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INTRODUCTION

About the Westfield Public School District

Labor Organizations
The majority of permanent employees hold positions in a bargaining unit. If your position is in a bargaining unit, you should receive a copy of the labor agreement that applies to your bargaining unit from the union representative in your building or online on our District webpage under Human Resources. These agreements outline more specifically some of the employment issues dealt with in this handbook.

Mission Statement and Strategic Direction

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This portion of the handbook summarizes the employment policies and procedures applicable to personnel of the Westfield Public School District. For more detailed information on this subject, employees are advised to refer to their individual labor contracts, if applicable. Additional information may also be found in the District’s Policy Manual available in each school and at Central Office.

Directors, Principals, Supervisors, and managers are expected to be familiar with the information presented in this handbook, and to be able to respond accurately and impartially to questions regarding policies and procedures. Employees are to sign off that they have reviewed the Employee Handbook and that they participated in the Back to School Powerpoint.

Employees may also contact the Human Resources Department, Benefits Coordinator, or the Payroll Department for advice and for interpretation of the material presented herein.

This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of policies and procedures of the Westfield Public School District. However, it is a guide to help answer the most commonly asked questions and sets forth guidelines under which the District operates. The District reserves the right to change any terms or provisions at any time.
**Equal Opportunity**

The Westfield Public School District is fundamentally committed to an environment in which persons of every race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, handicap (disability), participation in discrimination complaint-related activities, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetics are equally valued and affirmed. The District acknowledges its responsibility to the community to provide a staff that best meets the needs of students. Public schools have a major responsibility for preparing students for active and constructive participation in a society that is culturally diverse. It is the policy of the District to ensure that all personnel actions including compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, return from layoff, training, and education are administered in a nondiscriminatory manner. The District has developed a system of positive steps to recruit, retain, and promote a qualified staff that reflects the cultural diversity in the community. The Superintendent is charged with the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of this system. For the full text of the School Committee Policy on Equal Opportunity Policy, please see Appendix A.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

In accordance with Title IX of the Federal Education Amendment of 1992, as amended, and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B, neither the School Committee nor its employees shall discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, handicap (disability), participation in discrimination complaint-related activities, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetics in its employment policies. Any employee of the Westfield Public School District who believes he or she has been discriminated against or denied a benefit in violation of this policy may file a written complaint with the Director of Human Resources for the District. The Director of Human Resources shall initiate a review of the written complaint and respond in writing to the complainant within ten working days after receipt of the written complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with such response, the complainant may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent for action by the School Committee. [Add investigation procedure]

**Individuals with Disabilities**

The District complies with all federal requirements that extend civil rights protection to persons with disabilities and prohibit employment discrimination based on disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, protects qualified applicants and employees with disabilities from discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, job training, fringe benefits, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment on the basis of disability. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, bars employment discrimination in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance. Qualified persons with disabilities who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of a job will be employed, and advanced in employment, to the same extent as persons without disabilities.

**Hiring Practices and Procedures**

**Job Openings and Position Postings**

The Westfield Public School District posts vacancies on an as needed basis. The position postings allow the District to inform employees of openings that may afford them opportunities for advancement or transfer. Positions will be posted consistent with the language in the labor contract covering the vacant position. If a position is not affiliated with any bargaining unit, the duration of the posting period and placements of postings will be decided by the Superintendent or his/her designee with the needs of the District in mind.

Vacancies may also be advertised in newspapers or other periodicals, the District web site and/or other web sites, and/or other media as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee. All applicants must submit their applications via Schoolspring.

**Employment of Relatives**

Employment of relatives is permitted, except in circumstances where an appointment places related people in supervisory and subordinate roles within the same office or department, or in a situation where influence could be exerted, directly or indirectly, on future decisions concerning the status of employment, promotion, or compensation.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 67 provides that the District may not employ a member of the immediate family of a superintendent, central office administrator, or school committee
member, nor assign a member of the immediate family of a principal as an employee at the principal’s school, unless written notice is given to the school committee of the proposal to employ or assign at least two weeks in advance of the family member’s employment or assignment. All provisions of the Conflict of Interest Law must also be followed.

Background Checks
CORI

Background checks are performed on all potential employees, student teachers, interns, volunteers and any individual who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children prior to hiring any employee or accepting any person as a volunteer as required by state law and regulations. A candidate for a position with the District is required to provide his or her date of birth and any maiden name, alias, or prior legal name he or she may have used at anytime in the past. Written notice of this process is required for this inquiry.

Subsequent background checks will be performed at least once every three years after the initial inquiry for all employees. A signed acknowledgement of the written notification for these subsequent background checks is also required.

Fingerprinting

Chapter 459 of the Acts of 2012, expanded the law on background checks. All newly hired school employees, including educators, maintenance staff, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and employees of contractors who work in the schools and may have direct and unmonitored contact with children are currently required to complete the new national background check. All current K-12 employees are required to complete the new national background check prior to the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. Please see the Fingerprinting letter in Appendix B.

Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9)

All new employees are subject to the requirements of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 which stipulates that only American citizens, permanent resident aliens, and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States may be hired. Therefore, each new employee must provide evidence of identity and work eligibility as a condition of employment. The I-9 Form satisfying this requirement can be completed during the Benefits Orientation.

Pre-employment Physical Examinations

Pre-employment physical examinations are required of all maintenance employees after an offer of employment is made and prior to the first day of work. The required form must be completed and signed by a physician.

Required Documents

Upon initial hire, an employee must make an appointment with the Human Resource Specialist and Benefits Coordinator to complete all required paperwork and obtain an identification badge. Required documents may include proof of citizenship or permission to work in this country; a certified copy of the employee’s birth certificate for the retirement systems; completed W-4 and M-4 tax forms; emergency contact form; direct deposit form; signed Technology Acceptable Use form, and a Massachusetts Teacher’s License or other required licenses. Paychecks cannot be processed, unless all the necessary forms have been completed.

Assignment and Transfer

Assignment to a specific school is not binding. The Superintendent may transfer employees either on a temporary or permanent basis. Employees wishing to transfer from one building to another should file a written request according to the timelines in their contract, if applicable. Their requests will be considered on the basis of what is best for the effective operation of the District.

Identification Badges

Each employee of the School District, including administrators, faculty, staff, coaches, and part-time employees, must wear the employee’s school ID badge while on School District property. ID badges will be issued to all new employees through the individual schools or the Benefits Office. The ID must
be visible at all times during school hours. The ID shall be displayed on the assigned lanyard haging
from the neck or clipped to clothing so that it is easily visible.

Every employee shall return the employee’s ID to the principal of employee’s assigned building or the
Personnel Department upon termination of employment.

**Probationary Employment**

Professional Teacher Status – Certified Staff: All teachers, administrators, psychologists, nurses,
social workers, librarians, guidance counselors, and school adjustment counselors must serve in the
District for three consecutive school years in a position for which they are licensed by the State of
Massachusetts to be entitled to Professional Teacher Status (MGL Chapter 71, ch. 42). The
professional employee will be evaluated each year until Professional Teacher Status is granted. A
teacher, administrator, psychologist, nurse, social worker, librarian, school adjustment counselor or
other certified employee who does not perform satisfactorily, according to District standards, and/or
does not conform to the terms and conditions of employment at Westfield Public School District, may
be terminated upon notice in writing.

**District Food Service**

There is a food service program in each school that offers meals at reasonable cost to employees.
Offerings vary from school to school.

**Telephones**

While personal telephone calls are occasionally a necessary benefit for employees, they are to be kept
to a minimum. This includes phone calls made or received on District phones and phone calls made
or received on personal cell phones.

Under no circumstances may long distance calls or toll calls of a personal nature be made at the
District’s expense. Accepting personal, collect calls and charging personal long distance phone calls
to the District is prohibited.

The use of Directory Assistance for personal reasons is prohibited. Almost all phone numbers are
listed in local phone directories or on various internet web sites.

**Travel for the District**

The Westfield Public School District recognizes that, for many employees, travel expenses are
incurred in order to further the mission of the District. The District will reimburse employees for those
ordinary and necessary expenses incurred while traveling on official District business, when approved
in advance. The employee, in turn, should strive to travel in the most economical manner consistent
with the nature of the trip. In all cases, expenditures should be reasonable, use sound judgment and
adhere to the City of Westfield’s Travel Policy. (See Appendix B – City of Westfield Travel Policy) For
Unit A and Unit E professional development travel guidelines refer to labor contracts.

**Conference Travel**

An employee who wishes or is required to attend a conference must first submit a completed Travel
Request Form (See Appendix B- Revised Goldenrod Form) to the Superintendent or Director a
minimum of 15 working days before the time of travel. The request should provide estimated or actual
expenses that will be incurred during the travel. If the Superintendent or Director approves the travel
and the employee attends the conference, the form must be resubmitted with a completed Expense
Voucher (See Appendix B) after the conference with all actual expenses shown and original receipts
attached. The District will not advance funds for conference attendance other than payment of
registration fees through a purchase order.

**Registration Fees**

Once travel has been approved, employees are encouraged to submit a purchase order for
registration fees or pay registration fees from personal funds and submit this expense for
reimbursements after the conference. Registration fees are reimbursable with receipts and a copy of
the conference notification. The Business Office may pay applicable registration fees directly to the
agency conducting the conference provided forms and information are completed and submitted in
ample time.
Meals
Per the Internal Revenue Service Publication, 463, the City of Westfield uses an accountable plan for reimbursement. Therefore, the meal policy will be as follows:

If the employee does not present receipts, he/she will be reimbursed at the rate of $26.00 per day (the IRS Standard Meal Allowance) based on the following schedule:

- Breakfast: $4.00
- Lunch: $7.00
- Dinner: $15.00

The reimbursement will be paid on PAYROLL as these expenses may be deducted on the employee’s income tax. Employees receiving a contractual meal allowance are already receiving this on a payroll.

Meals will be reimbursed at higher rates (reasonable) upon presentation of detailed receipts. Tips up to a maximum of 15% may be reimbursed; however, at no time may anyone receive more than a $50.00 meal reimbursement for one day.

State Law Chapter 44 Section 58 will NOT allow reimbursement for alcoholic beverages.

When meals are reimbursed for more than one person, the other persons must be listed. If the reimbursement is for other City employees, each department must use their own expense account.

In order to receive a meal allowance, the request must be approved in advance.

Lodging/Accommodations Expense
Hotel and lodging expenses will be reimbursed, when approved in advance, for an employee only and up to a reasonable amount consistent with the going market rate for the location of the conference.

Hotel accommodations shall be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed the rate for single occupancy. The District does not pay for spouse’s accommodations or meals, nor will it reimburse for suites or deluxe accommodations.

The District will reimburse for only one night preceding the conference. Any additional accommodations made due to air travel reservations must be substantiated to show the cost benefit to the District.

Generally, the District will pay a one night deposit to the hotel. At the end of the stay, the hotel may either bill the District or the employee may pay the charges and be reimbursed by the District. In cases of financial hardship, a cash advance may be considered. This practice protects the District from cancellation charges or early departures.

Original receipts must be presented.

Transportation
Airfare: Tourist or Economy Class only. If an employee wishes to Travel First Class, he/she will be requested to pay the difference between the two fares. Extenuating circumstances may necessitate First Class travel, but must be documented accordingly. Receipts and Boarding Pass are required. In order to receive reimbursement for airfare, the request must be approved in advance.

Taxi: Actual costs plus tips with original receipt.

Private Vehicle Use
The District will reimburse employees for required use of private vehicles for official, approved travel between schools and other official, approved, local or state travel. All travel is undertaken with the approval of the appropriate department head or departmental authority.
Local or out-of-state travel expenses should be submitted to the Business Office using the approved city mileage forms. No requests for reimbursement submitted after the fiscal year ends will be honored.

**Automobile:** Per City ordinance $0.02 less than the IRS approved rate per mile or the rate established per contractual agreement.

**In-City Travel:** Mileage in/out must be submitted with odometer readings submitted monthly.

**Interschool Travel:** Mileage according to mileage chart, not odometer submitted monthly.

**In-State Travel:** Mileage according to mileage chart round trip allowable within the school day submitted monthly.

**Out-of-State Travel:** Mileage in/out must be submitted as stated in Mapquest. The Mapquest directions must be included with Expense Voucher and submitted for reimbursement upon return.

Tolls and Parking will be reimbursed upon submission of original receipts and statement.

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**Tuition Reimbursement**

Employees may be eligible for reimbursement for tuition expense. Each employee should consult his/her collective bargaining agreement to determine eligibility and process.

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**Professional Standards and Business Conduct**

**Customer Service**

District employees serve the students of the District, their parents/guardians, and all the residents of the City of Westfield. Their work will probably bring an employee into frequent contact with the public. Courtesy, tact, and helpfulness on the employee’s part is expected, and will do much to create the positive image District employees deserve.

**Personal Appearance**

The District expects an employee to dress in a manner suitable for the work involved and consistent with our district dress code policy and good personal hygiene. In addition, an employee should be guided by the employee’s supervisor in regard to any special clothes or equipment needed for the job.

**Staff Conduct**

The Administration assumes that those associated with the District will conduct themselves ethically and in accordance with what are generally accepted as “standard business practices.” The increasingly complex relationships that have evolved between the District and the numerous individuals, companies, and other groups, with which it deals, require that persons representing the District exercise a high degree of personal responsibility, integrity, and sound judgment.

The Westfield Public School District has issued policies and procedures designed to provide guidance to employees concerning employee code of conduct and business ethical issues. Each employee should be familiar with the policies and procedural guidelines that cover the business activities that are the employee’s responsibility. This requirement will vary significantly depending on the employee’s position, and may include information found in the following or in other sources: Westfield Public School District Committee’s policies; Westfield Public School District Business Procedures Manual; Technology Use Guidelines; and Massachusetts General Laws (Appendix A).

It is hoped that by clearly setting forth the standards of behavior that the District expects from its employees, any misunderstandings will be minimized, and any questionable situation can be brought to the attention of the responsible administrator and resolved.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of the types of conduct that are not permitted and that may lead to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge, and in some instances, possible legal recourse.

- [ ] Failure to maintain a satisfactory attendance record
- Unauthorized absence, tardiness, or leaving work without permission
- Exhibiting threatening behavior
- Use of threatening, sarcastic, abusive language or behavior
- Intimidating, coercing, or interfering with fellow employees or their work
- Insubordination or refusal to perform assigned duties
- Performing one’s duties in a careless, incompetent, negligent, or unsatisfactory manner
- Any act of theft, piférage, fraud, forgery, or other dishonesty
- Falsification of records including but not limited to time cards, insurance claims, applications, resumes, or student files
- Sleeping, fighting, or gambling on District property
- Use of tobacco products on District property
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on District property or appearing for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Release of confidential information about current or former students
- Inappropriate relationships with students

Any employee who has a question about these issues, or the policies governing them, that cannot be answered by employee’s supervisor is encouraged to direct the questions to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Reckless Endangerment of Children

The General Laws of Massachusetts require professionals whose work brings them in contact with children (Mandated Reporters) to notify the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if they suspect that a child has been or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

Mandated Reporters include psychologists, nurses, school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors, day care and child care workers, including any person paid to care for, or work with, a child, social workers, and school attendance officers. Mandated Reporters must report all suspected risks of abuse or neglect to DCF. Prior to doing so, the employee should inform the administration in charge of the school or the employee’s department. A school administrator, social worker or psychiatrist can assist the employee with the notification to DCF. Should the person in charge/designee advise against filing, the staff member retains the right to contact DCF directly.

Massachusetts law requires Mandated Reporters to immediately make an oral report to DCF when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse or neglect. Any physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse or any indication of neglect, including malnutrition; or any instance in which a child is determined to be physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth must be reported.

A written report must be submitted to DCF within 48 hours after the oral report has been made. Any Mandated Reporter who fails to make required oral and written reports can be punished by a fine of up to $1,000.

During the screening and investigation of a 51A report, any Mandated Reporter who has information which the employee believes might aid the Department in determining whether a child has been abused or neglected shall, upon request by DCF, disclose the relevant information to the Department. Under the law, Mandated Reporters are protected from liability in any civil or criminal action and from any discriminatroy or retaliatory actions by an employer.

Confidentiality

Anyone who handles personal information about students or other employees has the obligation to maintain strict confidentiality. Records must be treated confidentially and professionally. They may be discussed only with individuals authorized to have access to such records.

Conflict of Interest

The Westfield Public School Committee and Administration not only require that staff members of the District adhere to all laws regarding conflict of interest, but also be alert to and avoid situations which have the appearance of a conflict of interest. Substantial and continuing school-related business
relationships between the Committee and staff are discouraged. A summary of the state conflict of interest law (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A) appears in Appendix A. Employees with questions about how Chapter 268A applies to them may contact the State Ethics Commission's Legal Division or the District's City Solicitor. Employees with other conflict of interest questions regarding their official duties should consult the Human Resources Office or Superintendent of Schools.

Please see attached link for Disclosure Forms: http://www.mass.gov/ethics/disclosure-forms/municipal-employee-disclosure-forms/

Termination and Rehire Policies

Voluntary Resignation
A staff member should submit adequate written notice to the staff member's supervisor before voluntarily leaving the District. Those individuals whose responsibilities are determined by the academic calendar are expected to fulfill their commitments through the academic year. Members of the teaching staff are encouraged to inform the Administration by April 1 of their intention not to return the following year. Professional and administrative employees are expected to provide a minimum of one month's notice. More advance notice may be appropriate for senior level positions. Clerical and support staff members are expected to provide a minimum of two weeks notice.

Any unauthorized absence from employment for two or more consecutive days constitutes a voluntary resignation from employment.

Involuntary Separation
Employment is not guaranteed to any employee. Termination of an individual may result from reorganization, financial circumstances or lack of work. Written notice of termination for such reasons will conform with the requirements of individual labor contracts.

Continuation of Benefits after Separation
If an employee participates in group insurance plans through the District, the employee may be eligible to continue coverage after separation. Please see COBRA Coverage in the Insurance section of this handbook.

Rehire
Employees who leave the Westfield Public School District in good standing and later wish to return are eligible for consideration for rehire provided an appropriate position is available. A previous employee who is rehired is not guaranteed credit for prior service for purposes of vacation eligibility, seniority, and other pertinent benefits.

Reasonable Assurance
A non-certified employee will be notified in writing by the Superintendent prior to June 30 of the employee’s continuation of employment for the coming school year. While notification of rehire for the next year represents reasonable assurance of continued employment with the District, it is not an absolute guarantee of employment. It merely represents the District’s intention to make a good faith effort to employ the addressee for the coming school year.

A teacher or other professional staff member without Professional Teacher Status shall be notified in writing on or before June 15th if that person is not to be employed for the following school year. Unless such notice is given, the certified staff member is considered to have reasonable assurance of employment for the following school year.

An employee with reasonable assurance of employment is not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during the summer months.

Unemployment Compensation
Employees whose employment is separated from the District may be eligible for unemployment compensation as long as they are available for and actively seeking employment and meet other legal
requirements. To apply for unemployment compensation benefits, an individual must visit or call an office of the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) where it will be determined whether or not the employee qualifies for benefits.

**Breaks in Service/Continuous Service**

*Any employee who terminates employment with the District and is re-employed in the District will have a break in service. The only exception to this is in the case where an employee is notified that he or she will not be rehired for a particular position for the next school year, but then is hired in another position before the start of the new school year. In that case, there would be no break in service.*

**Performance Evaluations**

The work performance of all employees of the Westfield Public School District is reviewed on a regular basis. Performance evaluations provide a system with which to link the District's mission and goals to the individual performance objectives of the employee. They also provide a way for supervisors to communicate, in measurable terms, job expectations to employees and to let employees review how they have done.

Evaluations will be carried out according to the labor contract that covers the position of the employee. If an employee has more than one position with the District or has more than one supervisor, the employee may be evaluated by more than one supervisor.

**Grievance/Complaint Procedure**

The District is committed to sound employee relations and encourages resolution of job related problems through open communication and informal resolution whenever possible. However, when an employee who is covered by a labor agreement has a complaint that cannot be resolved through informal means, there are formal grievance procedures, which are outlined in the agreements with the individual bargaining units. In addition, specific procedures for complaints that relate to harassment or discrimination are outlined in the School Committee Policy Manual. Please see Appendix A of this handbook.

**Employee Records and Information**

The Administration maintains a record of each employee's employment at the Westfield Public School District, including such information as education, experience, work performance, and progress. These records are carefully reviewed when an employee is being considered for promotion, salary increase, or transfer.

In accordance with District policy and applicable law, all employee records (including but not necessarily limited to applications and other records pertaining to hire, promotion, demotion, transfer, work schedule, layoff, termination, rates of pay or other terms of compensation, and performance appraisal) kept by the District will be preserved for at least three years from the date of the personnel action. This does not apply to records for positions known to be casual or seasonal.

An employee may schedule an appointment to review the contents of employee's file by calling the Human Resources Department.

**Privacy Issues**

A personnel file may contain personal data as well as employment information. As a public servant, some personnel information in an employee's personnel file is considered public and may be accessed by anyone during regular business hours. This information includes but is not limited to an employee's name, age, date of original employment, current position title, salary, position classification or change in position classification, and the department and location where the employee is assigned.

Other information in an employee's file is confidential. However, some individuals do have authority to view this information, including state and federal agents. The District will release this confidential information only with the written permission of the employee or as required by law.
Change of Information
Any change of home address or telephone number, or a change in emergency contact information should be made by contacting the Human Resources Department. Changes in name require the employee to present a copy of a new Social Security card to the Human Resources Department. If an employee’s license reflects the employee’s previous name, the employee must contact DESE and update the license.

TECHNOLOGY
The Westfield Public Schools provides most staff access to computers, including electronic mail and the Internet. Each user in the District has access to a folder on the district’s server. This access includes a personal storage folder, school shared folder, and district shared folder. Since the hard drive space on the computers in the classroom/workstation and the resources allocated to support the computers and the networked servers are limited, the following rules have been put into effect.

Staff may not change any set-ups on a computer or install any plug-ins or software. Software not owned by the District may not be installed on any District computer. This includes Scholastic “reward” software, unless it is specifically donated to the District with a donation letter. Software of any kind should not be installed on District computers, unless approved by the Principal and installed by the Technology Center. This will ensure programs on the district’s computers are properly licensed. Older software may not be compatible with our network and can wreak havoc with newer set-ups and operating systems.

Moving desktop computers to other rooms is not permitted. All computers are inventoried and are assigned to specific classrooms and locations. It does not belong to the individual who is using it. If an employee moves to another classroom, a computer in that room will be set up for employee’s use.

A shared folder is assigned to each school on the server and is accessible to school staff. The school network shared folder provides a place to share documents with others in the building and as a place to temporarily store work. The work in this folder should be in sub-folders, clearly labeled and cleaned out on a regular basis.

The District Shared folder is for the use of all staff members. The District shared folder has various forms, applications and notices for staff to access. An employee must be aware that since all staff has access to this folder, NOTHING is protected from being deleted. Employees must be careful about what is left in this folder.

Internet and Bandwidth
The sending of bulk mail to others in a school or district is not permitted. Do not forward mail from others to every teacher in the school, unless prior authorization is obtained from administration. Virus warnings, jokes, “get rich quick” schemes, etc. are not a judicious use of District resources, and may also carry viruses if the message includes a file attachment.

Streaming audio and video are only to be used for instructional support. The use of Real Audio and Video to provide students with access to important, late-breaking events is important. However, the use of Real Audio for background music or watching film trailers, among other things, is an intense use of bandwidth and is not permitted.

Browser start-up pages are to be standardized. The start-up pages for the browsers should be either on the WPS homepage or the homepage of each school.

Use of any instant Messenger software is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: AIM (AOL Instant Messenger), Microsoft Messenger, and Novell Messenger.

Non-District web-based mail use is not allowed for staff. Staff members are not permitted to use any commercial Web-based mail on School District computers.

More specific rules and guidelines regarding use of the Internet are listed in the “Staff Technology Acceptable Use Policy.” This document must be signed and returned to the Human Resources Department before an account will be set up.
See Appendix B for a copy of the Staff Technology Acceptable Use Policy

**User Accounts and Passwords**

- **User accounts.** Each user is issued an account and should not share their account/password information with others. There may be multiple accounts issued for network, email, and/or specific applications.
  - More specific rules and guidelines regarding use are listed in the “Staff Technology Acceptable Use Policy”. This document must be signed and returned to the Human Resources Department before an account will be issued.
  - Upon approval from the Human Resources Department, the Technology Center will create the employee’s user account.

- **Access.** Each user account has specific network and internet access associated with it. This may be more or less restrictive than other accounts (i.e., student vs para vs teacher vs administrator). **DO NOT** share your account information with others.

- **Passwords.** Passwords are issued by the District (applications) and Technology Center (network and email). If you suspect your password has been compromised, contact the Technology Center to change your password. Please see password guidelines for recommendations.

**Hardware and Software**

- **District owned or leased equipment is the only equipment authorized on the Internal District Network (IDN).** All equipment is inventoried and is assigned to specific classrooms, locations, or individuals.

- **Only peripheral equipment owned or leased by the District shall be installed on district devices (computers) and the IDN.** Privately owned equipment is not allowed to be connected to District owned devices or the IDN. This includes, but is not limited to: printers, scanners, iPads, tablets, phones, media devices, etc.

- **District owned or leased laptop computers, iPads, and tablets are assigned to an individual.** Upon completing and signing the WPS Computer/Tablet Assignment/Return Form, staff will be issued the portable device. This device is the property of WPS and should only be used for educational and WPS related business.

- **Staff may not install or change any plug-ins or software on a District owned or leased device.** Software not owned by the District may not be installed on any District computer. Software of any kind should not be installed on District computers, unless approved by the Principal and installed by an authorized staff or the Technology Center. Unlicensed software is illegal and can jeopardize District funding. Software compatibility needs to be tested prior to installation on devices. Unlicensed or unapproved software will not be supported and will be uninstalled.

- **Specialty screensavers and wallpapers are not permitted.** Screensavers are pushed out via network settings from the Technology Center.

- Privately owned equipment is allowed to access the District “Voyager” network upon approval of the building principal. Support will be given on a “best effort” basis, with no guarantee. The right to access the “Voyager” network may be revoked at any time.

- **Donations of hardware and software need to meet district standards prior to acceptance.** All donations of hardware and software must meet specifications given in donation guidelines, set by District Office. This includes “reward” software, and corporate or personal donations.

**File Storage**
- Staff should clean unused files from the network and the computer’s hard drive on a regular basis. Periodically, computers are reimaged and all hard drives erased. Documents of importance should be saved to a folder on the network server.

- **Unacceptable file storage.** Unacceptable personal files include music, pictures, videos or any other long term file storage that does not relate to WPS. If found, they may be deleted at any time, without warning.

- **Personal cloud based storage syncing.** Storage of personal files on cloud based systems (iTunes, Dropbox, etc) is not encouraged. If files are syncing on network shares, they will be deleted. The District and the Technology Center will issue guidelines on cloud based storage for WPS related access.

**Internet and Bandwidth**

- **Use of internet is for WPS related business or instructional support.** Upon reviewing and signing the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), staff in WPS will be held responsible for their internet browsing history. All access is recorded and subject to review.

**Email**

- **WPS Email is issued to staff members for use for WPS related business only.** WPS Email is the property of WPS, and is subject to city, state, and federal usage guidelines. Inclusion of information on students in emails may be a violation of HIPPA, CIPA, and other privacy policies. All email is subject to legal and Freedom of Information Act requests and District review, and is not to be considered private. All email is permanently archived. Staff should not use WPS issued email accounts for personal use.

- **Email message size, including attachments, is limited to 20mb.** Messages larger than 20mb will be rejected. Mass emailing of attachments is strongly discouraged. Posting on school websites, file shares, or emailing links is the preferred way to disseminate information.

- **Staff should be prudent in subscribing to mailing list subscriptions pertaining to school related matters.** Many spam emails originate from these services. Every effort is made to limit spam, however, some will get through our filters. Please do not perpetuate this by forwarding it on; just delete it. If you would like to subscribe, get supervisor’s permission.

- **Staff should be prudent in reading and responding to emails from unknown or known sources.** Many spam/virus emails have become successful at mimicking valid senders (banks, credit cards, facebook, linkedin, etc). Every effort is made to limit spam, however, some will get through our filters. Please do not perpetuate this by forwarding it on; just delete it.

- **Use of personal email accounts for WPS related business is not allowed.** The use of personal email accounts for WPS related matters subjects it to legal or Freedom of Information Act requests.

**Printing and Copying**

- **Printers, copiers, toner, ink, and paper are property of WPS.** Use of WPS resources is logged. Personal use of these resources is not allowed.

See Appendix A for a copy of the Staff Internet and Acceptable Use Guidelines and Agreement.

**ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance on the job is important to the District’s operation. Frequent or unnecessary absence from work, tardiness in reporting to work, or leaving work early puts an added burden on fellow employees; interferes with the District’s ability to perform its business, education, will seriously
impair the value of an employee's services; and will be sufficient cause for termination or other disciplinary action. Whenever possible, elective surgery should be scheduled at a time that will cause the least disruption to an employee's ability to successfully perform the functions of the employee's position.

**Absences and Lateness**

An employee who must be absent from work is expected to notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible or report in AESOP, and keep the supervisor regularly informed during any extended absence (three days or more). In like manner, employees must call their supervisors if they are going to be late for work. In addition to oral notification, an employee is required to complete a "Leave of Absence Form" after their third incidence of absence.

Each supervisor is responsible for keeping accurate records of an employee's absences and having employees complete necessary paperwork. The Westfield Public School District reserves the right to request a medical examination or doctor's certificate during or following an illness (fitness for duty).

**Emergency Closing/Early Release**

If schools are closed for any reason, notification will be broadcast on radio and television between 5:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. The call letters of stations announcing this information are available at Central Office. The information will be posted on the District website, http://www.schoolsofwestfield.org/. In addition, a phone call will be sent to students homes via an automated calling system. School year employees should not report to work if there is no school. Cancellation of school does not affect the regular operation of District offices. If year-round employees are not expected to report to work or if there will be a delayed opening, a phone call will be made to employeees homes. Telephone chains are also established in order to notify employees individually. Year-round administrative employees who do not feel comfortable driving, because of the weather conditions, may use personal time, vacation time, or leave without pay for such days. Maintenance employees should report to work, unless directly notified otherwise.

Delayed openings will be announced in the same manner as school closings.

If the event such as a heavy snowstorm occurs during the workday warranting an early release, the Superintendent will inform supervisors to dismiss their employees. Unless so notified, employees are expected to complete the regular workday.

**Absence Due to Illness**

Most positions in the District have sick leave benefits. Each employee should consult the agreement of employee's representative bargaining unit for information regarding sick leave benefits.

**Family and Medical Leave Policy**

After an employee has worked for the District for at least twelve (12) months, met the minimum requirement of worked hours for the previous year, and is not considered a "Key" employee, the employee is eligible for up to twelve work weeks (or twenty-six (26) work weeks if leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness is also used) of unpaid, job-protected leave for certain family and/or medical reasons. Worked hours do not include any leaves except military leave, paid or unpaid, including, but not limited to: holidays, sick leave days, vacations, personal days, etc.

The District's FMLA policy is attached hereto.

For more information, contact the Personnel Department or the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor.

**Personal And Other Non-Medical Leaves**

**Personal Leave**

Personal Leave, if available under a labor agreement, is to be used to transact important personal matters that are impossible to transact outside the workday. Personal Leave shall not be used for extending vacation, recreation, matters associated with another position, business or other financially rewarding enterprises of the employee or employee's relative(s) or friend(s). Personal Leave the day before and after a holiday or school vacation is not allowed under some labor agreements and could
result in the loss of holiday pay under other labor agreements. Please consult the relevant collective bargaining agreement.

**Vacations**
Permanent full-time or part-time, year-round employees may be eligible to receive vacation benefits based on the length of the workday when school is in session. Supervisors will grant vacations at such time that will cause the least interference with the regular work of the District. Number of vacation time to be carried over to the next year is established in collective bargaining agreement or personal service agreement. Each employee should consult their collective bargaining agreement or personal service agreement to determine eligibility and process.

**Holidays**
A permanent full-time or part-time, year round or school year employee (excluding teachers and administrators) may be eligible for holiday pay, if the holiday falls on a regularly scheduled workday. In order for an employee to be paid for a holiday, he or she must work the scheduled workday preceding and following the holiday. Each employee should consult the employee’s bargaining unit agreement to determine eligibility.

**Military Leave (Armed Forces Reserve Or National Guard)**
Military Leave will be granted to members of the Armed Forces Reserve or National Guard in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 33, Section 59, and applicable federal laws, as amended.

**Bereavement Leave**
Bereavement Leave is available under the labor agreements with the District and varies from contract to contract. Each employee should consult the employee’s contract for information.

**Jury Duty**
If an employee is required to serve jury duty and thus absent from regular work duty, the employee shall receive no loss of pay for any time served. All payments by the Commonwealth or subdivision thereof, shall be turned over to the Committee.

An employee should inform his/her supervisor immediately upon receipt of the jury duty summons so that arrangements to accommodate the absence may be made. It is hoped that employees will try to request their duty be changed to a time that would not interfere with their work schedule, whenever possible.

Juror certificates must be submitted to the Human Resources Department upon receipt.

**Witness Duty**
Unpaid time off will be granted for absence due to witness duty if an employee is subpoenaed. Available personal leave or vacation time may be used to receive compensation for the period of this absence.

If an employee is subpoenaed to testify on behalf of the District as a result of a job-related incident, that time will be considered part of the employee's workday and will be paid.

**Other Leaves Without Pay**
Other leaves without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Director of Human Resources or Superintendent. Each employee should consult his/her bargaining unit agreement for more details. Requests must be made in writing with any appropriate documents to support the request.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

**Harassment**
The Westfield Public School District is committed to maintaining a work environment free of harassment for any reason, not just on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, handicap (disability), participation in discrimination complaint-related activities, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetics. The District expects all employees and members of the school
community to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner with concern for their fellow employees, students, and community members.

Any violation of the District’s policy on harassment should immediately be brought to the attention of the building principal or Superintendent so that an investigation may be conducted and appropriate corrective action taken.

Any employee found to have violated this policy would be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including warning, reprimands, suspension or discharge or exclusion, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

Retaliation in any form against any person who files a complaint of harassment or assists in investigating such a complaint is prohibited. Complaints of retaliation will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be taken immediately. However, filing a complaint of harassment does not protect a complainant from legitimate discipline.

Please see Appendix A for the complete policy and procedures regarding Harassment.

District Smoking Policy

The Westfield Public School District is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for staff, students, and citizens. Therefore, smoking and the use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes are prohibited in all buildings and on all grounds of the District at all times as per the requirements of the Education Reform Act of 1993.

Any violation of this policy by staff shall be referred to the appropriate supervisor, and may result in disciplinary action. Please see Appendix A for the complete Smoking Policy.

Alcohol/Drug Policy

Absolutely no alcohol or illegal substances are allowed on the job or at the worksite. Furthermore, District employees are expected to come to work free of impairment resulting from drinking or use of illegal substances elsewhere, whether at night, at lunch, or at any other time. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment. Please see Appendix A for the complete text of the School Committee’s policy on alcohol and drugs.

Administration of Medications Policy

All medications must be distributed to students and staff according to the Guidelines of the Westfield Public School District School Committee Policy on “Administration of Medications.” Please see Appendix A for the complete text of the School Committee’s policy on administration of medications.

Right to Know

The Massachusetts Right to Know Law requires that information on chemical hazards be given to employees by providing them with access to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), by labeling containers of chemicals, and by training on chemical hazards and safe work procedures. Employees who are exposed to chemical hazards must be trained annually. A record including the description of the training given, the date of the training, and the names of both the instructor and employees who attended the training must be kept for the duration of the employment. Employees have rights under the law which include the employee’s right to request a copy of a MSDS and, in certain circumstances, the right to refuse to work if a MSDS is not provided. More detailed information on employee rights is given on the required workplace notice and in the law and regulations. Please see Appendix A for a copy of the “Massachusetts Right to Know Fact Sheet.”

Safety

The Westfield Public School District strives to provide a safe and healthy work environment for its employees.

Employees must learn the fire drill procedures for their building and become familiar with the school’s “Emergency Procedures Guide” that describes proper procedures and practices during an emergency situation.
For certain jobs, personal protective equipment must be worn. If personal protective equipment is required, a supervisor will discuss its proper use, care, maintenance and storage.

The protection of our fellow employees, students, and the general public on District property is a responsibility we all share. If an employee knows of any unsafe working conditions or improperly operating equipment which could result in an accident, injury, illness or property loss, the employee should contact employee’s supervisor, principal, or the Director of Maintenance immediately.

See Also Worker’s Compensation and the School Committee’s Policy on Safe Schools in Appendix A.

**COMPENSATION, SALARY ADMINISTRATION, and BENEFITS**

**Payroll Procedures**

The Payroll Department is responsible for processing and distributing all paychecks. Questions concerning paychecks, tax deductions, and the procedures described in this section should be directed to the Business Department at 413-572-6407.

**Pay Period**

Payrolls are processed on a biweekly basis. The normal payday is every other Friday. If a payday falls in a week with a holiday or there is some other obstacle to processing the payroll, then paychecks will be issued on Thursday. The work week for hourly employees starts on Saturday and continues through Friday.

**Payroll Options for Teachers**

Staff members who hold salaried positions covered by the Agreement between the Westfield School Committee and Westfield Educators Association have a choice of how their paychecks will be calculated. A member may opt for 26 equal pays to run from September through August, or 26 equal pays but receive the July and August payments in a lump sum in June. All members must notify Human Resources by date referenced in “lump sum letter” in writing if they elect the lump sum option.

If an employee’s salary is funded through a grant, payroll options may be limited.

**Paycheck Distribution**

Paychecks may be obtained in the following ways:

- **Checks**: When school is in session, paychecks will be sent from the Administration Office to each building and distributed to employees. If school is not in session, paychecks may be picked up at the Administration Office or their respective school (secondary) between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

- **Electronic bank deposit**: Permanent employees must arrange to have their pay electronically deposited to their checking or savings account. This can be done at anytime by completing an authorization form and submitting it, along with a voided blank check, to the Human Resources Department. The process of setting up a direct deposit through the NEACH system may take as long as one month and paychecks will be issued until the process is complete.

Notification of deposits will be distributed in the same manner as paychecks, unless the payroll date falls in a school break period. When a payday occurs during a school break period and notification has not been picked up at the Central Office, it will be available at the employee’s home school immediately following the break. Employees who use the direct deposit option are responsible for ensuring that the amount has been credited to their bank account.

Direct Deposit is a convenient benefit. However, the potential exists for problems in the transfer and posting of the funds. Under some collective bargaining agreements, direct deposit notices will be sent electronically. Please refer to your collective bargaining agreement.

**Payroll Deductions**

Check stubs indicate gross earnings, net earnings, and all deductions for the current pay period and the calendar year to date. Required payroll deductions include federal income tax, state income tax, Medicare tax, and OBRA or public retirement contributions. Voluntary deductions may be arranged on an individual basis.
Overtime

Exempt/Nonexempt Classification
The Fair Labor Standards Act designates certain workers as eligible for overtime compensation. The following terminology is used to distinguish workers who may receive overtime pay from those who may not:

Exempt: refers to those employees whose duties and responsibilities make them exempt from overtime compensation as defined by the Act. In the District, almost all exempt employees receive a yearly salary.

Nonexempt: refers to those employees whose work as defined by the Act makes them eligible for overtime compensation. In the District, almost all nonexempt employees are paid on an hourly basis.

Eligibility for extra hours/overtime
Nonexempt staff are eligible for payment for extra hours worked at the request of the supervisor at times when workloads or unusual circumstances make it necessary. Because of budgetary restrictions, overtime is generally discouraged.

Overtime is paid when an employee works more than forty hours in one work week or as referenced in their contract or hire letter. Hours paid for non-work time, including but not limited to sick leave, vacation leave, personal days, etc., are not included when calculating overtime.

Overpayment
Because they share in the responsibility for accurate pay amounts, employees are advised to review pay changes carefully. If an employee is overpaid by mistake, the employee is expected to reimburse the District for the overpayment.

Worker’s Compensation
Worker’s Compensation insurance is available to cover the cost of medical, surgical, dental, or hospital services incurred as the result of injury incurred in the course of employment. It also covers payment for lost time due to a work related injury.

Any injury, no matter how slight, must be reported to an immediate supervisor at once. Employees are required to sign a medical authorization form that allows access to any medical records relevant to the accident. The school nurse (or supervisor if the school nurse is not available) will be responsible for the completion of the “First Report of Injury” form within 24 hours of the accident. A copy of this report will be given to the employee and a copy will be forwarded to the Benefits Department for processing.

Payment for Lost Time
Worker’s Compensation Insurance pays a pro-rated amount based on sixty percent of the prior twelve months’ earnings.

If an employee has earned sick leave or vacation leave accumulated, the District may pay the difference between the employee’s regular salary and the Worker’s Compensation received and charge the employee’s accumulated sick leave or vacation leave for that difference. The Payroll Department will issue a regular paycheck each payroll. The employee will also receive a check for the insurance amount that must be endorsed and returned to the District.

If an employee does not have earned sick leave, vacation leave, or overtime accumulated, employee will receive only the insurance amount and there will be no need to endorse the check over to the District.

Payment for the first five days of lost time due to a work related injury or illness would be covered by earned sick leave days, unless the amount of lost time exceeds 21 days. If more than 21 days are lost, the first five days will then be covered retroactively by Worker’s Compensation Insurance.

Medical Payments
When seeking medical attention, please inform all providers that it is a work related incident and all bills should be directed to the City Personnel Department for payment. If a provider bills an employee directly, the employee should send the bill to the City Personnel Department.
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
The District recognizes that personal issues can have an adverse effect on an employee's performance. To help employees deal effectively with these problems, which can result in deteriorating job performance and personal suffering, the District has established an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is designed to deal with life problems such as alcohol or drug abuse, marital conflict, emotional or behavioral disorders, family, physical, legal, financial, and other personal problems. The EAP is a confidential benefit to our employees offered through MIIA (Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association) with licensed mental health providers. Participation in the EAP will not jeopardize an employee's job security, promotion opportunities or reputation. All records and discussions of personal problems will be handled in a confidential manner and will be maintained separately by our EAP provider.

Any request for treatment or assistance will not jeopardize an employee's job security or rights. Continued failure by an employee to seek and pursue treatment when employee's job performance or attendance is affected will be handled under the normal disciplinary process. The intent is to reduce problems in the workplace and retain our valuable employees. This policy does not alter or replace existing rules or agreement, but serves as an adjunct to assist in their utilization.

This program is available to all employees and their extended family. There is no charge for the initial assessment or short-term services. Costs incurred for ongoing treatment, problem solving, or rehabilitation that are not covered by insurance or other benefits will be the responsibility of the employee.

For confidential and professional assistance, call MIIA at 1-800-451-1834 any day, 24 hours a day.

GROUP HEALTH, DENTAL, AND LIFE INSURANCE PLANS
All new employees should meet with the Benefits Coordinator immediately after being hired. The Benefits Coordinator will review the insurance plans and rates, retirement plans, required documents and all other available benefits.

Participation Eligibility
In accordance with Chapter 32B of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Westfield Public School District offers all eligible employees, their spouses, and dependents when applicable, the opportunity to participate in the group health, group dental, and group life insurance plans. Eligible employees are those persons actively employed on a permanent or temporary basis (non-seasonal) for a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week on a regular basis.

Enrollments
Employees may enroll in all plans upon initial eligibility, e.g., date of hire or date of increased hours.

Enrollment forms are available through the Benefits Coordinator and can also be found on the City of Westfield website:

http://www.cityofwestfield.org/?page_id=1898

Waiver of Benefits
Any eligible employee who does not wish to enroll in health and/or life insurance and wishes to enroll at a later date may be subject to waiting periods, physical examinations, and/or denial of coverage.

Contributions
The District contributes eighty percent (80%) of the premiums for the HMO Health Insurance plan and sixty-five percent (65%) of the premiums for the PPO Health Insurance plan for all eligible employees. The employee's share is deducted from two paychecks each month. Employees who are paid year round will have their premiums deducted in 24 equal payments throughout the year.
Employees paid on a 10 month basis will have premiums taken on an accelerated rate through the school year that will carry them through the summer months.

Health Insurance Rates are generally in effect from July 1 through June 30 of each year.

Dental Insurance Rates are generally in effect from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

**Continuation of Benefits - COBRA**

If an employee of the District is covered by one of the District's health or dental insurance plans and coverage is lost due to a decrease in hours of employment or termination of employment for any reason other than gross misconduct, the employee has the right to continue coverage under the federal COBRA law.

Spouses (including separated or divorced spouses if covered under the employee's insurance plan) and other dependents covered by the employee's insurance have the right to choose continuation coverage if they lose coverage for any of the following reasons:

- The death of the subscriber (employee)
- Reduction in hours of employment or termination of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct
- Divorce or legal separation
- Medicare eligibility
- A child ceases to be a “dependent child” under the terms of the individual plans

The employee, the employee’s spouse, or employee’s dependent have 60 days from the date that coverage would be lost, because of one of the events described above, to elect continuation of coverage. If an election is not made within that time period, group health and/or dental insurance coverage will end for all affected parties.

Under the law, the employee, the employee’s spouse or another dependent has the responsibility to inform the District of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status under the health and/or dental plans. When notified that one of these events has happened, the Benefits Coordinator will in turn notify the affected member that he or she has the right to choose continuation coverage.

If the loss of insurance coverage is due to termination of employment or reduction in hours, the continuation coverage period is 18 months. If termination of coverage is due to any other reason, the coverage may be continued for three years. Continuation of coverage may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- The District no longer provides group health or dental coverage to any of its employees
- The premium for continuation of coverage is not paid when due
- The subscriber becomes an employee covered under another group health plan
- The subscriber becomes eligible for Medicare
- The subscriber lost coverage due to divorce, subsequently remarries and is covered under a new spouse's group health plan
- The cost of COBRA coverage is 100% of the cost of the premium.

Any questions regarding COBRA coverage should be directed to the Benefits Coordinator at 413-564-3176.

**Section 125 Plan Pre-Taxed Deduction Of Insurance Premiums**

Employees pay their portion of premiums for dental, and health insurance in pre-tax dollars. Under this plan, an employee can elect to have his/her insurance premiums deducted from his/her pay before federal and state income taxes are calculated. This plan does not affect any of the benefits under the various insurance programs; it simply reduces taxable income. **If you choose not to pay your portion of premiums with pre-tax dollars, you are required to complete a refusal form available from the Benefits Coordinator.**
The Westfield Public School District is permitted to offer this plan under Internal Revenue Service Regulations (Section 125 of the Code) and Massachusetts General Law. This is a summary of the Section 125 Plan and states in general terms the highlights of the Plan. All rights and benefits under the Plan will be governed by the provisions of the Plan Document and any related contracts.

An employee is eligible to participate in the Section 125 Plan if the employee is eligible to participate and enroll in the group health, dental or life insurance plans offered by the District.

If you do not wish to participate in the Section 125 plan you must complete an "Employee Health Insurance Responsibility Disclosure Form."

Changing an Election

Once an employee has elected to participate in the Section 125 Plan, the employee must maintain employee's status in the plan until the next plan year or until a qualifying event occurs. A qualifying event would be a change in family status, (marriage, divorce, birth of a child, loss of a dependent, etc.) or a change in the employee's spouse's employment status. If a qualifying event occurs, an employee may change employee's enrollment in the health or dental insurance or terminate coverage completely, depending upon the nature of the qualifying event. The employee may do so by completing the appropriate form and submitting it within thirty (30) days of the qualifying event.

If a qualifying event does not occur, an employee must remain enrolled as initially elected until the open enrollment date.

**Health Insurance – Health New England and BCBS of Massachusetts**

Health Insurance is effective on your Date of Hire.

You have 5 health plans to choose from:

- **HMO:** Health New England (HNE) – Principle plan
- **HMO:** HNE – Wise Max HDHP plan
- **HMO:** BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS) – Network Blue New England plan
- **PPO:** HNE – Premium plan
- **PPO:** BCBS – Blue Care Elect plan

The employee paid portion of the premium is made on a pre-tax basis.

**Dental Insurance -Delta Dental of Massachusetts**

Dental Insurance *(Voluntary program)* is effective the 1st of the month following Date of Hire

- Delta Dental is offered & two plan options are available:
  - Low option (lower premium/ lower coverage) and High option (higher premium/ more coverage)
  - The employee pays the premium on a pre-tax basis.

**Flexible Spending Account (FSA):**

Health Care Reimbursement and/or Dependent Care Reimbursement

Effective on the 1st of the month following Date of Hire.

By utilizing these accounts you can reduce the amount of taxes you pay, as the contributions to these accounts are made on a pre-tax basis.
Enrollment After Initial Eligibility
If an employee does not enroll in one of the District's insurance plans upon initial eligibility (within 30 days of hire), the employee will be subject to certain restrictions if the employee wishes to enroll later. The employee may only enroll later if a qualifying event occurs or on the open enrollment date.

A qualifying event would be a change in family status or a loss of other group insurance coverage. A change in family status would be marriage, divorce, birth of a baby, etc. Loss of group health insurance coverage is limited to an involuntary loss of coverage, e.g., due to loss of job or employer stops offering coverage.

If a qualifying event does not occur, then an employee is limited to enrolling on the open enrollment date.

Dependent Coverage
Dependent coverage is provided for spouses and unmarried children until the age of 26.

Coordination of Benefits
Other insurers may be responsible for all or part of a member’s incurred claims and HNE or BCBS may check to see if other insurers are involved, (e.g., automobile insurance or worker’s compensation).

Questions
Specific questions regarding coverage may be directed to the Benefits Coordinator at 413-564-3176 or by contacting the Member Services Departments of Health New England at 1-413-787-4004 or 1-800-310-2835 or BCBS Network Blue at 1-800-782-3675.

*For additional information, please go to the City website:
http://www.cityofwestfield.org/?page_id=1898

Life Insurance - Provided By Boston Mutual Life Insurance Co.
Life Insurance is effective on the 1st of the month following 30 days of employment

Basic Life Insurance
The City of Westfield offers all eligible employees $20,000 Basic Term Life Insurance with $20,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance. This Basic Policy is reduced to $5,000 upon retirement from the school district. [insert percentage paid by employee]

Optional Life Insurance
The City also offers Optional Life Insurance. Those employees currently enrolled in the “Basic plans” are eligible to participate in an Optional Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Program. [insert percentage paid by employee]

Conversion Privilege
If an employee leaves employee’s present employment, the employee may convert employee’s group life insurance, regardless of medical condition, provided that employee does so within 31 days following termination.

Beneficiary
The insured may designate any person(s) to be the beneficiary of the coverage.

This summary is intended merely to summarize the benefits of this group insurance program. Each covered employee will receive a Certificate of Insurance that will explain all the terms and conditions of the coverage. The program offered is in conformity with Chapter 32B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
RETIREMENT PLANS

Mandatory Retirement Plans Public Retirement Systems

The majority of District employees are covered by contributory retirement systems governed by the Commonwealth's Retirement Law, Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. These systems provide retirement, disability and survivor benefits to Massachusetts' public employees. The Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System covers eligible, DESE licensed employees and the Hampden County Retirement System covers all other eligible employees.

City of Westfield Retirement System

Any non-licensed employees who work 20 hours or more must enroll in the City of Westfield Retirement System. For more information, please see the Benefits Coordinator or the Retirement Department.

Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System

Any DESE licensed employee who is appointed to a position at a full-time equivalency of more than .5 must enroll in the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System. For more information, please visit the web site at http://www.state.ma.us/mtrf/.

Contributions

Contributions are a percentage of the employee's regular compensation. The percentage is based on the retirement system to which the employee belongs and when the employee becomes a member.

All contributions are made on a pre-tax basis at the federal level. This means that federal tax is calculated after retirement contributions are deducted.

403B TAX ANNUITY Plan:

Entry Date: You can join this plan at any time

Tax deferred contributions can be made to a 403b account (government equivalent to a 401(k) plan).

Tax sheltered annuity plans also permit an employee to withhold and contribute a portion of employee’s salary to be used for retirement purposes. The Westfield Public School System does not endorse any company offering 403B plans. A listing of companies to whom contributions are currently being accepted may be obtained from the Benefits Coordinators Office.

TAX ANNUITY COMPANIES

403-b

(City of Westfield – School Department)

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<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 2073  | American Express Financial/Ameriprise 1-800-862-7919 | Brenda Kantor 413-737-9600  
Brian Costello 413-699-1775  
Susan Alvaros 413-821-9320 |
| 2066  | AXA Equitable – 1-800-628-6673  | Thomas Schreiber, Financial Professional 413-475-0770 1-800-628-6673 |
| 2097  | First Investors – 1-800-423-4026 | Ken Chase 1-800-426-4023  
413-821-9930 Nick Pappas 265-0396 |
| 2068  | Great American Life (GALIC) 1-800-497-85556 | Ana Pedreira Ferris 413-567-2684  
John Kirsch 413-322-3282 |
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<td>2074</td>
<td>Mass Mutual – 1-800-272-2216</td>
<td>413-739-3199</td>
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<td>Dean Godek 413-531-9740</td>
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<td>2086</td>
<td>Met Life 1-800-338-8378</td>
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<td>2071</td>
<td>Putnam Investors – 1-800-225-1581</td>
<td>1-888-4-PUTNAM also Michael Fioroni (1-888-178-8626) 562-2999</td>
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<td>2099</td>
<td>The Variable Annuity Life Ins. Co/VALIC 1-800-448-2542</td>
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<td>2060</td>
<td>New York Life Insurance – 1-800-710-7945</td>
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Can contribute — calendar year or 2 ½ months into following year of retirement whichever is greater

2014 – 17,000 (23000 if over 50)

**Sec. 457 Deferred Compensation Plan**

Tax deferred contributions can be made to a Section 457 account (government equivalent to a 401(k) plan). The City's plan is administered through MassMutual Life Insurance Company. A Roth (post-tax) option is also available. Dean Godek 413-531-9740