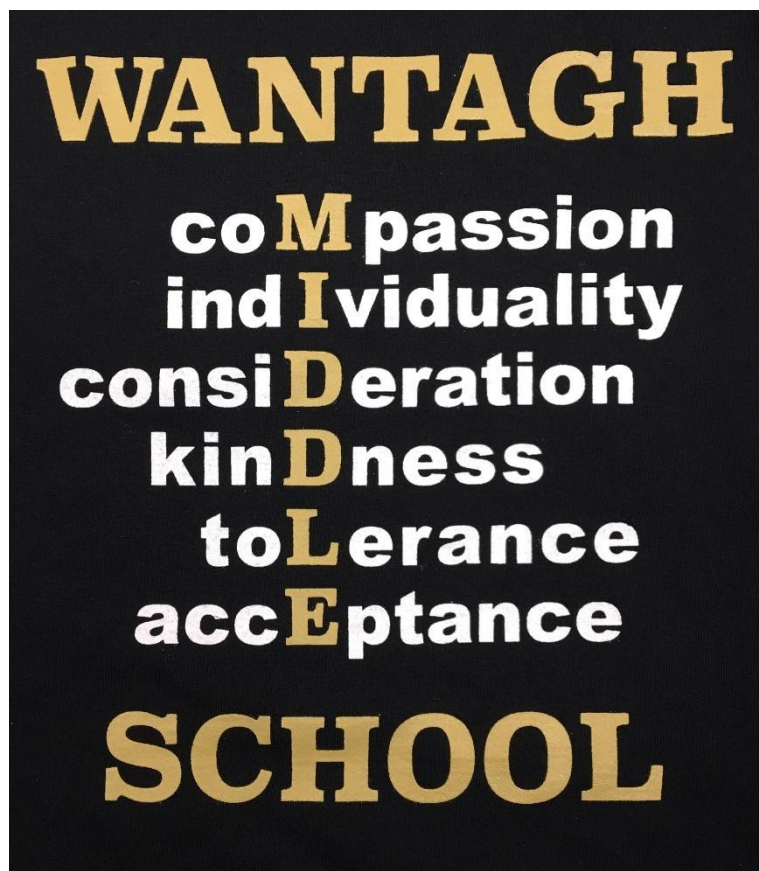


WANTAGH MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-2022



#WarriorsCare

Mr. Anthony E. Ciuffo, Jr., Prín cipal
Dr. Stephanie Scolieri, Assistant Prín cipal

Principal: Mr. Anthony F. Ciuffo, Jr.
Assistant Principal: Dr. Stephanie Scolieri

Guidance Counselors	Grades 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Mr. Ward	A-F	A-F	A-F
Mrs. Gilley	G-M	G-M	G-M
Mr. Bloom	N-Z	N-Z	N-Z

Psychologists: Dr. Zelenetz and Dr. Taylor
Nurse: Mrs. Dzigas **Librarian:** Ms. Weber

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

My goal is for Wantagh Middle School to be a place that you can’t wait to get to each morning and hate leaving each afternoon. Your teachers love you and want to see you succeed. They will do whatever they need in order to make that happen, but here are a few ways that you can also help yourself have an amazing school experience:

- Always come prepared with your Chromebook, notebook, pen and/or pencil.
- Please make sure to leave any communication devices in your locker.
- BE KIND to your classmates, faculty and staff.
- Work hard because “HARD WORK PAYS OFF!”

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is the importance of building positive relationships. When you walk through the doors each morning at Wantagh Middle School, make eye contact with someone, smile, and say “Hi.” Repeat this multiple times every day and you will be just fine. You’d be surprised how far a friendly smile and hello will take you. Remember that we are here to support you, so do not ever feel that you cannot come talk to any one of the adults in the building; our doors are always open for you. I am so honored to be your principal, and I wish you all an amazing school year.

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights – The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law and district policy. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and supportive school environment, all district students have the right to:

- Attend school in the district in which one’s parent or legal guardian resides.
- Expect that school will be a safe place to be educated.
- Be respected as an individual.
- Have the opportunity to take part in all school activities free of discrimination and harassment, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practice, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, weight or disability.
- Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel in a discipline situation.
- Access school policies, regulations, rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

Student Responsibilities – All students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to maintaining a safe and supportive school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to others and to property.
- Be familiar with and abide by school policies, rules, and regulations dealing with student conduct.
- Attend school every day unless legally excused. Also, be in class, on time and prepared to learn.
- Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
- React to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
- Work to develop coping skills to manage anger.
- Ask questions when they do not understand.
- Seek help in solving problems.
- Dress appropriately for school and school functions in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
- To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act.
- To report and encourage others to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.

DIGNITY ACT (DASA)

- Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment while supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- Identify material and resources that support teaching civility in classroom instruction and classroom management; and provide guidance to staff as to how to access and implement those resources.
- Be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the district’s bullying prevention policy.
- Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is unlawfully on school property or at a school function.

Wantagh Middle School Dignity Act Coordinators:

Mr. Ciuffo
Principal

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(516)765-4300

Dr. Zelenetz
School Psychologist

zelenetzt@wantaghschools.org
(516)765-4373

TECHNOLOGY

- **Inappropriate use of technology.** Examples of inappropriate use include but are not limited to:
 - Any violation of the district's policy for use of the school's resources as articulated by the BOE in the latest revision of the district code of conduct.
 - Use of any recording device to photograph, create, or manipulate an audio or video recording on school property, at a school event, or on a school bus without the permission of the school principal or supervising teacher.
 - Taking photographs and/or video/audio recordings on school grounds **without the consent of those individual(s) being photographed/recorded** or without an otherwise valid school sanctioned purpose, is prohibited. In addition, prior to taking photographs and/or video/audio recordings for any other reason, consent shall be obtained from the building principal or his/her designee.
 - Sending, posting, or otherwise distributing a photograph, video or voice recording made on school property, at a school event or on a school bus without the permission of the school principal or his/her designee.
 - Use of technology, including but not limited to email, instant message, blogs, chat rooms, social media forums, cell phones, websites, internet and gaming systems, to deliberately harass, threaten, or intimidate others or create a disruption to the operation of school.
 - Sending, posting or otherwise distributing suggestive, nude or semi-nude photographs.
 - Any unauthorized use of district logo, name, letterhead, or communication system.
 - Use of headphones that interfere with the student's ability to hear verbal directives, alarms, and warnings is prohibited.

- **Actions deemed appropriate for misuse of technology:**
 - Requirement to seek assistance in learning the proper procedure before he/she is allowed to use computer equipment.
 - Administrator/parent contact
 - Referrals and conferences involving various support staff or agencies
 - Behavioral contracts
 - Confiscation of inappropriate items
 - Restitution/restoration
 - Denial of participation in class and/or school activities
 - Denial of access to the Internet for a specified period of time
 - Denial of access of computer equipment and other technology resources for a specified period of time.
 - Suspension from school and/or other appropriate disciplinary action

STUDENT ONLINE ETIQUETTE AND ACCOUNTABILITY CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of Wantagh Schools is to provide a highly effective and seamless education to our students, no matter the mode of instruction. Therefore, in addition to the Wantagh Middle School code of conduct, this addendum is in effect **in the event that student instruction is delivered through an online platform.**

Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to attend their online classes when they are in session. If a student will be absent from or tardy to instruction, for any reason, a parent or guardian must call the Wantagh Middle School Attendance Office on the morning of the absence or tardy at **516-765-4300**. When the student returns to online classes, they must submit a note from their parent/guardian or doctor, stating why they were absent. Illness and doctors appointments will only be considered excused absences if there is a verified note from a doctor or doctors office.

- Daily attendance can be viewed on the portal.
- Illness and doctors appointments will only be considered excused absences if a note from the doctor is submitted to the main office when the student returns to online classes.
- If a student is chronically late to an online class, absences may accrue.

Make-up Work

- When absent from school for a day or two, the most efficient and effective way to keep up with your studies is to contact your teacher via e-mail and request your assignments.
- Students will have a set amount of time to make up and submit any missed assignments or exams. Please make sure to arrange all make up work with your teacher.

Student Dress Code (In-School and Online)

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for online instruction and online school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair, jewelry, make-up, and nails, shall:

- Be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnic group gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- Ensure that underwear or swim garments are completely covered with outer clothing.

In addition to this, here are some other things to consider regarding student dress:

- Extremely brief garments and see-through garments are not appropriate (crop tops, strapless tops, short shorts).
- Except for medical or religious purposes, students are required to remove hats upon entering the building.

In the event that a student is in breach of the dress code set forth by the district:

- Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item.
- Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to disciplinary actions.
- Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including suspension from the class &/or school.

Student Online Responsibilities (In the event that instruction is delivered through an online platform)

All students have the responsibility to:

- Attend online classes every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
- Use their school-issued devices for online learning.
- Inform the help desk (via Parent Portal) of any technological issues or concerns within 24 hours of the issue.
- Be ready to learn in an area where there are minimal distractions and provide teachers with an indicator that they are attentive throughout the instruction.
- Keep their cameras on when attending an online class and enter class with their microphones muted.
- During online instruction periods, students are expected to activate their camera and microphone during live video or audio lessons. Teachers will have the discretion to designate specific lessons or portions of lessons as "video / audio required." If a student or parent is uncomfortable with the use of video during class, they should contact the teacher as soon as possible to discuss alternatives.
- If a student is found to be non-participatory or unresponsive during a lesson, teachers have the ability to mark a student absent.
- Online lessons may incorporate live interaction for the opportunity for students to feel a connection to their teachers and one another. Text chat boxes are a useful tool for teachers and students during a recorded video or screencast, but not an ideal tool to use exclusively.
- Regularly monitor and acknowledge their Schoology accounts, email accounts, and other messenger apps the teachers may use for teacher comments, feedback, and communication.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES –

The entire District Code of Conduct is available on the website

Any violation of this Code should be reported to the building principal or assistant principal. Penalties may be imposed alone or in combination. Depending on the nature of the violation, student discipline may be progressive, that is, with each subsequent violation, the penalty can be increased, and all other relevant factors and circumstances shall be taken into account in determining the

appropriate penalty. However, depending on the severity of the misconduct, a first time offender may be subject to the most severe penalties. ***Any student who accumulates four referrals will not be permitted on any school sponsored field trips. For 8th graders one additional referral (total of 5) will result in the loss of attending the 8th Grade Event in June. Please note: one out-of- school suspension equals three referrals, one in-school suspension equals two referrals.*** Please understand that “fair” is not always “equal” when determining consequences.

The ranges of penalties which may be imposed for violation of the Code of Conduct include the following:

- Verbal warning
- Referral – written notification is maintained in student file
- Referrals to outside agencies: Counseling, PINS petitions, Juvenile delinquent and Juvenile offender status
- Detention – three different kinds of detention can be assigned:
 1. Teacher detention- served by the student with the individual teacher
 2. School detention – served by the student from 3:05-3:40 PM in an assigned room
 3. Lunch detention – students eat lunch in a secluded, silent setting under the supervision of a teacher
- Suspension
 1. In-school suspension – a student is suspended from regular classroom activities, he/she is confined to a teacher-monitored location where the student must complete all assignments sent by his/her teachers.
 2. Out-of-school suspension – a student is suspended from school grounds. A parent conference is required. The building principal has the authority to impose suspensions of five days or less. The superintendent of schools may impose a suspension of more than five days. If a principal determines that a suspension of five days or less is warranted, he/she shall immediately, within 24 hours, notify the student and the student’s parent/guardian that the student has been suspended from school. Written notice to the parent/guardian shall be given to the parent/guardian at the meeting. If possible, additional notice shall be provided by telephone. Suspension of more than 5 days shall be governed by appropriate procedures of the superintendent of schools.
- Exclusion and/or removal from a particular class/extra-curricular activity.
- Expulsion

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with all procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and regulations.

ADVISORY (PERIOD 1)-HOME AWAY FROM HOME

One of the first people you will meet on the first day of school will be your advisor. You will meet with your advisor each morning for either a 10-minute period or an extended advisory period. In your advisory, you will be with other sixth, seventh, and eighth graders whom you will get to know in this smaller, “family-like” setting. Attendance is taken here, notices are handed out, daily announcements are made, and special events may be organized in advisory. Breakfast, spirit day activities, homework help, and general discussions often occur during advisory. Your advisor is there to make your Middle School experience successful and enjoyable. Talk to him or her!

TARDINESS

If a student is late to school, report to the main lobby to sign in with our front desk monitor. Please have a note explaining the tardiness. Failure to have a note will result in an after school detention. **Ten late arrivals to school will result in an after school detention as well, whether they are excused or unexcused.** *Any athlete not in school by 9:30 a.m. cannot practice or participate in an event/game on that day.*

ABSENCE

A parent/guardian must call the main office if a student is going to be absent. Students are expected to bring an absence note to his/her advisor stating the reason for the absence upon return to school.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students may be excused with WRITTEN PERMISSION ONLY. Students can **only** be released to adults listed on their Emergency Contacts.

ROOM LOCATIONS

All 300 numbered rooms are located on the first floor, as are the gyms, main office, and offices for the nurse, guidance counselors, and psychologists. All 400 numbered rooms are located on the second floor, as are the IMC and the hallway to the lunchrooms.

In rare occasions, students may take classes located in the high school. All 100 numbered rooms are located in the high school on the 1st floor and 200 rooms on the 2nd floor.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued every 10 weeks on the parent/student portals only. If you are not currently enrolled in the parent/student portals please see the district website for instructions on how to sign up. You are encouraged to check the portal weekly in order to be current with your child's progress.

MERIT ROLL, HONOR ROLL and HIGH HONOR ROLL

To be eligible for merit roll, a student must have an overall average of 84.5 – 89.49 with no failures or incompletes. To be eligible for honor roll, a student must have an average of 89.5 – 94.49 with no failures or incompletes. To be eligible for high honor roll, a student must have an average of 94.5 – 100 with no failures or incompletes.

To calculate the average:

All courses that meet daily count 2 times in that quarter and every other day courses count 1 time in that quarter. For example: English, math, science and social studies count 2 times and music and physical education count 1 time. Electives may vary depending on course and frequency.

HONOR SOCIETY

Students are academically eligible for Honor Society if they have achieved a 90 or higher average in grades 7 and 8. In middle school, Regents and honors classes count the same. Students must have been an active participant in at least two (2) school clubs or sports or related community service activities during each grade. In addition, students will be rated on a scale of 1-5 by a committee of faculty and staff on character and leadership skills. Only those students who have averages of 4 or above will be eligible for induction. **Adherence to deadlines is also required.** You will be notified if your child has qualified for honor society.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic Integrity: What it is and why it is important?

Academic integrity, scholastic honesty, is essential for the assessment of student learning and the evaluation of teaching practices. We educators need to know what a particular student and a particular class have learned and the extent to which our curriculum and instruction is sound. Academic dishonesty is an obstacle to this intent. Academic integrity is violated when a student obtains credit for, or is evaluated on, work that is not his or her own. This includes students sharing their own work with others. Regardless of what the student does with the work that was shared with them, the responsibility falls on both parties involved.

Consequences of academic dishonesty, especially cheating and plagiarism

The two most common forms of academic dishonesty that we encounter in the classroom are cheating and plagiarism. Every student must be informed by both the school and the individual teacher as to what constitutes academic dishonesty and the consequences of such. When cheating or plagiarism occurs, it is important that the incident be recorded, appropriate school staff and the student's parents be notified, and an appropriate consequence will be given to all parties involved. Consequences can range from detention, to having to redo the assignment, to receiving a zero for the assignment. Consequences are at the full discretion of the teacher and administrative staff.

Explanation of plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own. This someone else could be another student, a parent, or an author of printed or electronic material. The words or ideas of another must be properly documented whether they are in the form of a quotation, a paraphrase, or a summary.

Anti-plagiarism strategies

Plagiarism is not just the concern of the teacher in the classroom. It is part of academic integrity and as such is the concern of the entire educational staff, students, and parents. We must educate students properly about plagiarism, instruct them in such a way as to prevent them from plagiarizing, and inform them of how plagiarism is detected. See Robert Harris's "Anti-Plagiarism Strategies for Research Papers" at <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm> for a brief and insightful discussion of this topic.

SCHOOL BUILDING HOURS

Students are not permitted in the building before 8:05 AM or after 3:05 PM unless in a teacher-supervised activity.

Regular Day Tone Schedule

PERIOD 1 -	8:16	-	8:26
PERIOD 2 -	8:30	-	9:10
PERIOD 3 -	9:14	-	9:54
PERIOD 4 -	9:58	-	10:38
PERIOD 5 -	10:42	-	11:22
PERIOD 6 -	11:26	-	12:06
PERIOD 7 -	12:10	-	12:50
PERIOD 8 -	12:54	-	1.34
PERIOD 9 -	1:38	-	2:18
PERIOD10 -	2:22	-	3:02

BUS PASSES AND CONDUCT

Bus passes are mailed to eligible students at the beginning of the year. Students should carry these passes with them every school day. Lost passes may be replaced at the cost of \$5.00 each. Bus passes are not transferable. Any misconduct by a student on a bus will be subject to disciplinary action by the school and/or forfeiture of the bus privilege for a period of time. **Students may only ride their own bus – no exceptions.** Non-bus students are not permitted on a school bus at any time except for a field trip.

EXTRA HELP

Extra help is available on Tuesday, Wednesday, and/or Thursday from 3:02 to 3:34 PM as posted in the teacher's classroom. Late buses will be available at 4:05, 4:45, 5:25, 6:05 PM. There is one north bus and one south bus available at each time noted. Additional morning sessions may be offered.

TELEPHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may use the phone in the main office at any time. Messages and deliveries from home should be left at the window of the security desk in the lobby. *Students are responsible to check for items that have been dropped off for them.* ***Under no circumstances will the main office call a student down.*** Please be advised, no electronic devices (cell phones, Ipods, smart watches etc.) are allowed to be on or used during the school day and must remain in the student's locker during school hours. The device will be taken from the student and brought to the main office if seen/heard by a teacher/staff member. Only a parent or adult listed on the emergency contact list may report to the main office to sign for its return.

LOCKERS

All students will be assigned a locker during the advisory period on the first day of school. You will be responsible for keeping it clean and LOCKED. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR COMBINATION TO OTHER STUDENTS AS YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING IN THAT LOCKER.** You may go to your locker at the beginning and the end of the day, between classes, and before and after lunch as long as you are on time for class. Periodic locker clean-outs will be held during the year. You will also have a physical education locker. You may keep your sneakers, shorts, and a shirt here for use in physical education classes. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE THAT IT IS LOCKED AT ALL TIMES.**

BACKPACKS

Due to the crowded halls during passing, as a safety measure it is recommended to use a string backpack during the school day. Students may use non-string backpacks to and from school. Once they are in school, the string backpacks should be used to avoid extra strain on the students' backs. These backpacks are sold in the school store for your convenience.

HALL PASSES

In between periods, students are expected to go directly to their next class and not congregate in the hallways. All students **MUST** have a pass if they are in the hall during class periods. Members of the staff may stop you and ask for this pass, so please keep it handy.

IF YOU GET HURT

If you are injured but can return to school with crutches or a sling, please bring a note from your doctor. A helper will be assigned to you to help you get to class with your books. In addition, you may be issued an elevator key. It is your responsibility to see that only you and your helper use the elevator and that you do so in a responsible manner. Failure to do so will result in the loss of the key and privilege.

MEDICATION

If it is necessary to take medication during school hours, you may do so with a note from your private doctor and your parent. The medication is to be brought to the nurse in the original labeled container. These instructions apply to prescription and non-prescription medications. A parent must be present to dispense non-prescription medication to a student during the school day.

HOMEWORK

It is your responsibility to copy down and complete your homework each evening. If you are to be out of school for at least 3 days, have your parent email your teachers or call your guidance counselor. Assignments will be gathered and sent to the guidance office where they can be picked up by your parent. It is expected that if assignments are requested, you will make every effort to complete as many as you can.

SPIRIT DAYS AND OTHER EVENTS

During the year, various spirit days which dictate specific methods of dress will occur. Advisories get points for the number of students who participate. Themes include Black and Gold Spirit Day, Halloween Costume Day, and various Spirit Week activities. Food drives around Thanksgiving and toy drives in December are just some of the special activities in the Middle School conducted through advisories. After-school events will be planned by members of the class or Student Council. All school conduct rules apply at any school-sponsored event.

SCHOOL STORE

The school store is open every morning from 8:00 to 8:10 AM. The School Store sells quality supplies at fair prices with superior customer service. Students have the opportunity to pre-purchase agendas, nylon bags, and school supplies in June for the following year. These pre-purchased items may be picked up at the School Store during the 6th grade picnic or during the first week of school. If you don't see something that you need for school, just ask—we would love to order it for you!

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria offers a hot lunch daily. In addition, there are sandwiches, salads, and fruit. The menu appears on our website. ***Food from outside establishments may NOT be delivered or brought into the school for lunch, including birthdays or other celebratory days.*** A breakfast cart is also available in the main lobby before school.

IMC

The IMC is open after school for taking out and returning books. Limited use during lunch is possible. Failure to return books will result in a student obligation resulting in the inability to access the report card on the parent/student portal.

RESPECT ★ RESPONSIBILITY ★ REFLECTION

The Wantagh Middle School seeks to promote academic excellence, social skills, self-esteem and respect for others through a cooperative effort.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Anthony Greco	President
Ms. Laura Reich	Vice President
Ms. Tara Cassidy	Trustee
Mr. Adam Fisher	Trustee
Ms. Kera McLouglin	Trustee

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. John C. McNamara	Superintendent
Dr. Marc J. Ferris	Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony J. Cedrone	Assistant Superintendent

MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Anthony F. Ciuffo, Jr.	Principal
Dr. Stephanie Scolieri	Assistant Principal

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Wantagh, New York 11793
Telephone: (516)765-4300 Fax: (516)765-4304
www.wantaghschools.org

*A copy of this handbook could also be found on the Wantagh Middle School website