Dear Parents/Guardians of WRHS Student(s) in Grades 10, 11, and 12:

I hope the summer break has found all of our students rested and prepared for another great year at Wachusett. I will continue to strive to make this the best place possible for all of our students to excel both in and out of the classroom. I am writing this note to welcome everyone, as well as review some of the policies and procedures that will help us maintain a safe and productive environment here at Wachusett.

This year all Wachusett students will report to school on Tuesday, August 27. Upon arrival, students in grades 10, 11, and 12 should report to their homeroom. Homeroom assignments may be found on PowerSchool or on lists that will be posted in the cafeteria and outside the Guidance Office on the first day of school. Please be sure to check as your homeroom may have changed.

Activity period will take place most every Tuesday after period 2. The focus of activity period will vary from week to week, but this will be time for class meetings, clubs, student extra help, make-up time, etc. Once again, senior mentors will be assigned to freshmen homerooms in order to facilitate discussions and offer support.

WRHS is committed to the District’s Nutrition and Wellness Policy. There are five lunch stations. Each station’s main entrée is served as a complete meal, which includes a choice of fruit, vegetable and milk. Available at all serving lines are chips, cookies, and drinks for an additional cost. We offer a complete breakfast that meets the USDA guidelines and includes a hot meal and other items such as bagels, cereal, yogurt, fruit, and other healthy items. Breakfast is served before school beginning at 7:00 a.m. The breakfast price is $2.50; reduced price is 30¢. The daily lunch price is $3.50 and reduced-price lunch is 40¢. Milk can be purchased separately for 60¢. Check pre-payments for lunches are accepted and encouraged, simply place the student(s)’ name(s) and identification number(s) on the check payable to WRSD Cafeteria, and of course you may still use cash. We also offer an online pre-payment system, for more information go to www.wrsd.net/foodservices. Any advance payments will be deposited into the student’s account. At lunch students simply pick up their meal, punch in their ID number on the keypad, or scan their Student ID card and the money will be subtracted from their account. We do not allow students to buy lunches for their friends with their accounts. Students may make a deposit anytime during the day but we encourage this before school. The amount of the pre-payment deposit is entirely up to you; it can range from one day to a month, even a year. If you wish, students may also purchase snacks using this system. Students are allowed two (2) IOUs or up to $7.00 for meals unless there is an agreement made between the student and cafeteria manager for payment of the IOU. There are no IOUs for à la carte items. The cafeteria manager can be reached at the high school at 508-829-6771, ext. 1602. Any student approved for free or reduced-price lunch is automatically programmed into the system preventing peer identification. The Free/Reduced Lunch application is available on the district’s website at www.wrsd.net/foodservices or at the main office.
We encourage all families in need of assistance to apply at any time during the year. For more information, please call Food Services at the Central Office 508-829-1670, ext. 278.

We will continue with mid-morning nutrition breaks beginning on Thursday, August 29. An additional five minutes is added to period three each day for morning announcements and during this time students will be able to have a quick snack. We ask that students bring healthy snacks such as granola bars, fruit, etc., in order to maximize the desired effect of this snack break. Any student that wishes to have a snack must bring it with them to period three for they will not be allowed to leave class to get one. Also, some classrooms do not lend themselves to a safe eating environment such as science labs, physical education, etc. At anytime an individual class or school may lose this privilege entirely if high standards of cleanliness or order are not maintained.

O'Connor Studios will be here on August 28, 29 & 30, to take students' photos. O'Connor Studios will be sending order forms directly to your home so that you may order portraits if you choose. ALL students must be photographed for their student ID—there is no fee. However, students who lose their ID or fail to have their photo taken will be charged a $5 processing fee.

We ask that parents complete the emergency card that will be given to your son/daughter on the first day of school and have them returned to their homeroom teacher on the second day of school.

The Wachusett Regional School District takes all reasonable precautions to preserve the confidentiality of student's records. According to federal law, the District is required to release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning for recruitment and scholarship purposes upon their request and without prior consent. Parents and eligible students have the right to request that this information not be released without their consent by notifying their school building office in writing. If you wish to exercise your right to "opt out," please complete the form provided on our website www.wrsd.net/wrhs. If the form was submitted in prior years, it will remain in effect until the student graduates.

Student Accident Medical Insurance Protection — Applications are available online at wrsd.net/wrhs for those families that are interested.

Athletics/Fall Sports – Students must register online prior to tryouts. All information regarding registration and tryouts can be found on the high school website at www.wrsd.net/wrhs/fallsports.cfm.

Student use of personal electronic equipment (i.e., cell phones, iPods, headphones/earbuds, wearable technology etc.) will be allowed with restrictions during the school day. Starting with the 2019-2020 school year all WRHS students will be issued a school owned chromebook for use for the entire school year. As a result, students will be required to bring these devices to school, fully charged, on a daily basis and will not be allowed to use their own computer, chromebooks, etc during classroom and other academic time. Students will be allowed to use devices and/or make phone calls prior to the start of school. At 7:27 a.m. ALL devices need to be put away without exception. Additionally, at no point after the warning bell to start school will a student be permitted to make a phone call during the school day until the last bell at 2:10 p.m. If a student has an emergency need to make a phone call, please report to an administrative or counseling office to gain permission to do so. The uses of electronic devices are permitted before the warning bell to start school at 7:27 a.m., after the last bell at 2:10 p.m., or during study halls (excluding phone calls). A teacher may seek approval from administration to allow the use of non computer or tablet electronic devices in their classroom but students should assume that it is not allowed unless explicitly stated by the teacher. Use of any electronic device is also not permitted in the hallways during the school day or in detention hall. If devices are visible or being used during the times they are not permitted, it will result in the device being confiscated, requiring parent pick-up and consequences to be issued in accordance with the Student Management Code. Failure to turn over electronic devices when requested by a staff and/or
faculty member will result in additional disciplinary action. Administration reserves the right to search electronic devices given reasonable suspicion of illicit activity. Wachusett Regional High School assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

We will continue to limit dismissals to emergencies that students and families need to attend to or for appointments that cannot be made at any other time but during school hours. Students who are dismissed must bring a note from their parent/guardian indicating their full name, grade, the date/time, phone number and reason for dismissal to the main office before school. Try to avoid dismissals during school hours. Phone dismissals are not allowed. There will be no dismissals during long block (lunch) that include returning to school that day unless the dismissal is for a documented medical or legal appointment. The class administrator will verify all such dismissals. (The only exception is that seniors may apply for Early Dismissal if they have no classes scheduled during long block and the following period.) Please note that the attendance code will be strictly enforced and the only absences that are excused from class are bereavement, religious holidays, documented chronic medical conditions, documented college visits, court dates and school-sponsored field trips and events.

I would ask that parents take notice of what their children are wearing to school. Items that the Administration feels are a detriment to the school environment or are dangerous will not be permitted. These items include, but are not limited to, any garment that may depict illegal substances or criminal activities, tops without straps or backs or that reveal midriffs, and no visible underwear. We will allow hooded sweatshirts but will insist that students do not have hoods on during school hours. We will also not allow sunglasses to be worn during the school day. If your child is wearing something inappropriate, they will be given the opportunity to secure something that is appropriate or the school may lend them something to wear. If arrangements cannot be made, then a parent will be notified and they may bring different attire to the student or the child will have to be sent home.

At Wachusett Regional High School we try to follow the norms of polite society. We do not allow students to use cell phones in hallways or classrooms without teacher direction. We encourage debate and consideration for others. And we work to create an atmosphere that encourages learning.

These ideals are embedded in our core values of citizenship and responsibility. We want our students to realize that coming to school, just as going to any public venue, requires consideration of the conventions and norms of society and consideration for other people. That said, we believe students should develop the responsibility to understand that coming to school, or going to any public place, requires people to follow the conventions of society. We ask your help in making sure students understand that proper clothing for school is different than proper clothing for a casual outing with friends. We further believe that an expectation that exceeds the casual “hangout” norms will help to promote an appropriate learning environment within our school community. Your support is much appreciated.

The responsibility of the school to provide a safe environment for all students is one that we take very seriously. We will continue to address all cases of bullying and harassment as prescribed by Wachusett Regional School District Policy. We ask that parents and students report to administration any incident where a child has felt bullied or harassed. We will investigate all complaints and when appropriate will issue consequences prescribed by the Student Management Code to any and all offenders.

In response to health concerns, as well as to comply with state law, students will not be allowed to smoke in school, on school grounds, or at school activities with or without parental permission. As part of the Disciplinary Code (see Student Handbook) to enforce this No Smoking Policy, Wachusett has stiff disciplinary rules and consequences and may include a fine from the Holden Police Department. In accordance with state laws, there is NO SMOKING in the building or on school grounds by anyone at anytime. This includes the prohibition of using any nicotine delivery devices.

Letter from the principal 8/2019
Starting August 12, parental access to PowerSchool will be available via the high school website to sign off on the student handbook and check bus schedules. Parents can use last year’s access code to initially view schedules beginning on August 19, and to monitor their children’s assignments and grades during the school year. Please refer to the website for an explanation of what parents can expect teachers to post on PowerSchool, as well as protocol to address any difficulties. If you do not have an access code, please contact the high school guidance department.

There are many opportunities for parents to assist directly in the life of Wachusett. The Mountaineer Booster Club is extremely active in supporting Wachusett's extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletic programs and can use your talents, time, and contributions to further their endeavors. TEMPO is the parent group that actively supports Wachusett's exemplary Music Education Program, and UPSTAGE provides similar support to our Theater Arts Program.

Also, feel free to contact your child’s guidance counselor, teacher, or administrator as needed. I can be reached at william_beando@wrsd.net, check our school website regularly for information and please follow on our Twitter account @wachusettbeando and on Facebook at Wachusett Regional High School.

Lastly, as many of you know, there is no late bus transportation. We will still hold detentions from 2:20-3:20 p.m., Monday through Thursday afternoons, along with a great variety of after-school clubs and athletics. Participation in extracurricular activities after school is a great way for students to get involved and build relationships with their peers. We have wonderful opportunities for all of our students. However, we ask that any student staying after school for one of the many organized activities to please arrange transportation home after the conclusion of the activity. Any student that is in the building after school hours and is unsupervised should wait in either the cafeteria or outside of the building near the gym entrance or main office entrance. Any students found loitering elsewhere or hanging around without reason will be asked to leave the building and further consequences may be issued by administration.

Clearly, the way to have the most possible success in educating "our" students will be to work together in a partnership. I am writing to you as parents and guardians to ask your support of our policies at Wachusett Regional High School.

I look forward to the upcoming school year and watching your children grow into the finest young adults we all know they can be.

Very truly yours,

Bill Beando

Principal

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