Each teacher will ask that the student's phone will be placed in a designated classroom location at the start of each academic period. Phones will remain in this location throughout the period.

Students may not keep their phone in any other location during class. Any student found with a phone on their person will be asked to place the cell phone in the designated classroom location for the remainder of the period. Failure to follow the first request will result in disciplinary action. Cell phones must remain in the designated classroom location even when the student goes to the bathroom or any other location in the building during the class period. Students may only take their phones when they are dismissed.

High school students will be permitted to use their cell phones during lunch for the last 15 minutes of the lunch period. If they are not respectful while using their phones, they will be asked to put their phone away.

Upon request and at the discretion of staff, students may be allowed to use their phone in specific circumstances. In this case, the students will be responsible for appropriate phone use and etiquette.

Absolutely no photographs or videos may be taken inside the school building without staff permission. Video calls or phone calls during lunches with people outside of the school are not permitted for the safety and security of everyone present.

We ask that parents/guardians do not contact their student on their cell phone during the school day. In case of emergency, please contact the front desk at 413-567-0374 (voice) or 413-798-4221 (videophone) and we will help you reach your student.

This policy is subject to change.

This policy will be handed out to all our middle and high school students with the expectation that they sign the agreement. A copy will be kept on file.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

I. Introduction

Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD) offers Internet access and the use of technology to its students and staff. Access to the school network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. This Acceptable Use Policy applies to school-owned technology equipment and also applies to privately-owned devices while on school property. The intent of this policy is to ensure that students utilize this access in a manner consistent with the purpose of providing this service. The policies outlined in this document cover all current technology now and into the future, not just those specifically listed. Willie Ross School for the Deaf reserves the right to amend this policy.

II. Purpose

The primary purpose of use of technology in the classroom is to support the educational objectives of WRSD. Network use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development.

Additionally, this policy explains the roles and responsibilities of students by showing appropriate and responsible behavior with regard to technology use. In order to use technology and the Internet, students must take full responsibility for their own actions. While the benefits are tremendous, there is also potential for abuse of this policy. WRSD is not liable for the actions of anyone accessing the network whether it is from a WRSD device or a student's personal device. Students will assume full responsibility for any issues or costs that come up from the way the students choose to use their access.

A student's use of WRSD technology constitutes their agreement to abide by this policy as set forth below, or as modified in the future.

III. Internet Usage Guidelines

Students are expected to follow this policy and to abide by the rules of acceptable use, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

It is the policy of WRSD to maintain a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Students shall observe this policy in the use of the Internet and technology.

- They shall use appropriate, non-abusive language, refrain from making defamatory remarks or racial slurs, bullying, or obscene language.
- Do not reveal personal information such as last names, addresses, phone numbers, photos, etc. that could identify yourself, another student, or a staff member, except when required by a teacher to complete school-related work.
- Tell a teacher or other school staff immediately if you see something that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Do not do anything to the internet that could cause damage.
- Students must not vandalize school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, or adding viruses to the computers.
- Passwords should not be shared with anyone. Students must not use another person's password. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you must have it changed immediately.
- Any use for, or in support of, illegal purposes or activities is not allowed.
- Students should assume that most materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright. Unauthorized copying of copyrighted materials is prohibited. Additionally, any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be properly cited regardless of copyright status.
- Not all material accessible through the Internet is of educational value. Students are expected to refrain from seeking, accessing, uploading, downloading, transmitting, or distributing material that is not relevant to their assignments or course work. No student may upload or download material to or from Internet sites without permission from their teacher.
- Students shall not access, upload, download, transmit, or distribute material that is deemed inappropriate by WRSD administration.
- Students must not access chat apps or social networking sites. Students are also prohibited from using the Network to blog or to send or receive instant messages.
- Students shall neither download nor install any commercial software, shareware or freeware onto network drives or disks without prior permission of the teacher. Students shall not change settings on the browser or any other application.
- Students must not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any file servers or data. This includes logging in through another person's account and/or accessing another person's files. Students shall not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other students.
- Students' personal devices such as tablets, cell phones or smart phones are not allowed access to the WRSD network without permission from an administrator.

Chromebooks used in the classroom are owned by WRSD. There is no expectation of privacy; as such, WRSD has in place on all devices, a 24/7 monitoring application to ensure proper use of the device for education.

IV. Privacy

Students should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received and/or stored on the school computer network. Students should be aware that the data they create, receive, or send on the Internet is property of WRSD, and that the data may be recovered and reviewed, even after it has been deleted. WRSD also reserves the right to monitor use and examine all data stored on school servers. All communications are public and are not private. All communications may be shared with law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver.

V. Violations

WRSD may take away or suspend specific user privileges and/or take other disciplinary action if there are any suspected violations of the policy. In the event that there is a claim that a student has violated any of the guidelines in this policy, they will be provided an opportunity to be heard.

TAKE HOME TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT

Willie Ross School for the Deaf, Inc. (WRSD) is pleased to be providing technology (including hearing assistive technology or HAT) to students for home use when necessary. A full list of included devices is listed in Attachment A to this document. This includes all students in grades PreK through grade 12. Students will be issued a device or devices as needed, including a charger for each device. The student is responsible for their device at all times. *An agreement (sent home separately) signed by student and/or parent is required before any technology device is allowed to go home with a student.*

Use of WRSD technology devices in school and at home by students is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. The student must be actively enrolled in WRSD.
2. The device and peripherals (charge cord) are on loan and remain the property of WRSD.
3. The student agrees to adhere to the WRSD's Student Technology and Internet Use Policy as outlined in the Parent & Student Handbook (*in preceding section*).
4. The student shall be the exclusive user of this device and shall not grant access to any other individual.
5. The student must comply with all applicable software license agreements.
6. Devices and peripherals must be returned to WRSD no later than the last day of school, time of transfer, withdrawal, or graduation from WRSD.
7. Devices and peripherals will be returned in good condition with reasonable wear and tear.
8. The care and maintenance of the device and related peripherals are the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian while in their care.
9. There will be a fee assessed if the device and/or related peripherals are lost, broken, or damaged in cases where the device is not covered by warranty. Full replacement costs are listed in Attachment A to this document. The student and

parent/guardian of the student will be billed and are responsible for said repair and/or full replacement cost.

10. Care and maintenance of the device include the following:

- i. Keep away from liquids.
- ii. Students must not deface or place any stickers or other material on any device.
- iii. Do not remove or alter any identification tag or label from the device
- iv. Students will leave all settings as installed and not attempt to “jailbreak” or remove or bypass the device settings-this includes not changing the sim card or any settings on the hotspots
- v. Chromebooks are owned by WRSD. There is no expectation of privacy; as such, WRSD has in place on all devices, a 24/7 monitoring application to ensure proper use of the device for education.

SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURE

In the event that weather conditions become severe enough to warrant either the delay or closing of school at the Longmeadow Campus of Willie Ross School and our partnership campuses in East Longmeadow, announcements will be made over the following TV channels. We will also post on our website www.wrsdeaf.org and Facebook page www.facebook.com/wrsd1967 as well as through our NIXLE Notification system via your cell phone.

Please watch specifically for **WILLIE ROSS SCHOOL** delays or closings, **NOT** Longmeadow or East Longmeadow Public Schools.

WWLP TV 22

WGGB TV 40

WSHM CBS – TV 3

If one of the programs at any partnership campus is closed early, all Willie Ross students will be transported to the Longmeadow Campus via a school vehicle. Their bus companies will be notified, and the students will be dismissed at the normal time from the Longmeadow Campus to their respective buses.

PARTNERSHIP CAMPUS CLOSINGS ONLY

If for any reason one or more sites should close during the day, the Lead Teacher at the affected location(s) will notify the Education Director and the Coordinator of Student and Administrative Services. Arrangements will be made for the Willie Ross School vehicles to pick up students, who will be brought to the Administration Building on the Longmeadow Campus or another WRSD location.

The teachers and staff will keep the students together until the school vehicle arrives to pick them up and drive them to the Administration Building on the Longmeadow Campus. Buses will be called by staff at the reception desk regarding **picking up the students at the end of the school day.**

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE SENT HOME EARLY.

TITLE IX POLICY

20 U.S.C. § 1681 states, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”

Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD) is committed to the health, safety and welfare of our students and employees. We do not and will not tolerate any form of discrimination on the basis of sex in our educational program or activities. We are required by Title IX not to discriminate in any manner.

I. Definitions

Sexual Harassment is conduct that is sexual in nature; is unwelcome; and denies or limits a student or employee ability to participate in or benefit from the school environment. Examples may be unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or non-verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature. Such conduct can be carried out by school employees, students, non-employee third parties, etc. This conduct may occur in school facilities or at off-campus locations (on a bus, during a field trip, at a training, etc.). Such conduct does not generally include legitimate nonsexual touching or conduct. However if such conduct takes on sexual connotations, this conduct could rise to the level of sexual harassment.

Sexual Violence is a type of sexual harassment, referring to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is unable to give consent.

Gender-Based Harassment is another type of sexual harassment, referring to harassment based on gender identity or nonconformity with sex stereotypes. This type of harassment may not involve conduct that is sexual in nature.

Consent voluntary and knowing agreement. Consent may not be possible due to age or disability.

II. Policy

Under Title IX, all students and employees are protected from sex-based harassment, regardless of the sex of the perpetrator or complainant. Included in such prohibition are claims of discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

It is our responsibility to be sure any sexual violence does not sufficiently limit or deny any of our student’s or employee’s ability to participate in or benefit from our educational environment, respond with prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the sexual violence, eliminate the hostile environment, prevent recurrence, and as necessary remedy its effects.

Upon receiving any information to suggest sexual harassment/discrimination/violence we will immediately begin our investigation or otherwise determine what has occurred (following

necessary confidentiality considerations). If such an investigation identifies a hostile environment, we will take necessary steps reasonably calculated to eliminate the hostile environment, prevent recurrence, and as necessary remedy its effects.

We are required under Title IX to protect the complainant and ensure this individual's safety, which may require taking interim steps to protect the individual during the investigation. Interim steps minimizing the burden on the complainant will be determined considering the specific incident and situation currently affecting the complainant. We will provide the complainant with updates on the status of the investigation as it progresses. We will provide the complainant with knowledge of all resources available to him or her and the right to report the incident to local law enforcement.

Our school employees are trained and aware of their obligations under state and local laws in this area. They are also aware of the consequences for failing to satisfy those obligations. We have specific policies in place to ensure employees of our school know they are prohibited from engaging in inappropriate conduct towards our students. Employees are also trained in responding appropriately if problems in this area arise.

When a complainant requests that his or her name not be disclosed to the perpetrator our school will ensure that such information is securely handled. While it may be required to disclose this information to certain parties due to the age of the complainant, the information will still be handled considering their request. It is the responsibility of the school to decide if nondisclosure can be followed, while also considering the necessity of providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment.

If a complainant requests that the school not investigate or pursue action against the perpetrator, it is our responsibility to inform them that this may limit our ability to respond fully to the incident. In addition, we are required to inform them that Title IX will protect them from retaliation.

If it is determined that we can respect the complainant's request to not disclose or not take action against the perpetrator, we will still limit the effects of the incident and prevent its recurrence. This may be through means of more monitoring, supervision, or security. Additionally, adjustments may be made to our school policy for sexual violence/harassment in response to such conduct.

Professional counselors are not required to report any information regarding an incident of alleged sexual violence under Title IX. Non-professional counselors are also not required to report information without a complainant's consent. However, all will inform the complainant of their rights under Title IX.

Our school has provided necessary training to all employees likely to witness or receive reports of sexual violence. Our trainings inform employees on their obligation to report, who and how to report possible incidents, and the appropriate steps that need to be taken after notification of sexual violence or harassment has occurred.

Our Title IX policy has been distributed and is available for students, families of students, and employees. Any questions concerning Title IX may be directed to our Title IX Coordinator, whose contact information is listed below.

III. Students with Disabilities

Given our student population, any sexual violence towards any of our students may require additional assistance and support. Any sexual conduct will also fall under other federal civil rights laws (Rehabilitation Act of 1973- Section 504 and Title II of the American Disabilities Act of 1990). We will work with our students to help them better understand our sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination prevention policies and procedures. If a student does experience sexual violence, we will provide supports and assistance as necessary.

IV. Title IX Coordinators

Our Title IX Coordinators are Erika Kaftan, Education Director and Joel Skelton, Coordinator of Community Engagement, located at 32 Norway Street, Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01106, and can be contacted at 413-567-0374 and ekaftan@wrsdeaf.org or jskelton@wrsdeaf.org

Our Title IX Coordinators are responsible for overseeing our school's response to all reports and complaints of sex discrimination. Our Title IX Coordinators will investigate facts relevant to a complaint, determine appropriate sanctions against the perpetrator and remedies for the complainant, and determine interim measures for a complainant after learning of a complaint. Their responsibilities also include:

- Ensuring all policies and procedures are in place and followed for working with local law enforcement and other services if an incident occurs
- Evaluating confidentiality requests and determining how to proceed when such requests are made
- Assistance in any training to employees about what conduct constitutes sexual and gender-based harassment and how to respond appropriately to this conduct
- Development of researching methods to survey the campus climate, evaluate if discriminatory attitudes pervade school culture, and decide whether harassment is occurring, where it is occurring, who is responsible for the harassment, who is targeted by the harassment, and how best to remedy these conditions
- Be informed of all Title IX reports and complaints at our school
- Coordination of recordkeeping, monitoring of incidents to help identify any repeat offenses by specific individuals or towards specific individuals, addressing any patterns or systemic problems, and making school administrators aware of any patterns
- Recommending increases in safety measures (monitoring, supervision, security) in any areas where harassment has occurred
- Regular review of effectiveness of our school's efforts to ensure we are free from sexual and gender-based harassment, and using information compiled to recommend future proactive steps that our school can take to comply with Title IX and protect our

school community

V. Grievance Policy and Procedures

Title IX requires that our school adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints. Our grievance policy is as follows:

Erika Kaftan, Education Director and Joel Skelton, Coordinator of Community Engagement, located at 32 Norway Street, Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01106, and can be contacted at 413-567-0374 and ekaftan@wrsdeaf.org or jskelton@wrsdeaf.org are responsible for investigating and resolving complaints regarding students' education and care. Students or parents can register complaints with these individuals concerning a student's education and care. We will provide timeliness in responding and the appeals process.

Erika Kaftan, Education Director and Joel Skelton, Coordinator of Community Engagement, located at 32 Norway Street, Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01106, and can be contacted at 413-567-0374 and ekaftan@wrsdeaf.org or jskelton@wrsdeaf.org are responsible for investigating and resolving discrimination complaints made on behalf of employees and students. We are committed to providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints from both students and employees alleging discrimination based on legally protected categories (race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability) that includes specific timeliness and the appeals process.

VI. Retaliation

No employee who, in good faith, reports a concern shall be subject to retaliation or, an adverse employment consequence. Moreover, an employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from their position or termination of employment.

Retaliation from the perpetrator or any individual from our school in response to a complaint is prohibited under Title IX. Prohibited retaliation includes any retaliation against any individual who filed the complaint or any individual participating in the Title IX investigation, hearing or proceeding. Our school will ensure that individuals are not intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against for engaging in this process.

COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

From time to time, concerns may arise at Willie Ross School. Students or parents should complete the Complaint/Grievance Form if they believe that their concerns are not being addressed. Forms should be sent to the Education Director, Erika Kaftan, or the Director of Operations, Bonnie Katusich. In the event that the complaint involves the Education Director or the Director of Operations, then it should be immediately forwarded to the President & CEO.

The Education Director or the Director of Operations shall act upon the complaint as soon as

possible by arranging a meeting with the staff member to discuss the nature of the complaint and to develop an appropriate and mutually acceptable agreement to resolve the issue.

Appropriate staff and/or administration will be called by the Education Director or the Director of Operations to attend the meeting. The administration and staff of the Campus program will work together to assure that the complaint is resolved in an appropriate and expedient fashion.

See form on next page.

Action Plan to resolve the issues:

Signature of those in attendance:

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<hr/>	<hr/>

Date: _____

Plans for follow up:

Attachment A

WILLIE ROSS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, INC. TAKE HOME TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT

Listing of Devices and related replacement costs covered by policy:

<u>DEVICE NAME</u>	<u>REPLACEMENT COST</u>
Chromebook	\$350.00
Chromebook Charger	\$25.00
iPad	\$450.00
Hot-spot Mobile Device	\$90.00
Hot-spot Mobile Device Charger	\$16.00
<i>Hearing Aid Technology (HAT)</i>	
Laptop wire/connection	\$15.00
ConnectClip	\$250.00
EduMic	\$600.00
Cochlear Mini Mic	\$425.00
Roger Touchscreen Microphone	\$870.00
Roger Receivers	\$795.00 per receiver
Roger Neckloop	\$640.00

Shipping and handling may be additional.