

# WORCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

## 1986-87 SCHOOL CALENDAR

September 2	First Day of School for Pupils
November 6	School Closed - Reporting, Records, and Parent Conferences
November 7	MSTA Convention - Schools Closed
November 27-28	Thanksgiving Holidays - Schools Closed
December 24-January 2	Christmas Holidays - Schools Closed
January 5	Schools reopen after Christmas Holidays
January 19	Martin Luther King's Birthday Observed - Schools Closed
January 23	Schools Closed - Reporting, Records, and Parent Conferences
January 26	Schools Closed - Teacher Inservice
February 16	Washington's Birthday Observed - Schools Closed
March 27	Schools Closed - Reporting, Records, and Parent Conferences
April 16-21	Easter Holidays - Schools Closed
May 25	Memorial Day Observed - Schools Closed
May 31	Services for Graduates
June 1	Graduation Exercises
June 10	Last Day for Pupils
June 11	Last Day for Teachers

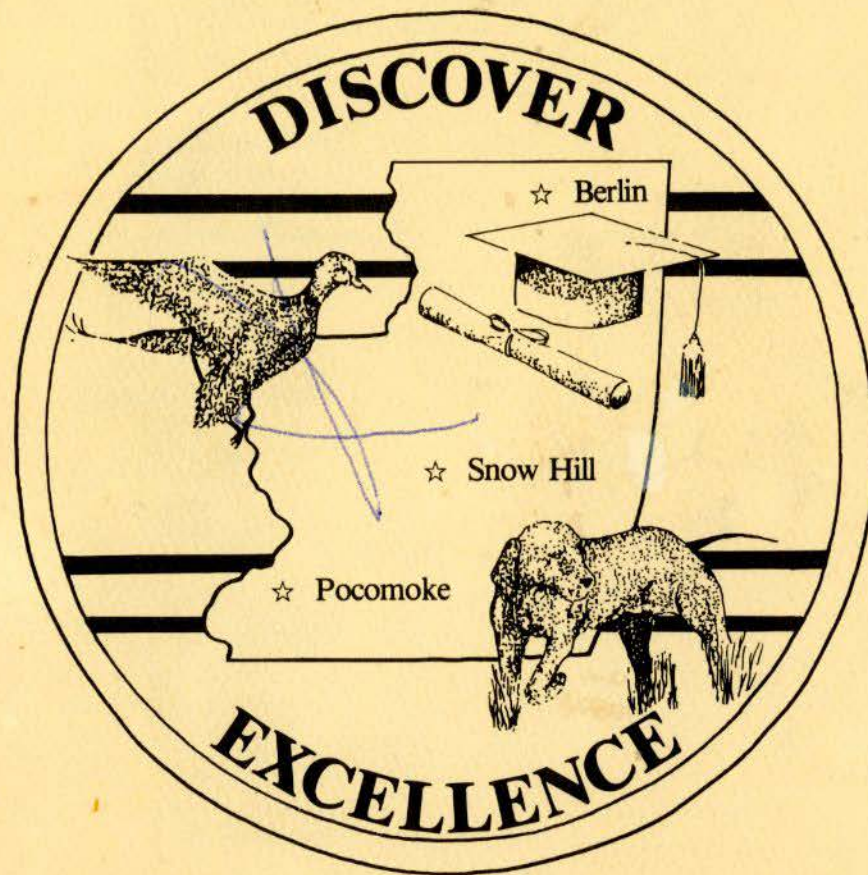
### INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of poor weather conditions, you may learn of school closings or delayed openings by tuning into the local radio and television stations beginning at 6:30 a.m. If you do not hear an announcement, schools will be open on time. **PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE THE SCHOOL.** In the event of inclement weather, January 19 will be the first make-up day, and February 16 the second. Additional make-up days will be added in June.

### MARKING PERIODS

Marking Periods End: November 6 (47 days); January 23 (43 days); March 27 (42 days); June 10 (48 days).

# THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS



Worcester County Public Schools  
1986 - 1987



# THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF WORCESTER COUNTY

1986-87

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## **WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The residents of Worcester County have much of which to be proud. Foremost, it is the only Maryland County bordering the Atlantic Ocean. Because of this location, the beaches and saltwater fishing have attracted visitors to the resorts of Ocean City and Assateague. The lush forests and the Pocomoke River provide exciting opportunities for hiking, camping, hunting and freshwater sports. Travelers going through Worcester County pass vast agricultural areas that serve as both home and vocation to many of the residents. Major businesses and activities center around three geographic regions: Berlin/Ocean City to the north; Pocomoke to the south; and the centrally located county seat of Snow Hill.

Situated within these three regions are the Worcester County Public Schools. Citizens can indeed be proud of the quality programs of instruction which are provided to meet the needs of all residents. Approximately 5,200 (K-12) students receive instruction on a daily basis in one of the 13 county schools. These modern, comfortable schools provide students with the most current facilities and materials available.

Worcester County's Public Schools have been recognized statewide as a most progressive and competent system. Because the professional staff provide instructional activities that reflect sound educational practices, students of Worcester County consistently achieve beyond the state and national averages on standardized tests. In addition, the number of individual students receiving academic recognition further testifies to the excellence of Worcester County Schools.

The public schools of Worcester County have been recognized for their progressive attitude and implementation of excellence in all areas of the educational process. And yet, the county is small enough to provide individuality and personal service to each student. You have many reasons to be proud that your child is a part of the Worcester County Public School System.

Worcester County is proud of its excellence in education, recreation, and agriculture.



## THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Worcester County incorporated the middle school concept into its educational delivery system with the construction of three modern facilities in 1970. The County was once again in the forefront of educational practice by recognizing the unique needs of the middle school age child. Since then, educational studies have consistently documented the importance of this middle school concept. Instructional techniques and social practices of both the elementary and high school programs are utilized for the rapidly growing child. The middle school student is provided instruction that expands the basic skills and concepts developed in elementary school as well as providing instructional activities that develop specialized skills in the academic and special subject areas. The middle schools of Worcester County continuously assess their performance and implement those instructional strategies and curricula that will meet the student's present and future needs.

The three Worcester County middle schools are geographically placed within the larger populated areas. This placement provides easy access and flow between the elementary and high schools and allows for identity within the community.

### Berlin Middle School

Students that have completed the fifth grade at one of the three elementary schools in the northern end of the county, Buckingham, Ocean City, or Showell, report to Berlin Middle for the sixth grade. Instructional activities are provided for the approximately 580 students in grades six through eight. Upon completion of the eighth grade, students enter Stephen Decatur High School in Berlin, Maryland.

### Pocomoke Middle School

Enrollment at this middle school is comprised of students in grades four through eight. Approximately 460 students attend classes daily in the comprehensive facility. Students from Pocomoke Elementary enter this middle school as fourth graders and leave to enter Pocomoke High School as ninth graders.

### Snow Hill Middle School

This school is within walking distance of both the elementary and high schools in Snow Hill, Maryland. Approximately 440 students in grades 4-8 attend this centrally located middle school.

The Worcester County middle schools are meeting the educational and social needs of all the students. Students and the educational staff work together within these modern, well-maintained structures. The middle school atmosphere provides a quality education to each child within a pleasant, safe environment.

## THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Students in the fourth and fifth grades at Pocomoke and Snow Hill Middle Schools spend most of the day with one teacher. This teacher provides instruction in reading, language arts, science, math, and social studies. The instructional procedures employed are similar to those experienced at the elementary school level. Music and physical education instruction are provided by a teacher specializing in that area. Students and teachers at these schools find the fourth and fifth grades to be an important transition period from elementary to middle school practices.

The school day for all sixth, seventh and eighth grade Worcester County students consists of scheduled periods of instruction from teachers specializing in that subject. The sixth graders find this changing of classes to be an exciting new experience. Not only does the middle school student develop new social skills, the child is being provided a solid instructional base. The Worcester County middle schools have developed and implemented curricula that will challenge each student and prepare the child for high school. The three Worcester County middle schools provide all students with daily instruction in the subjects of reading, social studies, math, language arts, and science. The school day may be completed with instructional activities in physical education, music, art, home arts, and industrial arts.

### HOMEWORK

Home assignments are an essential part of the schooling process. Students are, therefore, assigned homework which will reinforce classroom learning. The assignment may be thirty to forty-five minutes in length. Some evenings students will need additional time as when preparing for a test or special project. Evening review of the day's learning is critical for the retention of the newly acquired material. Parents can provide incentive to their child by offering words of encouragement and praise.

### GRADING STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

The 180 day school year is divided into four marking terms. At the end of each nine week term, your student will receive a report card for each subject. The grade card will provide you with an assessment of your student's performance that term. Students in grades four and five receive letter grades of: E (excellent); G (good); S (satisfactory); or U (unsatisfactory) for academic subjects. Written comments concerning progress in the special areas are made by those teachers. Students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades earn letter grades in the academic subjects based upon a percentage assessment. These letter grades are assigned as follows:

90-100%	A	Superior achievement
80-89%	B	Good achievement
70-79%	C	Average achievement
60-69%	D	Poor achievement
59% or less	F	Failing work



In addition, the letter grades of S (satisfactory work) and U (unsatisfactory work) are used to denote performance in non-academic subjects.

Your child will also receive an assessment on how well he or she is working in accordance with his/her ability. Each report card contains an area on which the teacher and/or parent may write comments concerning the child's progress. This area may also be used to indicate your request for a conference.

Report cards are sent home each term in an attendance folder. This folder will contain the record of the child's attendance for each marking term. Parents should take care to sign all report cards as well as the attendance folder.

## **SCHOLASTIC RECOGNITION**

Each middle school offers recognition to those students who demonstrate excellence in academic achievement. Students in the fourth and fifth grades will receive special academic recognition when they have achieved the letter grade of G (good) or E (excellent) in each academic subject. Middle school students in grades six through eight are given special recognition when they have attained the letter grade of B (good) or A (superior) in all academic subjects and the letter grade of S (satisfactory) in each of the exploratory subjects.

The three middle schools also participate in the Presidential Academic Fitness Award. Students that have attained a B+ average in the middle school and have placed at or above the 80th percentile on any nationally recognized standardized achievement test battery are honored with this prestigious award.

## **COMPUTER AWARENESS**

Students in Worcester County are introduced to the computer through a variety of "hands-on" activities. At the middle school level computers may be used in classroom activities to extend and further develop skills introduced by the teacher. Or, a computer center approach may be used. Often a combination of the two techniques are implemented. In addition, students complete writing assignments utilizing word processing programs.

## **JUNIOR GREAT BOOKS**

For the student desiring enrichment experiences in reading, the Junior Great Books program provides opportunities to survey a number of contemporary writers. Through interaction with trained parent volunteers, students interpretively read and discuss the literary selections.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Each of the three middle schools has developed programs for students displaying a particular academic strength or talent. These programs provide for the continuation of the challenge and enrichment activities begun in the elementary schools. The opportunities for the gifted and talented student extends into, and expands during the summer months. Challenging activities are provided to the middle school students in the areas of creative

problem solving, archeology, microcomputers, creative arts, foreign language, and drama. Throughout each of these programs are the unifying strands of creative thinking and problem solving. Students are encouraged to develop research skills which will permit them to analyze and formulate their own solution to a problem.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The middle schools of Worcester County have developed programs of instruction for those students who learn best through an individualized educational program. The program goals, developed cooperatively by parents and teachers, provide for intense instruction at the student's level. As the student moves through the program, careful monitoring of progress is maintained so that the goals may be constantly reviewed and updated.

## **FILM FESTIVAL**

The spacious and well equipped media center becomes the focal point of the film festival each year. Middle school students utilize the media center's resources to acquire the skills and techniques necessary to create, develop, and produce an audiovisual presentation. The student projects are judged during the countywide competition in the spring. Winning entries are then presented at the state level. Worcester County students have garnered numerous awards at the state level of competition.

## **OLYMPICS OF THE MIND**

Olympics of the Mind is a creative problem solving competition. Teams of five to seven students compete by developing solutions to a published problem. Over a several month period, students collectively work on the development and construction of props and script which are necessary to present their solution. During the day of competition, the teams are further challenged by having to compete in an unrehearsed problem solving activity. Teams from Worcester County have finished first in regional and state competition. And, several teams have gone on to compete and place in the World Finals.

## **SCIENCE FAIR**

Students of Worcester County middle schools are encouraged to complete an independent scientific investigation using the proper steps which are learned in class. The students' projects are judged on the scientific merits at each school. The top entries then compete in a countywide science fair.

## **MARINE SCIENCE CONSORTIUM**

Each spring, middle school science students have the opportunity to experience the surrounding coastal environment. Through a program of Marine Biology done in cooperation with the Virginia Marine Science Consortium, students participate in an extensive three day "living" laboratory. This program affords the students the chance to receive classroom instruction, examine live specimens in a laboratory situation, and to take part in actual field experiences. A major goal for students is to develop an understanding and appreciation for the environment in which they live.



## SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The middle schools of Worcester County encourage students to participate in a variety of activities designed to assist their social and physical development.

### STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Through participation in the Student Government Association, students are introduced to the procedures of a democratically run organization.

### WATER SAFETY PROGRAM

Students in the sixth grade attend a water safety program conducted at the therapy pool in Cedar Chapel Special School in Snow Hill. This is an important program for the children due to the influence which nearby bodies of water have on recreation and employment in Worcester County.

### ASSEMBLIES

In order to enrich and extend classroom learnings, various assemblies are held throughout the school year. Many of these are school-wide, but a few are held for selected grades. This decision is made according to the content of the assembly and needs of students. These assemblies provide the child with exposure to a variety of presentations in the areas of music, fine arts, drama and dance.

Other assemblies are organized to allow students to demonstrate skills and understandings which have been developed within the classroom.

### ORATORICAL CONTEST

In cooperation with the Worcester County Public Schools, the Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club sponsors a county oratorical contest. Open to all students, the child must write and present a speech of three to five minutes on a given topic.

### INTRA-MURAL SPORTS

The middle schools provide a diversified program of physical education. Students are exposed to a number of sports and competition is held within the school. The middle schools of Worcester County do not participate in competitive sports between schools.

### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Most school activities are conducted during the school day. There are, however, programs that are provided to students after the school day. These are, however, usually designed around the specific interests and needs of the particular middle school. Some programs included are: computers, foreign language, cheerleading, drama, and photography.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### GUIDANCE

Guidance services in the middle school are quite extensive. Each middle school has a certified counselor who has been trained to assist the middle school aged child. This assistance may vary from discussing issues about which the child may be concerned to planning their ninth grade schedule.

Each spring the guidance department also assumes the responsibility of orienting those students who are entering the middle school in September and assist the high school counselors in a similar program for outgoing eighth graders. This is done to ensure a smoother transition from one school to the next.

In addition, the counselors are responsible for career education within the school, permanent record-keeping, and the registration of new students.

### SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

There is a certified psychologist available to each of the Worcester County middle schools. He/she may be called upon from time to time to evaluate student's needs on an individual basis. Following this evaluation, the school psychologist meets with parents and teachers to explain the results. Together, a program of instruction is developed which will assist the student in improving his/her academic performance.

### STANDARDIZED TESTS

In order to provide the best possible education to the students of Worcester County, various standardized tests are administered each year. The results of these tests provide teachers and parents valuable information about students. These insights are then used to develop a better educational program for each child. These test results become a part of the student's confidential permanent records and are shared with parents.

The Worcester County middle school testing schedule is:

Grade	Name of Test	Measures
4	California Achievement Test	Basic Skills
5	California Achievement Test	Basic Skills
8	California Achievement Test	Basic Skills
8	The Test of Cognitive Skills	Aptitude for Basic Skills

### PROJECT BASIC

The Maryland Department of Education has developed what it believes to be critical information and skills that a Maryland high school graduate must have in order to be successful in life. This program further assures parents that their child has reached that level in the areas of reading, mathematics, writing, and citizenship. The Worcester County school system has developed an on-going assessment procedure to measure the progress of students in these areas. In the middle schools, tests are given periodically to



determine the needs of the students. Using these results, each middle school develops its own program of instruction to further develop these basic competencies. The schedule for Project Basic Testing in Worcester County middle schools is as follows:

Grade	Area
4	Reading, Math, Writing
5	Reading, Math, Writing
7	Reading, Math, Writing
8	Math, Citizenship

## **HEALTH**

Worcester County middle schools share the services of registered nurses with the elementary schools each day. Should a child become ill during the school day, he/she may rest in the modern facilities until parents arrive. This area is under constant adult supervision. In addition to the screening of vision, hearing, and scoliosis, the school nurse teaches a unit to all middle school students concerning human growth and development.

## **THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY**

### **PARENT ADVISORY BOARD**

Each year a group of parents are selected from each Worcester County middle school to serve as an Advisory Board for that school. Together, this board and the school work to develop school goals, promote the school and its educational activities, and develop community participation within the school. The advisory board listens to parents and teachers in order to make recommendations for equipment, materials of instruction, and other concerns that will further develop the educational quality of that school.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

Parent-Teacher Associations are a vital part of the middle schools in Worcester County. This group meets in each school regularly to discuss progress and needs of their individual school. The P.T.A. provides more than a dialogue between school and community. It is a support group for staff and students. Members work hard to raise funds which provide many of the "extras" Worcester County students enjoy. Teachers, too, reap the benefits of this group on such occasions as "Teacher Appreciation Day."

Following business meetings of the P.T.A., parents may meet with teachers to discuss the progress of their child.

### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The middle schools of Worcester County believe that community members offer a valuable resource to students. Each year, therefore, these schools are reaching out into the community to find those persons dedicated to volunteering their time and talents to help. At times this help is in the classroom providing additional reinforcement of a skill. Some volunteers bring unique experiences and/or artifacts to share with the students. Others can only offer a few minutes a week to help a teacher. Whatever the volunteer brings, however, it enriches the lives of Worcester County students.

## **STANDARDS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

The Board of Education of Worcester County has the responsibility of providing an educational program that will enhance each student's opportunity to develop his potential to the fullest extent. In order to realize this goal, each student has a right to a free public education as long as this right is exercised in concert with the rules and regulations of the school and does not hinder other students' progress in pursuing a meaningful educational program.

It is the Board of Education's position that a clearly defined set of established rules and regulations governing academic and social behavior will be beneficial to the progress of all students who are actively pursuing a quality education in Worcester County Public Schools.

The rules and regulations herein established to govern the academic and social behavior of students enrolled in the Worcester County Public Schools shall be applicable to all students attending the various schools and shall be enforced on a just and equal basis without regard for the student's sex, race, religion, creed, social standing, family background, economic position, political affiliation, or handicapping conditions.

## **STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR**

Much like the elementary school, students will move with their age group from one grade to another. Under this arrangement, the curriculum will reflect a program that is commensurate with the pupil's ability. On occasion, because of poor attendance or refusal to complete work assigned, a student may be held in a grade more than one year. Even though a pupil generally moves from one grade to another, this should not imply that a student successfully completes (passes) a course. It only means that the student is placed with his age group.

Students who do not meet the goals or standards that are commensurate with their ability shall not be graded as passing in their courses even though they may be moved to a higher grade.

## **STANDARDS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Universal education is so valued that state governments have made school attendance throughout the United States compulsory. Thus, education is not only a right and a privilege, but also an obligation. It is therefore, the responsibility of parents to send their children to school and to encourage them to obtain maximum benefits from such schooling. Students have the responsibility to attend regularly scheduled classes and to follow those local school rules affecting tardiness and the day-to-day operation of the school. Each student also has a responsibility to use his own abilities and talents to gain optimum learning benefits from the school and to refrain from interfering with the education of others. (Appendix D, #1)



Each child residing in Worcester County who is between the ages of 6 and 16 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year. Appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed and implemented by the Superintendent and his staff to ensure regular student attendance. (Appendix D, #2)

## ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

Education requires a continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences and study in order to reach the maximum educational benefit for each student. The regular interactions of pupils with one another in the classroom, and their participation in well-planned instructional activities under the direction of a good teacher, are essential for learning to be meaningful and effective. Poor attendance hinders the learning process. Students who are absent for unnecessary reasons learn poor attendance habits. In many cases, poor attendance habits learned in school stay with individuals as they enter the work force. For these reasons, the Worcester County Board of Education believes it is very important to insist on good attendance.

The following reasons are listed by the Maryland State Department of Education as "Lawful Causes of Absence":

1. Death in immediate family
2. Illness of a child (The principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parent or guardian of a child reported continuously absent for illness.)
3. Quarantine
4. Court summons
5. Physical incapacity
6. Mental incapacity
7. Violent storms
8. Work or activity accepted by school authorities
9. Observance of religious holidays
10. State emergency

The following reasons are listed as "Other Causes of Absences" (excused or unexcused - determination by the principal) by the Maryland State Department of Education:

1. Indifference of parents
2. Indifference of pupil
3. Uncertified illness of pupil
4. Illness in family
5. Poverty
6. Illegal employment
7. Truancy
8. Suspension
9. Lack of authorized transportation

The principal or vice-principal will consult with the student and the student's parents or guardians when determining whether or not a student's absence shall be excused or unexcused in view of the reasons listed above.

The Worcester County Board of Education has adopted the following guidelines on the relationship between absences and make-up work:

1. Classes missed due to trips such as band, athletic, etc. authorized by the principal, shall be excused. Students must assume the responsibility for making up the missed work.
2. Classroom make-up work for excused absences must be submitted to the teacher within one week (five school days) after the student returns to class. The principal or vice-principal may accept other make-up plans for long term absence due to unusual circumstances.
3. Shopwork, laboratory exercises, and participation in class discussion or group work that cannot be made up should not be held against the student unless the student has been absent so often that a meaningful and effective learning experience has not occurred.
4. Students should be encouraged to complete make-up work, however, work missed during days that are **determined to be unexcused** cannot be made up for credit. (Appendix D, #3)
5. Parents or legal guardians wishing to take their child out of school for a family trip must submit their intention, in writing, to the building principal. This request will be forwarded to the superintendent for consideration. If the trip may be demonstrated to be of educational value, the absence will be treated as lawful (excused), **family trips not meeting this requirement will be considered as unexcused**, and work missed cannot be made up.

## ATTENDANCE AND GRADING

For a given subject or course, five unexcused absences during any one grading period shall result in a failing grade. Unexcused absences shall be interpreted as meaning truant, class-cutting or any other absence from school or class that has not been authorized by the local school administration or the Superintendent of Schools. The principal may waive this requirement if the student's subsequent conduct and achievement warrants. (Appendix D, #4)

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Each student has a right to an education and any disciplinary measure that deprives him of his right must be applied with great discretion. Disciplinary actions of administrators and teachers shall be fair and appropriate.

The maintenance of discipline in the schools is essential to an effective learning climate and is the responsibility of teachers and administrators. Regulations and rules concerning appropriate student behavior other than those mandated by state laws, bylaw, or county Board of Education policy may be formulated on a countywide basis or at the local school level, and such regulations should be clearly and precisely written and disseminated.

The courts have consistently maintained that young people in the United States have the right to receive a free public education, and the deprivation of the right may occur only for just cause and in accordance with due process of law. (Appendix D, #5)



Accordingly, the Worcester County Board of Education has adopted the following expectations and procedures for school personnel to apply when confronted with specific unacceptable social behavior.

It is the obligation of teachers to provide a setting that is conducive to learning on the part of the student and to possess the management skills necessary to maintain order in the classroom in particular and the school in general.

After a teacher has exhausted good management techniques, and a pupil continues to be disruptive to the orderly educational progress of others or poses a danger in the classroom, he should be referred to the administration by utilizing proper channels established within the school.

The Board of Education affirms that all students enrolled in the middle schools are expected to practice standards of accepted behavior and under no circumstances shall behavior that is disruptive to others be tolerated.

Students who disrupt the orderly educational progress of others must be dealt with in a positive and firm manner at the school level. The Worcester County Board of Education has outlined procedures within three categories to insure the rights of due process.

#### **Minor Infractions**

To maintain the orderly administration of the school, minor infractions of school discipline may be handled in a summary fashion providing that the student is informed of the nature of the infraction with which he/she is charged. Some positive methods of working with the student include student conferences, school-parent conferences, parent conferences, and program modification.

If a student's conduct necessitates his being removed from class pending a parent conference, that conference shall be scheduled at a time agreeable to both parties and as early as possible. A temporary removal from class does not constitute a formal suspension, unless it is specifically designated in writing by the principal. As a last resort, corporal punishment by the principal may be utilized. All punishment should be consistent with the *Public School Laws of Maryland* and the policies and procedures established by the Worcester County Board of Education.

#### **Suspension for Five Days or Less**

"The principal of every public school in Maryland, in accordance with the rules of the county board of education, shall have the right to suspend temporarily, for cause, any pupil in the school under the direction of said principal for a period of not more than five school days, provided, however, that the pupil, parent or guardian shall be given a conference promptly with the principal and appropriate personnel during the suspension period." (Appendix 4, #6)

When the in-school procedures for maintaining behavior have been completely exhausted or a particular incident is of a major consequence, the principal may exercise his option of suspension. The Worcester County Board of Education has determined that the administrator should proceed as follows:

#### **Causes for Automatic Suspension**

1. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
2. Destruction of school or personal property
3. Stealing
4. Extortion
5. Intoxication or impairment from alcohol or drugs

#### **Other Causes for Suspensions**

1. Persistent misconduct
2. Habitual tardiness or skipping class
3. Fighting
4. Threatening (another person)
5. Profanity
6. Possession of a weapon
7. Smoking
8. Conduct which constitutes a crime under the law
9. Conduct which is determined to be detrimental or disruptive to the efficient operation of the school.

Before a student has been suspended, the school administrator must have a conference with the pupil to hear his interpretation of the situation and base his decision on the facts presented. The principal must notify the parents or guardians, in writing, of the reason for the suspension. Prior to reentering school, the parent(s), or guardian(s), along with the student, must appear before the principal or his designated representative (Appendices A & B)

The first suspension during the school year shall be for at least one day and considered a warning to the student and parents. They should be apprised of the consequences of additional suspension. A student having participated in the execution of a Behavioral Contract as a condition of admission to school may be recommended for expulsion on the first suspension.

The second suspension during the school year shall be for a minimum of three days. This suspension should clearly indicate the dire consequences of future suspensions.

The third suspension during the school year shall be for a minimum of five days. If the student was on probation or expelled the previous school year, a recommendation for expulsion may be made on the third suspension. A referral to pupil personnel is mandatory. This referral will generate a letter to the parents by the Superintendent of Schools. The letter will state that the fourth suspension will result in a recommendation of expulsion on the part of the school. A conference with the pupil, parent or guardian, the principal or the principal's designee and other appropriate personnel will be scheduled for the purpose of executing a Behavior Contract **prior** to the student's reinstatement in school.

#### **Expulsion or Suspension for Longer Than Five Days**

The fourth suspension, which shall be for a minimum of five days, will result in a recommendation for expulsion to the Superintendent of Schools. The student and parent(s) or guardian(s) will be given ample opportunity to present reasons as to why the pupil should not be expelled. (Appendix A, S7-304)



If the Superintendent of Schools concurs with the recommendations for expulsion, the student will be expelled. Parents who disagree with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools may appeal to the Board of Education. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Under certain circumstances, the principal shall automatically recommend expulsion to the Superintendent of Schools. Reasons for a five-day suspension and mandatory recommendation of expulsion are:

1. Assault
2. Use of a weapon on any person
3. Sale or distribution or attempts to sell or distribute alcohol or illegal drugs

All mandatory recommendations for expulsion shall be handled in the same manner as those that result from automatic recommendation of expulsion and in accordance with the *Public School Laws of Maryland*. (Appendix A)

## SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR

The Worcester County Board of Education affirms that all students enrolled in the schools of Worcester County are expected to practice standards of accepted behavior at all times and under no circumstances shall behavior that is disruptive to others be tolerated.

Since proper conduct of students on the school bus is considered the responsibility of the Board of Education, any behavior or misconduct which jeopardizes the safe operation of a school bus or which interferes with the welfare of other pupils shall be prohibited.

Examples of this type of conduct include but are not limited to the following:

1. Throwing objects
2. Fighting
3. Smoking
4. Use of alcohol
5. Use of illegal drugs

Bus drivers are directly responsible for promptly reporting to the school principal, any violation or any misconduct on their bus.

At the discretion of the appropriate school administrators, a student shall become ineligible for Pupil Transportation when his behavior is such as to cause serious disturbance on a school bus, or when he disobeys state or local rules and jeopardizes the safe operation of a school bus or which interferes with the welfare of other pupils.

In the case of use of alcohol, use of drugs or smoking violations:

1. The principal shall deny bus transportation to offending pupil 20 consecutive school days for the first offense.
2. For a second offense - 40 consecutive school days
3. For a third offense - transportation shall be denied permanently

In cases of misconduct the principal shall, in addition to denial of bus transportation, take appropriate action, which may include suspension or expulsion.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

### STUDENT EXPRESSION

Students have the right to express opinion, to take stands, and to support causes either publicly or privately in an orderly manner not to infringe upon the rights of others. Students have the right to seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly manner by utilizing those acceptable channels provided for this purpose.

Each student must upon request, identify himself to proper school authorities in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school sponsored events.

Students at school-sponsored, off-campus events shall be governed by school rules and regulations and are subject to the authority of school officials.

Students attending school-sponsored activities shall be governed by rules and regulations of the sponsoring school.

Students attending school-sponsored events which are partially supervised by law enforcement officers or school security officers are subject to the authority and directions of those officers. (Appendix D, #7)

### Speech

A student's right to free speech, verbal or symbolic, shall not infringe upon the rights of others.

As an intellectual being, every student has a right to search vigorously for truth by examining opposing ideas and to espouse and express in any orderly manner whatever views commend the assent of his mind. Where soundness of his position can neither be proved nor disproved with documentation, he shall in no way be penalized academically for holding those views.

A student's responsibility must include personal concern for the effect of the spoken word or symbolic expression on the personal reputation of others, and a student has the right to have his own personal reputation protected accordingly. Consequently, personal attacks and obscenities are prohibited.

Note: Conduct by a student in class or out of it, which materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others is not protected by the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech. (Appendix D, #8)

### Petition

Students have the right to present petitions utilizing those channels provided for this purpose. However, the collecting of signatures on petitions shall not disrupt classroom procedures nor interfere with the educational process.

Students shall not be subjected to disciplinary measures for initiating or signing a petition providing that the petition is free from obscenities, libelous statements, and personal attack.



## **Press**

### **School Sponsored Publications**

In a school community, students involved in student publications shall convey information with accuracy and insight in such a manner that truth shall remain predominant. Such publication shall have qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high publication standards. Only materials alleged to contain the following should be withheld from the press:

1. Libelous materials as defined below
2. Obscenity as defined below
3. Materials which should reasonably lead the principal to forecast substantial disruption of or material interference with school activities.

The responsibility and authority for decisions based on the standards mentioned above are vested with the principal.

### **Non-School Sponsored Publications**

Literature may be distributed and posted by students of the school in designated areas on school property with prior approval of the principal.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Libel or Libelous Materials**

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States protects the right of free expression by an individual, either in writing or in speech, on all matters of public or general concern about a person, without regard to whether such person is famous or anonymous, in whom the community and press have a legitimate and substantial interest because of who he is or what he has done. However, a written or oral statement about such a person which is made with "actual malice", that is, with knowledge that it was false, or with reckless disregard of whether it was false, or which was made with a high degree of awareness of its probable falsity, is subject to sanction and is not protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

A statement is libelous and not protected by the First Amendment if it is made with "actual malice" and if it tends to expose one to public hatred, shame, obloquy, contumely, odium, contempt, ridicule, aversion, ostracism, degradation, or disgrace, or if it induces an evil opinion of one in the minds of right thinking persons, or if it causes one to be shunned and avoided in society. (Appendix D, #9)

### **Obscene or Obscenity**

The average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that it, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest.

It depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct currently defined by Maryland law.

Taken as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

## **Distribution**

This means dissemination of literature in any form which is made generally available to students. This includes the posting of literature in areas of a school which are generally frequented by students. The principal will require submission of literature for prior review when there is to be a substantial distribution of literature: 1) so that it can be reasonably anticipated that in a significant number of instances there would be a likelihood that the distribution would disrupt school operations or 2) in order to determine whether such material is libelous or obscene as defined in this policy.

### **Assemblage**

Students have the right to assemble peacefully. This right must not be abridged unless it can be viewed as a violation of the rights of others, or a clear violation of statute and legal policies. There is an appropriate time and place for the expression of opinions and beliefs. Conducting and/or participating in demonstrations which interfere with the operation of the school, classroom or basic rights of others is inappropriate and prohibited.

All student meetings in school buildings or on school grounds may function only as a part of the formal education process or as cooperatively established and approved by the principal of the school. (Appendix D, #10)

### **Dress**

Student dress and grooming is the responsibility of the student and his parents, unless some standard of dress and grooming is a reasonable requirement of the school to carry out the educational function.

The school has the responsibility to counsel with those who affect extreme styles of dress and grooming. (Appendix D, #11)

## **PATRIOTIC AND RELIGIOUS EXERCISES**

It is the responsibility of the school to protect the students' religious and political freedoms.

### **Patriotic**

The school shall provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate his patriotism by such expressions as the flag salute and other patriotic exercises. Students who can demonstrate that participation in patriotic exercises is objectionable to the religious order to which they subscribe, shall stand, but not be required to actively participate in the patriotic exercises. Students who do not actively participate in patriotic exercises shall not, by word or symbolic gesture, violate the rights of those participating in these exercises. (Appendix D, #12)

### **Religious**

Each student has the right to practice his own religious belief so long as he does not violate either the constitutional rights of others or the Supreme Court's prohibition of a school's extending the mantle of public sanction or support to any particular religion. Each student shall have the right to investigate, study, discuss, and analyze religious ideas, beliefs, and customs in the same manner as any other subject in the curriculum.



The previously stated rights in no way should be construed as approving acts of disrespect or interfering with participation by others. (Appendix D, #13)

## **PRIVACY**

### **Student Records**

Individual student records are to be confidential in nature and access to those records may be granted by the Board of Education or its duly appointed representative only for the purpose of serving legitimate and recognized ends.

Records of a student shall be available to that student's parents or legal guardian in conference with appropriate (professional) school personnel.

Access to records by colleges, prospective employers, and other legitimate and recognized agencies shall be made available upon written permission by the parents of the student provided he/she is of legal age. (The Board of Education will comply with court orders relative to student records.)

The transfer of information from one school to another or from one department to another within the same school system without permission does not violate the principal of confidentiality.

### **Counseling**

Whenever a student shall seek information for the purpose of overcoming any form of drug abuse from a teacher, counselor, principal or other professional education employed by an approved educational institution, no statement, whether oral or written, made by the student and no observation or conclusion derived shall be admissible against the student in any proceeding. (Appendix D, #14)

### **Search and Seizures**

"Police officers, upon the authority of a search warrant, may make a search of that part of the school premises described in the search warrant, and school officials should cooperate in performing such services."

"Investigative searches of school premises by police officers shall only be permitted upon the authority of a search warrant or in any case where the search is essential to prevent imminent danger to the safety or welfare of the pupil or other persons or school property. Such search shall not include a pupil's assigned locker unless specified in the search warrant."

"Every effort shall be made to conduct searches in a manner which will minimize a disruption of the normal school routine and minimize embarrassment to pupils affected."

"In no case may a police officer search the person of a pupil not under arrest, unless the police officer has a reasonable suspicion that such pupil is concealing a weapon which poses a danger to others, but under no circumstances shall a school official conduct such a search of the person at the request of a police officer."

"School officials may at any time conduct such searches as are essential to the security, discipline, and sound administration of the particular

school, but are limited as stated above whenever the search is in connection with a police investigation." (Appendix D, #15)

### **Arrests**

"When possible and appropriate, arrest by police should be made during non-school hours and away from the school premises."

"When an arrest on school premises during the school hours is necessary, the responsible school official shall ascertain such facts from the arresting officer as will enable him to fully advise the parent or guardian and other school officials of the nature of the charge, the identity of the arresting officer, and the location of the pupil."

"When an arrest has taken place on school premises or during school hours, every effort shall be made by the school officials to inform the parent or guardian immediately and thereafter promptly to advise the Superintendent's office."

"Arrest on school premises during school hours shall be effectuated in such a manner as to avoid both embarrassment to the pupil being arrested and jeopardizing the safety and welfare of other pupils." (Appendix D, #16)

### **Questioning on School Premises**

"School officials shall not permit the questioning of a pupil under arrest on the school premises and shall request the arresting officer to remove the pupil from the premises as soon as practicable after the arrest is made."

"Police investigations involving the questioning of pupils shall not be permitted on school premises unless in connection with a crime committed on the premises or in connection with an investigation which if not immediately permitted would compromise the success of that investigation or endanger the lives or safety of the pupils or other persons, provided however, that a school official should be present throughout that questioning."

"Whenever investigative questioning of pupils is permitted on the premises the school official should promptly advise the parent or guardian and the Superintendent's office of the nature of the investigation and such other details as may be required."

"In the absence of an arrest, school officials shall not authorize the removal of a pupil from school for the purpose of investigative questioning without the consent of the parent or guardian." (Appendix D, #17)

## **NON-DISCRIMINATING PRACTICES**

Membership and participation in school-sponsored activities must be open to all all students. In no instances may there be any restrictions based on race, creed, color, sex or economic condition. No student may be denied participation in any activity for any reason other than those established by state and/or county eligibility requirements and those requirements legitimately related to the purpose of the activity. (Appendix D, #18)



## **STUDENT GOVERNANCE AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Each student has the responsibility and the right to participate in student government organizations in order to provide all students with a voice in school affairs and an open channel of communication with the faculty and the school administration. Recommendations made to the administration by the student government shall receive a response within a reasonable period giving specific reasons in case the recommendations are not adopted or are substantially modified.

Qualifications for holding office shall be determined by the student government in accordance with prescribed eligibility requirements.

Students shall be encouraged to form and participate in a variety of extra-class organizations as a means of broadening their educational experiences. Pupil organizations that conduct activities on school premises must be authorized to do so by the principal and must have approved adult supervision.

School clubs and/or organizations shall not be permitted to use the school name or participate in activities outside the normal realm of the school community unless prior permission has been granted by the appropriate school authorities (Appendix D, #19)

## **USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

Each student or group of students may use school facilities in accordance with countywide or local procedures. Arrangement for such use must be made through the office of the principal, or his designated representative. (Appendix D, #20)

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCES**

Each student has the right to appeal any decision which impinges upon any right outlined in this document, to the next in line school official, representing the Board of Education. (Prior to presenting his grievance to the Board of Education, however, all appeals to local school, administrative and/or supervisory authorities should have been exhausted.) In the event that further appeal is necessary, said appeal may be directed to the State Board of Education. (Appendix D, #21)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Bylaw 13.07.04.01A - Suspension and Expulsion**

In those instances where the behavior of a pupil is disruptive and detrimental to the operation of the school, such pupil may be suspended or expelled in accordance with the procedure set forth in Section 95 of Article 77.

### **Bylaw 13.07.04.01D - Temporary Suspension**

The alternative to corporal punishment in case of last resort is the temporary suspension from school by the principal, with notice to the parent that an interview will be necessary before the pupil may return. In such cases, the local school authorities, whose approval is required to continue the suspension or to make it permanent shall be notified at once of the suspension and the offense.

### **S 7 - 304 - Suspension and Expulsion**

- (a) Suspension for no longer than five school days.
  - (1) In accordance with the rules and regulations of the county board, each principal of a public school may suspend for cause, for not more than five school days, any student in the school who is under the direction of the principal.
  - (2) The student or his parent or guardian promptly shall be given a conference with the principal and any other appropriate personnel during the suspension period.
- (b) Suspension for more than five school days and expulsion. At the request of a principal, a county superintendent may suspend a student for more than five days or expel him.
- (c) Procedure for more than five day suspension or expulsion.
  - (1) If a principal finds that a suspension of more than five school days or expulsions warranted, he immediately shall report the matter in writing to the county superintendent.
  - (2) The county superintendent or his designated representative promptly shall make a thorough investigation of the matter.
  - (3) If, after the investigation, the county superintendent finds that a longer suspension or expulsion is warranted, he or his designated representative promptly shall arrange a conference with the student and his parent or guardian.
  - (4) If, after the conference, the county superintendent or his designated representative, finds that a suspension of more than ten school days is warranted, the student or his parent or guardian may:
    - (i) Appeal to the county board within ten days after the determination;
    - (ii) Be heard before the county board or its designated committee, and



## APPENDIX B

### WORCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

- (iii) Bring counsel and witnesses to the hearing.
- (5) Unless a public hearing is requested by the parent or guardian or the student, a hearing shall be held of out the presence of all individuals except those whose presence is considered necessary or desirable by the board.
- (6) The appeal to the county board does not stay the decision of the county superintendent.
- (7) The decision of the county board is final (An. Code 1957, Art. 77, S-95, 1973, ch. 22, S2)

1. Suspension is a disciplinary action to be used after substantial behavior modifications (i.e., student conferences, parent conferences, referral, etc.) have failed to modify the student's behavior to acceptable school standards. For certain serious breaches of accepted student behavior, a student may be suspended immediately.

To be considered suspended, a student must miss a day of school. A student missing class time but remaining in the building is not suspended from school. A student sent home until his parents report to school with him is not considered suspended unless he misses a day of school.

2. Upon suspension of a student, the following procedure should be followed in Worcester County:
  - a. A letter is to be sent to the parents stating the reason for suspension and the length of the suspension. The parents are notified in this letter that by state law a conference must be held with the parent and the school official(s) prior to the student returning to the school program. This must be done in less than five days from the date of suspension.
  - b. A "Daily Record of Suspensions" shall be kept by the school and sent monthly to the Supervisor of Pupil Services.
  - c. If the student and parent have not appeared for said conference after five days, the school shall contact the parents to determine reasons for not appearing.
  - d. If the student has not returned to school after ten days of absence, resulting from the suspension, the Supervisor of Pupil Services shall be informed of the case.



## APPENDIX C

### DUE PROCESS

The courts have consistently maintained that young people in the United States have the right to receive a free public education, and the deprivation of that right may occur only for just cause and in accordance with due process of law. Procedural due process, as it applies to students, requires that the following elements must be present:

- (1) The student must have prior knowledge of the conduct which is required of or prohibited to him;
- (2) He must be aware of the specific matters giving rise to any proposed penalties or discipline;
- (3) He must have had some opportunity to express or convey, to the decision-making authority, his views or rebuttals regarding the incident;
- (4) The decision-making authority must base its decision on the incidents or matters which the student has been apprised as indicated above.

Reference: Chapter 22 - *The Public School Laws of Maryland*

## APPENDIX D

1. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 73, Article 77, Sect. 92, Article 77, Sect. 94, Bylaw 721:1, Bylaw 722:1, Bylaw 722:2
2. *Policies and Procedures Manual*, Worcester County Board of Education, Policy IV-A-2
3. *Policies and Procedures Manual*, Worcester County Board of Education, Policy IV-A-3
4. *Policies and Procedures Manual*, Worcester County Board of Education, Policy IV-A-4
5. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 85A, Article 77, Sect. 96, Article 77, Sect. 98A, Article 77, Sect. 98B, Bylaw 731.1, Bylaw 731:2, Bylaw 731.3, Bylaw 741.5
6. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 95a
7. The Constitution of the United States; Amendments, Article 1 Tinker v. DesMoines Independent Community Sch. Dist., 89 A. Ct. 733 *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Article 27, Sect. 577A2
8. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 96
9. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 96 Baughman v. Freienmuth, 343 F. Supp. 487 (D. Md. 1972)
10. The Constitution of the United States; Amendments, Article I *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 96 Gebert v. Hoffman, 336 F. Supp. 694 (E. D. Pa. 1972) Farrell v. Joel, U.S. Cir. Ct. of Appeals, 2nd Cir. 437 F. 2d 160 (1971)
11. Bannister v. Paradis, 316 F. Supp. 185 (N.H. 1970) Press v. Padadena Inc. Sch. Dist. 326 F. Supp. 550 (Tex. 1971) Wallace v. Ford 346 F. Supp. 156 (E.D. Ark. 1972)
12. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 77 Banks v. Bd. of Publ. Instr., 314 F. Supp. 285 (Fla. 1970) Affirmed 450F 2d 1103 (5th Cir. 1971)
13. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 324:1 Engle v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421, N.Y. 1962 Murray v. Curlett, 374 U.S. 203 Md., 1963
14. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 751:2, Bylaw 751:3, Article 77, Sect. 85A
15. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 742:1
16. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 742:1
17. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 742:1



18. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 144, Bylaw 731.3, Bylaw 761.2, Bylaw 761:3, Bylaw 411
19. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Bylaw 731:3, Bylaw 741.5
20. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 97
21. *The Public School Laws of Maryland*, Article 77, Sect. 59

## WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### SCHOOL DIRECTORY

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Buckingham Elementary	Dr. Stuart J. Scott	641-0454
Cedar Chapel Special	Mr. William A. Jones, II	632-3434
Ocean City Elementary	Mrs. Lenore P. Huffer	289-6800
Pocomoke Elementary	Mrs. Irene K. Hazel	957-3171
Showell Elementary	Mrs. Wilda M. Stroh	641-4880
Snow Hill Elementary	Mr. Jesse L. Lynch	632-1155

#### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Berlin Middle	Mr. C. Edward Prager	641-3010
Pocomoke Middle	Mr. Willie C. Jackson	957-1567
Snow Hill Middle	Mr. Tommy Tucker	632-1727

#### HIGH SCHOOLS

Pocomoke High	Mr. W. Carey Reece, Jr.	957-1484
Snow Hill High	Mr. Kelly H. Shumate	632-1658
Stephen Decatur High	Mrs. Gladys C. Burbage	641-2171
Vocational Center	Mr. William M. Brown	632-2582