

FAMILY INFORMATION HANDBOOK

2023-2024



WATERSHED
SCHOOL

Watershed School
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www.watershedschool.org

"To spark adventure and wonder, foster inquiry and community, and build the character and ability to take on the world's greatest challenges."

Revised Summer 2023

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Non-Discriminatory Policy

Watershed School is strongly committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity, without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sex, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or age in administration of its educational admission, employment, and scholarship policies in accordance with existing state and federal laws or regulations. All students and employees are protected from coercion, intimidation, interference or retaliation from filing a complaint of assisting in an investigation under any of the following policies.

Our Mission

To spark adventure and wonder, foster inquiry and community, and build the character and ability of students to take on the world's greatest challenges.

Watershed School Design Principles

Our Design Principles are the foundation of the Watershed experience. They celebrate our commitment to a program and school culture that inspires and educates students to become highly capable, healthy, wise, and engaged citizens prepared to take on the world's great challenges. In keeping with the founders' intentions, Watershed periodically reviews, updates, and re-affirms its Design Principles. The seven Design Principles below were adopted in 2019 and serve to focus our vision, remind us of what is important, and inform our decisions.

Adventure And Wonder

Education at its best is an adventure full of wonder and discovery for students, for educators, and for schools.

We build a culture of curiosity and inquiry to nurture and develop the wonder, wisdom, and insight we all have within. We embrace adventure with the understanding that transformative learning and growth involves risk. Our work together remains fresh and dynamic because we are all committed to the continuous evolution of learning opportunities—for it is in the unknown that the greatest learning lies.

Real-World Learning

Deep, enduring learning happens first-hand – directly from the people, ecosystems, cultures, and challenges of the “real world.”

We explore important questions with a transdisciplinary approach that draws on real-world experiences and experts. The world is our classroom, as we travel locally, regionally, and internationally to explore and learn. Students build the capacity to solve problems by integrating their knowledge, seeking multiple perspectives, and understanding the complexity of our world. The curriculum is flexible in order to respond to real needs and learning opportunities as they arise.

Depth Over Breadth

Exploration of real-world topics and questions leads to deep understandings.

Students develop rich understandings of the complexity and connections in our world through deep study of real-world topics. Through these explorations, students discover and develop their own interests and passions. We know that success in the future does not depend on remembering a broad collection of content; success depends on having the skills of effective learners: critical thinking, creative problem-solving, communication, collaboration, craft, and the broad perspective of a global citizen.

Student Agency

We honor students as architects of their own learning.

To develop lifelong learners, we help students learn to ask important questions and pursue them well. Learning is personalized because students have diverse interests and needs. Every aspect of the school encourages students to become increasingly responsible for directing their learning and supporting others. Students and educators collaborate to set goals, help plan expeditions, participate in committees, and participate in school-wide decision-making.

Educators As Learners And Mentors

To best help students learn and grow, educators' most important roles are as expert learners and trusted mentors.

Watershed educators model the skills and habits of deep learning for students. They actively engage in professional learning by remaining current with educational research, attending and presenting at professional conferences, and visiting other schools. Educators become effective mentors by knowing students well and having excellent rapport with them. To truly realize these roles, the student:teacher ratio is low, teachers work with students for extended lengths of time, and individual and group advisory meetings occur every week.

Our Community Ethos

A strong community is the foundation of great student learning and growth.

At Watershed, we respect the inherent dignity and worth of all people, and strive to build a world that is more just, more collaborative, and more sustainable. Therefore we all work together to create a school community that values diversity, equity, and inclusion and that fosters a climate of warmth, acceptance, unconditional respect, and fun. We connect our students with the communities beyond our school, cultivating awareness of social justice and sustainability so students are empowered to take thoughtful action to address issues that matter. In our community, students learn that all people can, and should, make a difference.

Work That Matters

Learning focused on the previous six Design Principles culminates in work that matters. Students learn best when engaged in work that matters – to themselves and to the world.

Our students engage in work that matters for two reasons: because schools should be of service to their human and ecological communities, and because motivation is higher and learning is deeper when the work has meaning. Students pursue answers to questions essential to their own lives. Students also work on projects that make a difference beyond the walls of the school, improving the communities in which we live. These projects serve as authentic assessments of student learning.

Watershed inspires and empowers students and educators to bring out the best in each other, to contribute to our communities, and to be active leaders helping to take on the world's greatest challenges.

School Vision

In 2018, Watershed began working with staff, parents, trustees and students to plan our path forward, creating the school's next strategic vision. We hit pause on that work during the second half of the 2019-2020 school year and the first half of the 2020-21 school year due to COVID, picking it back up in the spring of 2021. [Watershed's new strategic vision](#) was unanimously endorsed by the Board of Trustees in September 2021.

Portrait of a Graduate

The Watershed Portrait of a Graduate was initially created in 2016. The school worked to identify the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors we wanted to see in each Watershed graduate. The goal was for us to be able to discuss curriculum working backwards from a commonly held idea of the kind of person we wanted to send out into the world. In 2020, two seniors helped review and revise the portrait of a graduate. They read current research on the fourth industrial revolution and what will be needed in the future of a changing world. The Watershed Portrait of a Graduate frames the work that we do in all of our classes and community curriculum.

The graphic features a dark background with a white circular logo on the left containing a stylized 'W' and a mountain range. To the right of the logo, the text reads: 'to spark ADVENTURE + WONDER, foster INQUIRY + COMMUNITY, AND build THE CHARACTER + ABILITY OF STUDENTS'. Below this, it says 'TO TAKE ON THE WORLD'S GREATEST CHALLENGES.' The central text reads 'PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE' followed by 'WATERSHED GRADUATES ARE curious learners, creative problem solvers, adventurous spirits, and caring, committed global citizens.' The bottom section is divided into two columns: 'THEY EMBODY THESE CHARACTER STRENGTHS:' and 'THEY DEMONSTRATE THESE SKILLS AND ABILITIES:'. The first column lists curiosity, courage, creativity, emotional intelligence, and ownership. The second column lists research skills, communication skills, quantitative reasoning skills, craft + artistry, and leadership skills.

to spark
ADVENTURE + WONDER, **foster**
INQUIRY + COMMUNITY, AND **build**
THE CHARACTER + ABILITY OF STUDENTS

TO TAKE ON THE WORLD'S GREATEST CHALLENGES.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

WATERSHED GRADUATES ARE
curious learners, creative problem solvers, adventurous spirits,
and caring, committed global citizens.

THEY EMBODY THESE CHARACTER STRENGTHS:

- curiosity
- courage
- creativity
- emotional intelligence
- ownership

THEY DEMONSTRATE THESE SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- research skills
- communication skills
- quantitative reasoning skills
- craft + artistry
- leadership skills

THE CLASSROOM

For the 2023-24 school year, Watershed will be using the block schedule shown below. Block courses are one trimester long and earn a half credit. Throughout the year, students must take 12 blocks total: 6 expedition blocks, 2-3 math blocks, and 3-4 other blocks (arts, foreign language, electives, or independent study). (See weekly schedule on next page.)

We group courses into two different categories: “skills” courses and “expedition” courses. This is on purpose, and is linked to research on learning and teaching. Students need to both develop the underlying skills of exploring the world (our “skills” classes) and have the opportunity to use these developing skills in the context of real-world problems (our “expedition” classes).

Skills Courses

Skills courses (e.g., math, Spanish, writing, art, etc.) are where students develop fundamental skills that cross all disciplines (e.g., creativity, quantitative reasoning, communication skills -- indeed skills listed in our Portrait of a Graduate). These are skills that clearly link to research on success in college and beyond. In many ways these courses help students develop foundational skills that enable them to do the work of exploring the world’s great challenges.

Expedition Courses

Expedition courses begin with big questions and challenges that are real in the world and alive in the hearts of our students. And we let the “content” flow from there. Again, this is linked to research on success in college and beyond. How much you remember from your history class or physics class does not correlate with success in the future. So while of course Watershed students learn an appropriate breadth of content, we let the content flow from the big issues, challenges, and questions we explore with students. Expedition courses become natural places to engage students in work that matters beyond the walls of the school, since we design these courses around real challenges and problems in the world.

Independent Study, Directed Study, and Internships

Students who wish to pursue academic interests beyond Watershed’s course offerings should consider independent or directed study coursework, or an internship. Students can pursue a self-designed independent study, study a language not offered at Watershed, and advanced courses in mathematics and Spanish.

Students interested in pursuing an area of demonstrated passion are able to design their own independent coursework and internship opportunities. This includes identifying learning goals, making connections in the community, and completing coursework in their topic area. These courses and opportunities are designed to offer a more rigorous experience for students ready to take on more challenge and self-direction in their learning. Students must complete the initial plan

description during the course registration process to be considered. Once your initial plan description is submitted, you will be sent a course design plan to be completed and returned by the date specified depending on your independent study trimester.

The Role of the Student

- Propose a set of learning targets, work deliverables, and a week-by-week schedule to a sponsoring teacher. This proposal must be finalized into a plan by the end of the school's add/drop period (the first week of the trimester).
- Present pre-determined work products to the teacher and share their work with a presentation at FAIR.
- The student is responsible for initiating contact with the sponsoring teacher and for scheduling and attending all conferences.

The Role of the Teacher

- Work with the student to identify work product(s) and learning outcomes, certify the results, write an end of the trimester narrative, and award pass/fail status.
- Have ongoing conferences with the student to ensure progress.
- Determine whether the independent study is awarded a "pass" or "fail." Except in very rare circumstances, independent studies may not be awarded an "incomplete."

Independent Language Study

Independent study in language is not designed to replace participation in Watershed's core Spanish language and culture program. We support language independent study in one of three scenarios:

- Students wish to pursue study in another language and enroll in an approved and accredited institution and pay for the study independently and the course is recommended by the College Counselor and approved by the Director of Academics and Community Partnerships. As a general policy, the school will not approve online language classes that do not include a live instructor engaged in synchronous instruction with the student.
- Students who want to focus on language study as an area of passion begin a second language in parallel with Spanish and pay for the study independently and the course is recommended by the College Counselor and approved by the Director of Academics and Community Partnerships;
- Students are prepared to go beyond a fourth year of Spanish and continue advanced Spanish language study and the course is recommended by the College Counselor and approved by the Director of Academics and Community Partnerships.

Independent Study and Internships

Students interested in pursuing an area of demonstrated passion are able to design their own independent coursework and internship opportunities. This includes identifying learning goals, making connections in the community, and completing coursework in their topic area. These courses and opportunities are designed to offer a more rigorous experience for students ready to take on more challenge and self-direction in their learning. Internships have a minimum hour requirement to be awarded credit each term. Independent studies and internships will only be

approved if it is recommended by the College Counselor based on graduation requirement status and approved by the Director of Academics and Community Partnerships.

Directed Study

Online courses may be taken when they are offered from an accredited institution and approved by the College Counselor. The student’s grade is not included in a Watershed transcript, but Watershed will count the accredited online work towards the student’s graduation requirements and attach the transcript in the student’s school file sent to colleges.

Watershed Weekly/Daily Schedule 2023-24

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Block 1	Block 1	Project Block 1	Project Block 2	Block 1
8:15-9:30	1hr 15 mins	1hr 15 mins			1hr 15 mins
			2 hrs 45 mins	2 hrs 45 mins	
9:30-9:45	Interblock	Interblock			Interblock
	Block 2	Block 2			Block 2
9:45-11:00	1hr 15 mins	1hr 15 mins			1hr 15 mins
11:00-11:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:45-12:25	Advisory	Community Meeting	Advisory	Seminar	Advisory
	Block 3	Block 3	Project Block 3	Project Block 4	Block 3
12:30-1:45	1hr 15 mins	1hr 15 mins			1hr 15 mins
			2 hrs 45 mins	2 hrs 45 mins	
1:45-2:00	Interblock	Interblock			Interblock
	Block 4	Block 4			Block 4
2:00-3:15	1hr 15 mins	1hr 15 mins			1hr 15 mins

Note: Interblock time can be used for short meetings with teachers, for relaxing, for bathroom breaks, and for getting ready for the next class.

Work Done Outside Of The Classroom

As with all authentic learning, some of the work students do will occur during school, and some will extend beyond the school day. Teachers will provide students with multiple opportunities to show their understanding of the long-term learning targets; however, missing work will likely affect the

student's overall assessment. As responsible members of an educational community, students are expected to complete all assigned homework by the due date. In the event that a student misses school/class they are responsible for contacting their educator before the next class meeting to discuss the necessary steps to make up any missed work. If students are unable to complete an assignment, they are expected to communicate with their educator before the beginning of the class in which it is due. Repeated failure to complete homework will result in supports ranging from required attendance at homework help to a fuller Academic Concern Contract. Significant difficulties with work completion may lead to an Academic Probation contract and/or not receiving credit for a course.

Expectations For Learning

Our expectation is that when students are healthy and physically able they will attend classes in person. When students are unable to be physically present in school, our expectation is that they will be able to work independently to stay caught up with the learning and work being done in class. Students enrolled at Watershed School are expected to uphold the Community Commitments. If students are struggling to meet these expectations, communications will be sent home to parents and the student may be put onto a concern or probation contract. Continued failure to meet expectations could result in separation from the school.

Assessment

At Watershed School, we believe that assessment is a critical part of the learning process itself, rather than a way to judge success or failure. Its purposes are to,

- help students evaluate their own progress so that they may celebrate their successes and identify the areas that still need work;
- help educators assess the progress and needs of individual students in order to tailor instruction and experiences to meet those needs, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of their curricula and teaching techniques; and to
- document the learning that takes place at Watershed School for prospective colleges, for students and parents, and for other professionals in the field of education interested in improving the quality of education in their schools.

Performance and progress are assessed using the concept of proficiency towards clearly stated learning targets in each course. The proficiency levels are *Beginning, Developing, and Accomplished*.

Assessment occurs on an ongoing basis through project evaluations, public presentations of learning, and other evaluations of students' learning and community involvement. These include self-reflections and educator assessments, regular one-on-one meetings with advisors, and feedback from community mentors.

Progress Reporting

Parents can expect regular information on their student's progress through the following types of assessment at Watershed School:

At mid trimester we will hold student-led educator and family conferences to think together about how the course is going and set a plan for the rest of the trimester. At the end of each term, educators will share with students and parents a narrative report as well as a proficiency level. In addition, we will be asking students to engage in reflection on their own progress, and these will be shared with parents.

Throughout the year (generally at the beginning, middle and end of the school year), students will share their work in public settings. These include RoLs (Reflections on Learning) after Orientation and May Term, and FAIR (Festival of Arts and Intellectual Reflection).

High School Transcript GPA

People are more than a number or GPA. We do not give grades, we do not rank students, and we do not report a GPA as a regular part of student progress reports. Within our community, our assessment conversations are about student learning and growth, which is too nuanced for any GPA to capture. We use learning targets and rubrics to evidence how students have met expectations and where they have room for improvement.

However, in order to facilitate credit transfer and acceptance to higher education institutions that typically rely on GPAs for admission and scholarship qualifications, Watershed converts proficiency levels into a GPA when a high school transcript is produced. (There is no GPA in middle school.)

The high school GPA will be calculated according to the following scale:

Proficiency Level	What Does It Mean?	How Can It Vary?	GPA Equivalency Upon Exit
Accomplished Proficiency	Student has demonstrated an advanced understanding of the major concepts, skills, and experiences of the course, and can help others use and apply the concepts. This assessment level represents significant accomplishment.	Teachers may choose to designate accomplished proficiency as “high” or “low” to designate placement within the range of accomplished proficiency.	4.0 3.75 3.5
Developing Proficiency	Student has made significant progress toward understanding the course's major concepts, skills, and experiences.	Teachers may choose to designate Developing proficiency as “high” or “low” to designate placement within the range of developing proficiency.	3.25 3.0 2.75
Beginning Proficiency	Student is beginning to grasp the major learning concepts.		2.0
No Credit			0.0

How can you help your child meet learning expectations?

- Help set-up a healthy morning routine for your child. Make sure they: eat a healthy breakfast, have all they need for the day and arrive at school at least ten minutes before school starts.
- Email, call or make an appointment to speak with your child's advisor and/or educators if you have questions or concerns about their progress at school.
- Support your child's engaged learning. Ask clarifying questions; do NOT do the work for your child.
- Check and discuss schoolwork: "Tell me about your learning today!"
- Encourage time management, solid work habits, follow-through and responsibility at home.
- Encourage a daily homework/reading/project time and place that is free from distractions.
- Read *FridgeNotes* weekly.
- Attend school meetings (New Term Info Night, Student-led Educator and Family conferences, RoLs, FAIR, etc.).
- Check the OnCampus Parent Portal regularly for class information and homework assignments.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We value the health and safety of our community and of the individuals within our community. The expectations described below are intended to support a healthy and safe community within which students can learn and thrive. We understand that in today's world, health concerns can rapidly emerge and we may have to adapt and adjust our practices to ensure health and safety in our community.

When To Keep A Child Home

If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or an infection, please do not send them to school. Keep your child home until you have contacted a health care provider and receive guidance on appropriate procedures.

If you suspect your child to have any contagious disease, including but not restricted to COVID-19, other viruses, flu, strep throat or any other illness, please do not send your child back to school until medically cleared by the child's physician. Parents must call the school immediately to report a medically diagnosed communicable condition. This is for the protection of your child and the entire Watershed community.

Illness At School

If a student becomes ill during the day, either between classes or during a class, it is the student's responsibility to inform their educator and the front desk that they are not feeling well. If a student has a fever of 100.4 or above, they will be isolated and the school will contact a parent, legal guardian, or other emergency contact so they can pick-up their child from school. Before leaving, the student must be excused in person by the authorized adult who has come to pick them up. If the

student is a registered driver, the office manager or other administrator must receive verbal or written confirmation from a parent or guardian that the student may leave.

If a student is experiencing an ongoing physical or psychological illness and may not be fit to attend school for a period of time, Watershed School reserves the right to place the student on medical leave until appropriate medical support has been established.

Immunizations, Medical Information, And Release Forms

Parents and students must fill out all of the required forms found in the application and on the [Magnus Health website](#). Forms in the application only need to be filled out once. Forms found on the website must be completed yearly. All medical and contact information must be verified on a yearly basis. A student will not be allowed to attend class at Watershed School or participate in any school activities until all forms have been received.

Emergency Numbers

All families are asked to fill out an “Emergency Contact” form. This form should be updated with any changes throughout the year.

Medications

All prescription and non-prescription medications to be administered during school hours or school events, including overnight trips, must be turned into the front office. The medication must be in the original prescriptions container with correct instructions for administration on the label and will be kept in a locked cabinet at the school. Parents must complete the “Medication Administration Authorization” form in order for medications to be administered by school personnel. Exceptions may be made for students with diabetes, severe allergies or asthma, whereby the student may have written permission from their physician to keep their medication with them at all times.

If the instructions for dosage change after the label is printed, a new physician’s order must be on file with the school before a change in the administration of the medication can be made. The physician may fax the change to (303) 440-7521. School personnel may not dispense any over-the-counter medication without first verifying the parent permission on the “Medication Administration Authorization” form.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to obtain all unused medication from the school when the medication is discontinued, the school year ends, or if the student transfers to another school. At the end of the school year, school staff will dispose of all unclaimed medication.

Accidents

In the event that an accident or emergency occurs during school hours, our first priority is the safety of the students and staff. If your child is involved in an accident or emergency, we will call emergency medical services first and then we will contact the person listed on your child’s emergency contact information sheet, as the situation permits. If emergency contact information is unavailable or inaccessible, we will take appropriate measures to reach you or a family member, to

the best of our ability given the circumstances. If we are unable to reach a family member in the event of a medical emergency, the student will be transported to the nearest medical facility with a staff member. If you need to reach the school in emergency circumstances, please call the school's main number, 303-440-7520. If you are unable to contact someone, and it is imperative that you speak with someone regarding an emergency situation, please call Hannah Nelson, Assistant Head of School, at 802-338-1271 or Tim Breen, Head of School, at 603-991-8528.

THE COMMUNITY

We're All In This Together

A key element of Watershed School's approach to "sparking adventure and wonder, fostering inquiry and community, and building the character and ability of students to take on the world's greatest challenges" is for all community members to be role models living out this mission. By actively reflecting upon and improving our own individual character, we strengthen our collective character.

The health of any community is tested when it is under duress in the midst of stress, challenge and conflict. In order to support and maintain the collective strength of our community and culture throughout the year, we agree to work together with honest communication, an open heart and an open mind to build a kind, strong, and healthy culture.

Community Curriculum

The following components together form our Community Curriculum:

- Orientation: overnight camping (middle school) and backpacking (high school) trips and day adventures, to help establish connections to the community, the curriculum, and the norms of the school.
- Community Meeting: a weekly meeting for the community to come together, hear from speakers, connect with each other and have shared experiences.
- Stewardship: frequent opportunities for students to share in the maintenance and support of the functioning of the school.
- Advisory: a time for a small group of students to meet with their advisor for academic guidance, social support, development of academic portfolios, self-directed learning challenges, and for fun. One of the goals of the advisory is for an adult to know each Watershed School student well in a holistic way, academically and socially, and across all learning and community experiences.
- RULER: a dedicated time to do Social Emotional Learning across all grade levels. RULER is a program developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.
- Passages: activities and conversations to help mark 8th graders' passage into new phases of their lives – into adolescence, into young adulthood, and leaving middle school.
- Portrait of a Graduate: annual presentations at Spring FAIR engaging students in reflecting on who they are as a learner and a community member.
- May Term and Expedition-based extended fieldwork: academic trips that also provide opportunities for students to live and work closely together as a team.

Bullying And Harassment

Members of The Watershed School are expected to treat one another with respect and care. The school has zero tolerance for any discriminating comments, treatment or conduct, particularly, but not only, if the harassment and or bullying relates to religion, race, ethnicity, gender, physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender expression. Because the relationships between adults, between adults and students, and between students are central to Watershed's philosophy, the definitions and policies set out below apply to us all—faculty, administration, staff, students, volunteers and anyone providing services to Watershed.

According to stopbullying.gov: "Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose."

At Watershed, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment. Whether the actions occur between students on campus, or in cyber space off-campus, the Watershed School actively seeks to stop bullying or harassing behavior and promotes positive social relationships. The creation of a positive social-emotional environment that is welcoming to all students makes up the majority of our work surrounding bullying-prevention. We use our community curriculum, including orientation, advisory, RULER, clubs, and community meetings to discuss classroom issues, support social emotional growth, and actively work to create an open and welcoming environment for all of our students.

Students are expected to do more than just 'not bully' at Watershed; we expect students to actively work to create a positive social environment, and actively assist in constructing such an environment. However, if bullying or harassment does occur, Watershed will seek to work with all parties involved, resolve underlying issues, and seek appropriate disciplinary consequences and/or remediation plans. Students and parents are prohibited from retaliating against or making false accusations against a victim, witness or anyone else who in good faith provides information about an alleged act of harassment, bullying or cyberbullying. Students or parents who engage in harassment, bullying or cyberbullying may be subject to discipline, including dismissal from the school.

The Family's Role In Alcohol And Drug Prevention

Watershed School is committed to providing an alcohol and drug free environment for students both on- and off-campus. Possession or use of tobacco products, vaping products, alcohol, or other drugs (other than prescription drugs, prescribed to that individual, accompanied by appropriate school paperwork) by any student is strictly prohibited. This applies to students while they are involved in any school event including all academic or community related activities, all school-sponsored trips, fieldwork, clubs, athletic events and school business functions. The possession, use, or sharing of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs at any school-related event or activity will result in disciplinary action by the school and could include a variety of actions, including dismissal from the school, depending on the nature and level of the violation.

This policy also refers to any and all paraphernalia regarding alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping, or edible, synthetic, natural or herbal variants of drugs available. School, and school functions, are not the place for any of these items.

As an educational institution that has a responsibility for the welfare and growth of every student, the school has policies and procedures that respond positively to a student in trouble and that support the family to help their student. The burden of care for each individual student must be weighed against the school's responsibility to create a healthy, safe, non-threatening environment for all of its students. While we are supportive of children in difficulty, our overriding concern is the well-being of the total Watershed community. Students who are concerned about themselves or a fellow student are encouraged to take the initiative to seek help from an adult on campus. Any student identified, by self or others, as possibly having a problem involving alcohol or drug use may be encouraged to seek professional consultation and treatment, even if there has not been a violation of school rules.

In line with Watershed's view that responses to students should always consider the individual case, and in recognition that some misbehaviors are more serious than others (e.g., selling drugs would be judged more harshly than possession), the school administration may, at its discretion, consult any party the school deems necessary and consider such factors as the following: the extent of the student's involvement with the substance in question; the student's prior history in the school and record of discipline; the attitude of the student toward the school (do they care about the community and express respect for the institution?); the willingness of the student to recognize the problem and to accept a treatment response; and the commitment of the parents to respond to the child's problem.

Equally important in substance abuse prevention is the message that our students are receiving from home and from other members in their immediate community. In an effort to provide a clear and consistent message we encourage parents to do the following:

- Become informed about the facts of teenage vaping, tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and other drug use so that you can discuss these substances credibly with your child.
- Develop and communicate to your child a clear position about alcohol and other drug use.
- Set a responsible example for your children.

- Help your child develop a healthy concept of themselves and teach effective problem solving, decision-making, and communication skills.
- Take responsibility for your child and be concerned for the welfare of other children.
- Promote and encourage creative social activities without alcohol and other drugs.
- Do not serve alcohol to other people's school-aged children.
- Resist pressure from your child when they say, "But everyone else's parents allow it."
- Encourage your child to resist peer pressure.
- Do not sponsor or condone activities your child or you yourself are unable to control (such as parties with limited or no adult supervision).
- Communicate openly with other parents to establish a sense of community and to provide support in giving consistent messages.
- Support the school and law-enforcement policies regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs by youths.

Hosting Other Watershed School Students In Your Home

When a Watershed School student is in the home of another Watershed School family, parents must agree to maintain an atmosphere of safety and legality. Although Watershed has the highest regard for the good sense of its students, we also know that events that may at first seem innocent can get out of hand if not guided carefully.

- All private functions should be supervised by host parents.
- Parents should have information about who will be attending parties or events held at their own homes or in other places that their children will be visiting.
- Host parents should provide details about events to the parents of those invited and, if there are any questions, parents should call the adults responsible for organizing and supervising any event attended by their children.
- A clear ending time for private events should be established so that students know what it is in advance and it can be confirmed by host parents.
- There should be absolutely no alcohol or drugs allowed at private parties for minors. Parents who host parties that do not follow this guideline run the risk of arrest and prosecution.
- If any student attends a private event under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the host parent should contact the student's parent(s) to make sure that the student receives appropriate care.

Providing Watershed School students with alcohol or drugs, or permitting them to use alcohol or drugs in your home is not allowed and can result in expulsion or non-renewal of your child(ren)'s enrollment contract.

GETTING INVOLVED

Watershed Parent Association

The Watershed Parent Association (WPA) ensures that parents have opportunities to be an integral part of the Watershed community. The WPA facilitates community among Watershed families, strengthens the partnership between the parent community and the school, and supports the school through fundraising, staff appreciation efforts, outreach, and events (including monthly

morning coffees). All parents/guardians are members of the Watershed Parent Association. There is no membership fee.

The WPA is led by two Co-chairs. Other WPA leadership opportunities are available through participation in various committees.. If you are interested in volunteering as a WPA leader, please contact one of the WPA Co-chairs or the WPA staff liaison, Julie Yates, Director of Development & Communications.

Volunteering

Parents and other individuals who volunteer with the school or who have direct student contact are expected to maintain professional standards of conduct and confidentiality and to follow health and safety guidelines. Volunteers may not discuss student performance or behavior with other parents.

Giving at Watershed School

Like all independent schools, Watershed relies on philanthropic support to help us realize our mission for every student. The Watershed Fund provides annual support of the research-based, future-focused, community-centered education Watershed is known for. The Watershed Fund contributes approximately 10% of the school's annual budget and provides vital operational support including funding for small class sizes, expedition and skills courses, May Term courses, Orientation, co-curricular programs, sustainability initiatives, advisory, technology, scholarships and tuition assistance, staff professional development, and so much more!

Parents, alumni, grandparents, alumni parents, staff, and friends of the school generously support Watershed every year. Every gift matters and we hope that you will support the people and programs of Watershed School at a level that is comfortable for you and your family. The entire staff and student community thanks you for your support! Please don't hesitate to contact the Director of Development & Communications-- julie@watershedschool.org | 303.440.7520-- about giving opportunities at Watershed.

All gifts to Watershed School are tax-deductible as allowable by law.

COMMUNICATION

Who To Contact

The attached communication chart (see Appendix) is intended to help parents find the most appropriate avenue for their questions or concerns. If you're unsure, any member of the school's administration can help you identify the right person to contact with your concern.

Advisor Role

The student's advisor serves as the primary point of contact for parents regarding their child's overall experience at Watershed School. Parents are asked to email or call their child's advisor to ask questions, express concerns, or to schedule a meeting regarding their child's experience at Watershed School. Please note that advisors are engaged in the educational program throughout the

day and may not be able to return your call immediately. In an emergency, please contact the front office at 303-440-7520.

Student-led, Family-Educator Conferences

Each term, Watershed School schedules conferences. The purpose of these conferences is to review the academic and social progress of each student. In the best interest of the student, all parents and guardians are expected to attend scheduled conferences together to better facilitate communication. If necessary, additional conferences may be scheduled with the appropriate staff. These student-led conferences are an opportunity for the student to discuss with his/her parents and educators, answer any questions or concerns they have and name and plan toward goals they may have.

Contacting Your Student

Parents can call the school and leave a message for their student. In order to minimize the interruption to the school day, parents should refrain from making non-urgent phone calls or sending text messages to their student(s). Parents and students are asked to make arrangements about lunches, transportation, and after-school plans before the beginning of the school day.

Website And Email

In our continuing efforts to foster consistent communication with families, Watershed School offers OnCampus, which displays updated homework assignments, coursework, and report cards for students. The school often needs to communicate with families in an efficient manner. "*Fridge Notes*," our weekly information blast, is sent via email and contains important information and schedule updates. We post regularly on Watershed's blog and send a monthly e-newsletter, *Currents*. For this reason, we expect all Watershed School parents to provide to the school an email address to which we may send regular and important updates and information pertaining to the school. It is further expected that all parents will check this email address frequently, and will update information in OnCampus if there is a change in their email address. Please contact the front desk if you need assistance setting up a new email account or accessing OnCampus.

SCHEDULES AND NUTS AND BOLTS

School Schedule And Calendar

Staff will be in the building beginning at 7:45 a.m. Monday-Friday, at which time students may enter the building. The first block begins at 8:15 a.m. and students are asked to arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the start of class to get settled and organized for the day. The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. and the building will remain open until 4:30 p.m. Students are not permitted in the building without a staff member present. Students may be asked to stay until 3:30 to speak with a teacher or their advisor. Current calendars and schedules can be found on the website. (See Appendix for the year-long calendar.)

Building Access

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, all doors of Watershed will be locked throughout the school day. All students will have a key card that they will use to enter the building. All key cards will be handed out on the first day of Orientation in August. If a student loses their key card, the first one will be replaced with no charge; the second lost card will be replaced for \$5. Parents and visitors will need to be buzzed into the front door. To enter, please follow the directions on the front door when visiting.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, Watershed School consults with other independent schools in Boulder County and with BVSD to make a decision about a late start or a snow day. Any closures or delays will be notified to families by email and text message and posted on the school's website no later than 6:30 a.m.

Other Schedule and Calendar Changes

Watershed School will communicate calendar and schedule changes via email, *FridgeNotes*, and the school's website. Parents and students are encouraged to check the Watershed Family Google Calendar for changes as well.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

Our first priority in the morning is attending to the students and getting the school day off to a good start. Our parking lots are small and we ask that families be swift but safe in their drop-off and pick-up and do not linger without parking in a designated space. The main parking lot is one-way traffic. Please enter on Alpine and exit on Balsam. If you need to speak with us, we encourage you to get in touch with us via phone, email, text or in-person during less busy/heavy parking lot traffic times. Please do not drop off students in the East lot (church side).

Student Transportation

Each student is strongly encouraged to utilize forms of transportation other than private vehicles coming to and from school when possible. As stewards of our community and planet, we strongly encourage students to find public or environmentally friendly forms of transportation to and from Watershed School. Any student who would like to drive themselves to school, must fill out the [student driver registration form](#). Students who drive themselves to school must abide by all traffic laws and Colorado state laws. Students who do drive to school are not permitted to drive during the regular school hours from 8:15 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. or until the completion of their last school commitment. Student drivers may leave school for medical appointments with express permission from parents and the school. All students must park in the east lot (church side). If a student violates any of these driving expectations, they may be placed on a community concern contract.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to our colleagues at Catlin Gabel School, Calhoun School, Logan School, and the Sage School for inspiration and text for some portions of this handbook

Watershed School Academic Calendar 2023-2024

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

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

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

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

Start/End Dates

- 8/16 New Student Orientation
- 8/17 First Day of School
- 9/5 First Day of Trimester 1
- 11/9 Last Day of Trimester 1
- 11/14 First Day of Trimester 2
- 1/11 Students return
- 2/8 Last Day of Trimester 2
- 2/12 First Day of Trimester 3
- 4/18 Last day of Trimester 3
- 4/24 First Day of May Term
- 5/22 Last Day of May Term
- 5/24 Last day of School

No School for Students

- 9/1 Day of Rest
- 9/4 Labor Day
- 10/9 Educator PD/Workday
- 11/3 Educator PD/Workday
- 11/10 Veterans Day Observed
- 11/13 Educator PD/Workday
- 11/20-11/24 Thanksgiving Break
- 12/22 Educator PD/Workday
- 12/22-1/10 Winter Break
- 1/8-1/10 Educator PD/Workdays
- 1/15 MLK, Jr. Day
- 2/2&2/9 Educator PD/Workdays
- 2/19 Presidents' Day
- 2/20 Educator PD/Workday
- 3/25-3/29 Spring Break
- 4/22-4/23 Educator PD/Workdays
- 5/27 Summer Break begins for students
- 5/27 Memorial Day
- 5/28-5/31 Educator PD/Workdays

Conferences / In School Events

- 10/5 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 10/6 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 12/14 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 12/15 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 3/14 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 3/15 Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences (AM Classes, PM Conferences)
- 4/18 Portfolio Presentations
- 4/19 Community Day (Moving Prep!)
- 5/23 All School Community Day
- 5/24 Graduation!

Travel

- 8/24 HS Leaves for Backpacking
- 8/27 MS Leaves for Camping
- 8/30 MS returns
- 8/31 HS returns

Evening Event (regular school day)

- 8/16 ShedFest
- 9/12 New Term Info Night
- 11/14 New Term Info Night
- 12/21 FAIR
- 2/13 New Term Info Night
- 4/10 May Term Info Night
- 5/21 8th Grade Passages
- 5/22 RoL's
- 5/23 Senior Dinner



COMMUNICATION ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Questions/Concerns	Personnel	Role	Contact Information
Course-specific Topics and Issues	Your Child's Teacher		first.last@watershedschool.org
Overall Well-being of Your Child, Social/Community Issues, General Academic Issues	Your Child's Advisor		first.last@watershedschool.org
General Questions, Attendance, Student Forms & Records, OnCampus, FridgeNotes, Point of Contact (for Student Travel)	Hannah Filley	Family Experience & Front Office Manager	hannah.filley@watershedschool.org
HS Community and Student Support, Community and Academic Concern/Probation Contracts	Hannah Nelson	Assistant Head of School	hannah@watershedschool.org
MS Community and Student Support, Community and Academic Concern/Probation Contracts	Jeff Steele P'29	Middle School Dean of Student Life	jeff.steele@watershedschool.org
Academic Program, Community Partnerships	Chris Carithers	Director of Academics & Community Partnerships	chris@watershedschool.org
Emergency Preparedness & Risk Management, Experiential Education Programs and Resources (Orientation & Course Travel)	Hannah Nelson	Assistant Head of School	hannah@watershedschool.org
Individual Learning Plans, Social/Emotional Learning, Student Support	Elyse Manteris, Ph.D.	School Psychologist and ILP Director	elyse@watershedschool.org
College Applications, Course Registration, SAT & ACT Testing, Transcripts	Jen Curtis	College Counselor and Program Director	jen@watershedschool.org
Technology Issues (computers, internet)	Luke Robbins	Technology Coordinator	luke@watershedschool.org
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts at the School	Joie Le, Ph.D.	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator	joie@watershedschool.org
Tuition Payments, Accounts Receivable & Payable, Facilities & Vehicles	Jill Giordano	Director of Finance & Operations	jill@watershedschool.org
Watershed Fund/Capital Campaign/Fundraising, Alumni Relations, External Communications, Watershed Parent Association Liaison	Julie Yates	Director of Development & Communications	julie@watershedschool.org
Admissions, Tuition Assistance, Re-enrollment, Tours and Shadow Days, Open Houses, Admission Marketing	Gray Carr Bridgers	Assistant Head for Enrollment Management	graycarr.bridgers@watershedschool.org
Institutional and Program Development and Oversight, Staff and Educator Supervision, Budget and Finance	Tim Breen, Ph.D.	Head of School	tim@watershedschool.org
Governance, Legal Matters, Strategic Planning, Long Range Facilities Plan	Julie Goldstein P'24	Chair of the Board of Trustees	chair@watershedschool.org

