
Worcester SDA School Student Handbook



The Worcester Seventh-day Adventist School (“the school”) is operated by the Worcester Seventh-day Adventist church. All other SDA churches in the area are invited to become constituent churches. Constituent and supporting churches acknowledge the educational program as an integral part of their mission. It is the fundamental structure by which workers are prepared to finish the work of God on earth. The school is chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is under the supervision of the Superintendent of Education of the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The school is a multi-grade school which allows a child to develop independent work skills. The small class size allows the student to receive more individualized instruction than is possible in a traditional classroom.

Philosophy

The aim of the school is to provide moral, intellectual, social and spiritual development in the setting of a Christian, character-building atmosphere. It is the objective of the staff to promote the practical and spiritual aspects of this philosophy, to work for the success of the school, to individualize instruction as necessary, and to follow the counsels on Christian education as established by the church. The prime objective of the school is to give students preparation for this life and the life to come. Specific objectives are:

Spiritual - To educate students to develop and maintain the Christian life and be ready for the second coming of Jesus and to acknowledge God’s supreme ownership of all resources, both human and natural.

Mental - To maintain a standard of scholastic excellence, to develop an ability to think clearly and logically and to develop an appreciation for the fine arts.

Social - To teach citizenship, self control and how to serve others.

Physical - To teach the basic principles of health and physical well-being while encouraging the development of a healthy lifestyle.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Worcester SDA School is to prepare our students for service in this world and in the world to come, to create a positive Christ-Centered environment, and to challenge our students to expect the most from themselves.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The school admits students of any race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin without discrimination. All programs, activities, rights and privileges are made available to each student. Neither does the school discriminate in administration of policies or programs.

In its admission practices Worcester SDA School does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, but does discriminate on the basis of sexual misconduct, which includes but is not limited to non-marital heterosexual or homosexual misconduct or the encouragement or advocacy of any form of sexual behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Worcester SDA School and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Admission

The school welcomes applications from young people whose principles and interests are in harmony with the policies and ideals of the school as outlined in this bulletin. It is understood that if accepted a student agrees to cheerfully abide by the behavior and dress standards of the school. Students who demonstrate a continued unwillingness to accept such standards will, after due process, be requested to withdraw from school.

Entrance Age

Pupils may be admitted to first grade if they have attained the age of six on or before the date established by law of the region.

Admission Procedure

1. Submit an application or reapplication form along with the deposit, which will be applied to the amount due at the first payment.
2. Complete all registration forms.
3. Provide the school with a copy of immunization records and the student's birth certificate.
4. Meet with the treasurer and develop a personalized payment agreement.
5. Medical exams less than one year old are required of first, fourth, and seventh graders and all new students.

Acceptance is conditional upon school board approval. New students are accepted on probation for up to nine weeks.

Tuition Policy

Tuition is due by the first of every month. Tuition payments must be made in accordance with the instructions on the tuition bill. Payments made after the sixth of the month will incur a \$5.00 late fee. If you are unable to meet your financial agreement at any time you must request special arrangements from the treasurer. If an account has a past due balance that is more than one month the student(s) may be asked to stay home from school until satisfactory arrangements are made with the treasurer. Notice will be given on the third day of the month and enforcement will begin on the fifth day of the month.

Attendance Policy

Absence from school is greatly discouraged. Absences are excused for illness or death in the family. If a child becomes ill during school hours, the person designated on the application form will be contacted. The child should be picked up from school as soon as possible for his/her protection as well as that of the other students. Students are required to bring a written excuse from their parent the day following an absence. Any student absent from class more than 15 % (seven days) of a grading period will require special academic projects as determined by the teachers. It is the responsibility of the student or parent to obtain any assignments which are missed and to arrange for makeup work or tests. . Chronic absences may be reported to the

appropriate local or state agencies.

Arrival / Dismissal

Before and after school supervision is not provided. Doors will not be opened until fifteen minutes before school starts. Students should arrive at the school no earlier than fifteen minutes before school and leave immediately after dismissal. Arrangements must be made with the school for any exception. Upon arrival students will put away their belongings, and report to their classroom unless otherwise directed. Students will not be allowed to leave campus with anyone other than the parent/guardian without written permission. Students are expected to be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the school day has ended. Prior arrangements must be made in writing in the event the student will not be picked up within 15 minutes of the end of a school day.

School Closing

If the Worcester public schools are closed due to severe weather, so is our school. In the event that school must be closed after the day has started, parents or their designated choices will be contacted by phone and arrangements made. If the Worcester public schools have a weather related start time delay on a Friday, the school will still be in session for four hours but will start later.

Discipline

Lifelong success depends on self-discipline. Every student should manage his/her own behavior. Each child deserves the most positive educational climate possible for academic growth. The principal and teachers will set up classroom rules. They may choose to include the students in this process. It is expected that each student will comply with all regulations and render prompt and cheerful service to the directions of any teacher or staff. Students should respect all properties and assume responsibility for all damage caused by abuse.

Unfortunately there are times when behavior is not acceptable. The school reserves the right to take the following action(s):

- a) Pupils will be detained after school in certain circumstances after previous arrangements have been made with the parents.
- b) A student may be suspended from coming to school for repeated deviations from their agreement with the school. Prior corrective measures and notification to the parents will precede suspension and will be kept in the student's file. In the case of a serious overt act and violation of school regulations, the principal/teacher may suspend a student without prior deviant behavior. Parents will be notified, and the suspension will be in effect until the parents appear at the school to discuss the conditions for re-admission. Suspension will not exceed three days without the approval of the chairperson, principal, and one other school board member, and will not be longer than two weeks.
- c) The school board is the delegated body who determines, upon recommendation of the teacher, dismissal of students for serious disciplinary problems. Every attempt will be

made to resolve a problem through discussion with parents, teachers and school board members prior to actual dismissal.

- d) In the event that a student's parents are dissatisfied with the disciplinary actions taken, the parent may submit a letter requesting a meeting with the school board to revisit the specific decision.

Specific Regulations

Anti-Bullying Policy

In accordance with Massachusetts law, bullying is prohibited at any school function including any activities on the school premises, at school sponsored or school related activities or events, during transportation to or from the school premises to an off- site activity or event, or through the use of technology or an electronic device if the act(s) create a hostile environment at the school for the victim or substantially disrupt the education process or orderly operation of the school.

Other Regulations

- There will be zero tolerance for verified instances of bullying, threatening language, drugs, weapons, violence or harassment. Incidents will be reported immediately and police will be contacted when necessary. As used in this policy, "weapons" include any object possessed or used for the intent of harming someone including but not limited to the following: firearms and explosives/ammunition, martial arts and gang weapons, paint ball guns, pellet/BB guns (spring, gas or air-powered), or any toy made to look like a gun, fixed-blade knives, double-edged knives, spring loaded knives, folding knives that become fixed when open, and all knives whose blades have cutting surfaces of 3 inches or longer. Disregarding this policy will subject the student to serious discipline up to and including expulsion.
- Insubordination will not be tolerated.
- Swearing and foul language of any kind is unacceptable.
- Students may not leave the campus without proper permission.
- With the exception of scientific calculators, students are not permitted to possess electronic devices in the classroom without prior approval. This includes but is not limited to: audio or video players, electronic games, radios, and cell phones.
- Students are not permitted to have cellular phones or other electronic communication devices (ECD) without prior request from their parent/guardian. Parents/guardians may request that their child/student have a cellular phone with them but during school hours the phone will not be allowed to be turned on and should remain in the possession of the student or a school faculty member. If a cell phone is discovered that is not requested by the parent/guardian then the phone will be confiscated. If a cell phone that has been requested by a parent is turned on during school hours then it will be confiscated. All confiscated cell phones must be turned off by the student before handing to the school faculty member. Confiscated cell phones are to remain powered off while in the possession of the school faculty. School faculty reserve the right to permit isolated instances of a student using their cellular phone or

ECD during school hours.

- Appropriate sporting equipment is allowed. All other games, toys and distractions are prohibited unless specifically requested by a teacher.
- No student should assume privacy on campus. The principal may authorize the inspection of student desks, purses, backpacks, bags, lockers, and other personal items. The school cannot assume responsibility for the belongings of students.

Electronic Devices and Responsible Uses

Worcester SDA provides each student in grades 1-8 with access to electronic devices (ie. desktop computers, i-pads, and tablets) to advance their opportunities to learn in a 21st century context. Using these devices is a privilege, and students are expected to maintain a level of responsible use. Students and Parents must sign a “Responsible Use” contract with the school at the start of the school year. The following is a list of expected responsible behaviors for students to engage in when using all devices.

Responsible Use Expectations

- The devices are an educational tool and should be used in that capacity. Students are responsible for taking excellent care and caution in the protection, care, and use of the devices.
- The devices are the property of the Worcester SDA School, and as such, all content (software, e-mail, internet use, etc.) will be monitored. Messages and/or internet content relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.
- The presence of weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, gang-related symbols or activity, or inappropriate images are not allowed on the devices and will result in disciplinary actions.
- Students are expected to notify a teacher whenever they come across information, or messages, that are inappropriate, dangerous, threatening, or make them feel uncomfortable.
- “Cyberbullying” will not be tolerated. Cyberbullying is bullying by use of any electronic communication device (ie. e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, online games, websites, etc.).
- Students should have no expectations of privacy and can expect teachers and administrator to conduct checks of their internet history, documents, etc.
- Passwords should be kept confidential.
- These devices are not to be used for downloading/uploading large files nor viewing (or listening to) non-academic streaming media.

- Internet sharing/hosting services are not allowed.
- The use of built-in cameras are prohibited unless approved by a teacher.
- Students are prohibited from attempting to bypass filters.
- If a device malfunctions, or is in need of a repair, students will not attempt to repair it, but will notify their classroom teacher.
- The identification tags on the devices and cases must remain on the devices at all times.
- Do not mark the bags, cases, or tablets in any way with markers, stickers, etc.
- Do not eat or drink near the devices.
- Do not place items on the keyboards.
- Conduct yourself in a socially acceptable and positive manner at all times when using the devices, the network, and the internet.
- Enjoy the use of these devices and take advantage of the opportunities it offers to enhance your education.

Electronic Devices Responsible Use Violations and Fines

As previously stated, the use of electronic devices is a privilege, not a right. As such, Worcester SDA School reserves the right to discipline, revoke access to the devices, and/or assess fees, as deemed necessary, for any action in violation of the “Responsible Use Contract”.

All technology materials are the property of Worcester SDA School and are checked periodically for damages. If a device, or any connecting pieces, are damaged or missing due to negligence, intentional damage, or multiple occurrences of damage to the devices, the student will be responsible for the total cost of full repair, or replacement. *Please note* In addition to replacement costs, there is an additional fee for educational learning time lost.

Appearance

Students are required to wear the school uniform each day. The following items are approved:

Uniform separates: burgundy polo shirt, short or long sleeved – school logo required
 Navy blue uniform slacks or uniform walking shorts
 Navy blue T-shirt or sweatshirt for PE days only
 Navy blue sweatpants or uniform walking shorts for PE days only

All navy uniform pieces must be SOLID navy blue, no stripes or piping please.

Girls may also choose: (all uniform) skirts, skorts, kilts or jumpers

The uniform companies sell the following items which may be used to supplement the uniform.

Optional items: navy sleeveless fleece jackets, cardigan sweaters, V-neck sweaters and sweater vests. Navy, burgundy or white turtlenecks may be worn under the uniform shirt for added warmth.

Shoes and socks are required at all times. The type of shoes and socks are the parents' choice but must be fully enclosed. Flip-flops and sandals are unacceptable. Items not listed above, including coats and hoodies, should not be worn in the classroom. Any clothing not listed must be under the uniform and unseen at all times. Uniform must be in good repair with no open seams, tears, or marks of any kind.

No makeup or jewelry should be worn.

Graduation

Home & School will be responsible for selecting, ordering, and providing the cake and punch at the reception. All other costs of the reception will be the responsibility of the eighth grade class. Graduate dress code at graduation will be cap and gown. There is a \$25.00 graduation fee.

Parent-Teacher Relationships

The teachers will communicate with parents frequently throughout the year to keep you aware of your child's progress. In addition, a parent is always welcome to contact the school for information, to share ideas, or request a conference. Parental involvement is critical to the success of the school. Should a problem ever arise between a parent and the teacher, the following steps should be taken in the order listed below:

1. The parent should first talk with the teacher involved and attempt to resolve any problem on an informal basis.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parent then asks the principal to help resolve the problem on an informal basis. (Move to the next step in cases where the teacher involved is also the principal).
3. If the problem is still not resolved the parent then contacts the school board chairperson who will attempt to resolve the problem on an informal basis.
4. If the problem is still not resolved the chairperson will meet with the school board's executive committee or the full board. When such a meeting takes place, the conference superintendent of education must be informed of a potential problem.
5. If the problem is still not resolved the parent then contacts the conference superintendent of

education and explains the problem in writing. The superintendent of education then attempts to resolve the problem with the parent, teacher, principal, and school board chairperson.

6. If the parent is not satisfied with the results of the preceding steps, the matter will be referred to the conference K-12 board, or its duly appointed body which deals with such matters. Their decision will be considered final.

In the event that a parent or other party appears before the school board, the protocol is as follows. The guest party will present their case as a monologue to the school board and specify what the issue is and what they are requesting. The school board members may ask questions at any time during the proceedings. Once the matter has been stated and the school board members have no further questions, the matter will be discussed by the school board members in an executive session. No parties other than the school board will be part of the deliberation of the matter. The decision of the school board will then be communicated to the guest party by a representative of the school board.

General Information

Illness Guidelines –

If a student has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, has vomited, or has diarrhea, the parent will be called to come and pick up the child. Do NOT send a child to school that has shown these symptoms within the last 24 hours prior to arriving at school.

Prescription Medications - Medications that have been prescribed by a physician and must be taken by the student during the school day must be brought to the attention of the principal and the parent/guardian must provide the school with:

1. A written statement from the physician detailing the time schedule for dispensing the medicine, the amount, and method by which such medication is to be dispensed.
2. Written consent from the parent or guardian requesting the school oversee the proper implementation of the instructions of the physician.
3. The medication must be delivered to the school by the parent or guardian in the original container bearing the pharmacy label.

Non-prescription medications

- In accordance with applicable law, over the counter drugs (such as Tylenol, etc.) may be taken with written permission from the physician.
- If sunscreen or insect repellent are used they must be provided by the parent/guardian and administered by the student.

Phone Calls

During school hours the teachers often cannot answer the phone so an answering machine will take messages. Messages are checked frequently but most calls will not be returned until after school hours. Students may make out-going calls with permission.

Progress Reports

Student grade reports are issued four times a year. Parent / Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of first and third quarters and arrangements are made by the teacher. A teacher may schedule additional meetings as necessary for a variety of situations. Parents may always request to meet with a teacher or principal.

Supplies

Students are required to bring their own school supplies as listed by their teacher. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to ensure they have supplies throughout the year. Any supplies needed but not on the list of supplies will be provided by the school. Parents will be notified each time a student doesn't have the necessary items for class. The school reserves the right to send a child home and/or ask that they not return to school until they have all necessary materials.

Visiting

Parents are always welcome at the school. Appointments are preferred if possible. Our school building is secured and has an alarm system. If, at any time a parent needs to speak with a student, drop something off, or take the student off campus, access is available by ringing the buzzer on the south side of the building by the first set of double glass doors. Please don't be offended if someone who doesn't recognize you requests identification.

Student Records

This school is a private religious school that does not accept federal funds. As such, it is not subject to the provisions of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, your records will only be readily available and accessible to authorized personnel, the student, or the parent/guardian.

Asbestos Notification

The school facility contains non-friable asbestos. The inspection management plan for Asbestos-Containing-Building-Materials (ACBM) required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) has been performed for this school. The management plan has been submitted to the state for review and approval. A copy is on file at the school office and is available for public inspection upon reasonable notice. If desired, a copy of the plan may be obtained upon payment of a reasonable reproduction cost.

Please feel free to contact the school with any questions you have.

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Responsibility Statement

It is the responsibility of the parents and students to be familiar with the handbook and comply with its requirements. Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes made during the school year.