

Northampton Public Schools

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK
and
CODE OF CONDUCT
for
Bridge Street School
Jackson Street School
Leeds School
Robert K. Finn Ryan Road School**



2016-2017

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year! We believe that it will be a great year in which all students will learn new and interesting things, grow mentally and physically more skillful and stronger, make new friends, learn how to get along with everyone, and feel comfortable and safe.

There are many adults at school to help you so that you have success at school. We encourage you to try your best in your work at school and home.

This handbook and code of conduct will answer some of your questions and give you information about some important policies and procedures. It will also make you aware of the opportunities that the school offers. Please read it thoroughly, and then keep it available for reference during the year.

We hope you have a great year!

Sincerely,

The Elementary Principals:

Gwen Agna, Sal Canata, Beth Choquette, and Sarah Madden

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STUDENT ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE

A. Student Records

The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school district and which personally identifies the student; it consists of the temporary record and the transcript. For purposes of these procedures, custodial parent refers to a divorced or separated parent who has physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parents may not be eligible to access their child's student record, or may have to follow certain procedures in order to access the student record.

The rights outlined below may be exercised by the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) for a student under the age of 14 years, or jointly by the student and custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child over the age of 14 years. A student over the age of 14 is called "an eligible student". A student 18 years or older may, in writing, deny his/her custodial parent(s) and/or non-custodial parent(s) access to his/her student record, with the exception of transcripts, report cards and/or progress reports.

Each eligible student and custodial parent/guardian, except as limited herein for certain parents, has the right to see the student record for that student within ten (10) days of submitting a written request to see the records. Copies of any record may be obtained upon request and shall be provided within ten (10) days of the request. The District may charge for the cost of reproducing copies.

The student's record is available to authorized school personnel who work directly with the student, or administrative/clerical personnel who need to have access to records in order to carry out their responsibilities. The term "authorized school personnel" includes, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, counselors, therapists, paraprofessionals, administrative office, staff and clerical personnel. Authorized school personnel included those employed by the District or under contract with the District as an independent contractor. Authorized school personnel do not need permission to see the student records.

No information in the student's record is available to anyone outside the school system without written permission from the eligible student and/or parent and/or guardian, unless the requesting party is listed as an exception as provided by the Student Records regulations. Exceptions to the requirement of written permission include, but are not limited to, a probation officer, court order, subpoena, where health or safety requires the disclosure of student information/records or upon transfer to another school district. However, eligible students and/or their

parent/guardians will generally be notified before these records are released. A written release must be signed to have any part of the school record sent outside the school. This includes, but is not limited to prospective employers, other technical school(s), and colleges.

B. Health Records

All students entering the school system must provide the school with immunization records, or copies, which meet the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Proof of a comprehensive physical examination within the past 6 months is required. It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to provide current immunization records and a copy of the most recent physical exam. The health record is considered a temporary record and it is the practice of the Northampton Public Schools that if a student transfers to another school district, the paper record, and any pertinent electronic record, will be transferred directly to the receiving nurse. The original health record may also be given to the parent/guardian at the time of transfer. An electronic copy of the immunization record will be kept. Health records are maintained separately from student educational records and there is no access to the records by anyone other than the school nurse.

C. Directory Information Notice

The Northampton School District has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Records Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et. Seg.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports (7) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors, and awards received, (10) post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seg.

D. Rights of Certain Divorced or Separated Parents

It is necessary for divorced parent to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order, and any subsequent changes made thereto, to the District so that District

personnel may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child. The non-custodial parent may access his/her child's record unless

1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student, and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. the parent has been denied visitation, or
3. the parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been registered by a temporary or permanent order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information containing in the student record, or
4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The District shall place in the student's record any documentation indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a)

Non-Custodial Parent Access: In case of a non-custodial parent who is eligible to access the student record, i.e. does not fit any of the four (4) categories under 1-4 above, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student records to the school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the principal and/or his/her designee shall immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth under 1-4 above

When the student record is released to the non-custodial parent, the school will delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parent. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

E. Amending Your/ Your Child's Record

1. A parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student's record. The parent should submit the additional information in writing to the principal with a written request that the information be added to the student record.
2. A parent has the right to request in writing deletion or correction of any information contained in the student's record, except for information which was inserted into that record by the TEAM. Such information inserted by the TEAM shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or

amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

- a. If a parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable materials in the student's record, the parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
- b. The Principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent, the principal and/or designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.
- c. If the principal's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeal shall be in writing and submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.
- d. If the Superintendent's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing as required on the appeal as required by 603 CMR 23.09 (4).

F. Notice On Transfer to Other Schools

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07 (g), notice is hereby given to parents and eligible students that the District forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such a transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent or eligible student.

G. Destruction of Records

1. Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

2. In addition, each year, the principal and/or teacher and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary records: disciplinary records (other than documentation suspension/expulsion/exclusions), any notes from the Parent/guardians or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian want those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

H. Complaint Procedure

In addition to the appeal procedure, above, a parent/guardian/eligible student may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) of the Federal Department of Education. The FPCO has the authority to interpret and decide issues involving student records under FERPA. The FPCO's address is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

I. School Choice

Northampton Public Schools provides school choice opportunities for parents/guardians within the district and from other communities. Notification of available spaces is posted in local newspapers in February when the district begins to accept applications for the following school year. Availability is limited by enrollment in each grade in each school.

Families moving out of Northampton during the school year can apply to remain in a Northampton school through the school choice program. A child can remain as a School Choice student only if there are available slots from those advertised as required by M.G.L. c. 76, sect. 12B, and only if there is no waiting list for that grade and school.

All families of children accepted under the school choice option are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from school and school activities.

J. Withdrawal

Parent/guardians who are moving their families out of Northampton during the school year are requested to inform the school office of the intent to withdraw and complete a withdrawal form and permission to forward school records.

DAILY ATTENDANCE, CALENDAR, and CANCELLATIONS

Regular attendance is important to a student's academic success and establishing positive social relationships. A student who is not in school by 11:00 AM will be considered absent and *needs to bring a written excuse to her/his teacher upon returning to school*. The note should list the days missed, the reason for the absence and must be signed by the parent or guardian. The following is our daily schedule for this year:

School/Class Begins at 8:50 AM to 3:00 PM.

Dismissal on Half Days: 12:20 PM.

Pre-school: 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM or 12:30 PM to 2:50 PM Monday through Thursday

If a student is unable to attend school, parent/guardians are asked to telephone the school between 8:45 and 9:45 A.M. This call should be made for the safety of the student. The school will call the home of any student whose parent/guardian has not notified the school. The school notifies the Community Outreach Social Worker when a student is repeatedly absent. The school may file a criminal complaint against a parent whose child is absent for more than seven (7) full days or fourteen (14) half-days in a six-month period. See M.G.L. c. 76, sect. 2. The court can take a variety of actions against a parent including the imposition of a fine. Further, under the law known as Child Requiring Assistance law, the school has a school-wide attendance program, and can bring an action under that statute for the court's involvement in getting a child to attend school on a regular, consistent basis.

A. Tardiness

A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives at school after 8:50 AM. A student who is tardy *must* report to the office to make certain that his/her name will not be placed on the absentee sheet, thus preventing a needless call home. A note explaining the reason for the tardiness should be sent with the student the next day. Students who arrive late because of a late bus will not be marked tardy, but must report to the office. *When there is a pattern of tardiness, parent/guardians will be notified and the Community Outreach Social Worker is notified also.* A pattern of tardiness can be an indicator of parent/guardian neglect and may be reported to the Department of Children and Families.

FOR GUIDELINES ON DETERMINING WHEN A CHILD SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS, SEE HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION.

B. Early Dismissal

If a student has to leave school before dismissal time, a parent/guardian needs to send a note to school with the child stating the time of dismissal and the name of the person who will pick up the student. The school may call the parent/guardian to verify the information sent on such a note. *The student will be released only to a parent or guardian, unless a written request to release the student to another person is presented.*

Both bus students and walkers need notes when early dismissal is requested. Elementary students are not permitted to be dismissed early if they are to walk alone. For safety, walkers will be dismissed early only if a parent/guardian or designated caregiver picks them up.

C. District Calendar

At the beginning of the school year, each student is given a Northampton School District calendar for the school year that lists all the school holidays, vacations, parent/ teacher conferences and marking periods. In addition, the school calendar includes the dates for Professional Development Days for teachers and for parent/ teacher conferences. There are no classes on the afternoon of parent/ teacher conference days, so parent or guardians need to plan for home care for their children on such days.

D. Canceling school

In case of bad weather or other emergencies causing school closing, information will be broadcast through the School Messenger phone calls and on local radio stations beginning as early as possible. The stations are as follows: WHMP, Northampton; WTTT, Amherst; WWLP TV 22, Springfield; WGGB TV 40, Springfield; WMAS, Springfield; WSPR, Springfield; WHYN, Springfield; WNNZ, Westfield.

It is not our policy to close school during the day except in the case of an extreme emergency. If a serious weather condition develops during the morning, afternoon preschool classes may be canceled.

E. Delaying school

Delaying schools for one or two hours will be seriously considered on any day when the weather conditions are improving and with the additional time the roads and walkways would be safe for ALL students. The decision to cancel or delay will be made by 6:00 AM.

On delay days, all schedules are affected by one or two hours. This includes bus pick-up times and also the time when children, either walkers or students who are dropped off, can arrive at school. At all elementary schools with a one-hour delay, *STUDENTS SHOULD NOT ARRIVE BEFORE 9:35 AM*, two-hour delay, *NOT BEFORE 10:35 AM*. Also included in the delay are the before-school care programs that are

held at the elementary schools. The before-school program coordinators have been notified of this policy. Lunch schedules in each school will be adjusted by the building principal. Dismissal time will always be the normal time.

NOTE: ONCE A DECISION IS MADE TO DELAY, WE WILL NOT CHANGE THE LENGTH OF A DELAY, AND ONLY IN EXTREME CASES WILL WE CANCEL AFTER A DELAY CALL HAS BEEN MADE.

School Messenger calls, Radio and TV announcements will be made by 6:00 AM and information on the Gazette Line is available at 6:00 AM. Stations making announcements are:

WHMP - Northampton WWLP TV 22 WITT - Amherst WGGB TV 40
WMAS - Springfield WNNZ - Westfield WHYN - Springfield
Gazette Line - 584-3200, Selection #3708

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Children who live two miles or more from the school building are eligible for school bus transportation. Information on buses, routes, stops and pick up and drop off times are available in the late summer from the transportation office and are printed in the local newspapers. In September listed times are approximate and students should be at the bus stops at least ten minutes earlier than the scheduled time.

Only students designated for a route may ride a school bus. *Guests, friends, and relatives are not permitted to ride on a bus.* Parent/guardians are also not permitted to ride school buses.

The School Committee approves bus stop locations and bus drivers are not permitted to pick up or drop off students at a place other than an approved stop. There is no regular adult supervision at bus stops. Parent/guardians are encouraged to accompany younger children to the stop.

Students who are on Individualized Educational Plans or 504 plans may be eligible for school transportation regardless of the distance from home to school. Eligibility for special transportation is determined during the special education or 504 evaluation process. Students who are placed in district-wide special programs such as those for English Language Learners may also be eligible for transportation to the school site with the appropriate programming.

The Northampton School Committee has two main responsibilities in regards to school transportation: 1) the enforcement of school attendance laws and 2) the safety of students.

Students who are transported by the Northampton Schools are expected to follow all rules listed in the Code of Conduct. These standards for behavior are necessary in order to provide safe and efficient school transportation. To assist in this effort, the buses all are equipped with cameras that include audio recording which allow for administrative oversight as needed.

To insure the safety of students, the School Committee has ruled that they may withdraw the privilege of free bus transportation from any student whose conduct is such that it is distracting to the bus driver.

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL

A. Arrival

For safety, no student should arrive at school earlier than 8:30 AM. There is no guarantee of adult supervision on the playground prior to that time. Students are expected to remain outside the school building until the bell rings at 8:50 AM unless they are having breakfast in the cafeteria. In inclement weather students may be brought into the school building to wait for the arrival bell.

Once students have arrived on school grounds in the morning, they are not permitted to leave school property without permission of the principal and/or parent or guardian.

Students are expected to enter the building in an orderly manner by the designated entrances only.

B. Dismissal

All students will be dismissed regularly at 3:00 pm.

Walkers are expected to leave school grounds at dismissal time unless parent/guardians have provided written permission for them to remain on the playground unsupervised. *There is no adult supervision on the playground after the buses depart.*

Students who ride the school bus or van home will be put on the appropriate bus unless the school office is notified of alternate arrangements in writing. *If a bus student is being dismissed after school to a destination other than the usual one, the parent/guardians should send instructions to the school in writing otherwise the child will be expected to follow their usual dismissal routine.* If friends are coming home after school they may not ride the bus unless they are regularly assigned to that bus route. In such cases parent/guardians will need to make alternate transportation arrangements.

C. Safety Issues

For Walkers:

It is important that students know the route to school. If students are going to walk and are new to the school, it is advisable for parent/guardians to walk them over the route a few times so that they are familiar with the way and know how to make all of the crossings safely. An older brother or sister may help rehearse the route with younger students. Parent/guardians are encouraged to review the following pedestrian safety rules with their children:

- Always crosses at crosswalks.
- Look left right left for moving cars before crossing.
- Make sure the driver sees you. Make eye contact with the driver.
- Cross only when the road is clear.
- Keep on looking for cars even as you are crossing the street.
- Walk when you cross - don't run.
- Always walk facing oncoming traffic.

There are crossing guards provided by the City of Northampton through the Police Department. They are stationed at the more traveled and dangerous intersections. Please make sure that your child crosses only with a crossing guard whenever possible. The school office and/or the police department can inform you of crossing guards stationed in your area.

For Bicycle Riders (includes skateboards, scooters and roller blades):

Students may ride their bicycles to school. Some grade restrictions are made in individual schools. Racks are provided and must be used at all times. Bicycles should be locked to ensure their protection. Students must exercise extreme care because of buses and automobiles. Students should not ride bicycles on sidewalks or lawns unless riding in the street would be hazardous. *There will be no bicycle riding on school property during school hours or for 15 minutes before or after the school day.* **State law requires that helmets be worn.** Those abusing the privilege and the laws will not be permitted to ride their bicycles to school.

Skateboards are not permitted to be ridden on school property at any time. Skateboards, roller blades and scooters may be secured inside the school building in areas designated by the principal. Skateboards and scooters are not permitted on school buses and vans.

For Parent/Guardian Transportation:

Parent/guardians who provide transportation to and from school are expected to comply with all traffic and school regulations regarding parking and safety. Each school has areas designated for parent/guardian drop off and pick up. This information will be available from the school office. The safety of children is of critical concern. Parent/guardians are asked to demonstrate safe behavior during arrival and dismissal by parking in designated parking areas, not passing school buses loading or unloading students, not double parking, not allowing children to exit on the street side of vehicles, not walking between waiting school buses, not leaving unattended vehicles running, and crossing streets in marked crosswalks and/or with crossing guards only.

For Bus Students:

Bus drivers will not dismiss a kindergarten student from the bus without a parent or guardian present at the bus stop unless older children are getting off at the same stop. When the bus driver judges that it is not safe to let any student leave the bus, the student will be returned to the school office where the parent/guardian will have to pick him/her up.

Students should learn the number of their bus they take to and from school. There is a sign in the window of each bus. H stands for High School, K for J.F. Kennedy Middle School, B for Bridge Street School, L for Leeds Schools, J for Jackson Street School and R for R.K. Finn/Ryan Road School. The number after the letter is for the route of the bus.

Students must wait on the sidewalk for their bus. Students must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door to the bus before approaching to load. Students must not run or walk towards a moving bus. When boarding the bus *students must walk to their buses using the sidewalk.*

The following items are not allowed on the bus. Skateboards, scooters, large athletic equipment, balls that can not be carried safely in backpacks or large school projects that can not be held on the student's lap, live animals, insects or reptiles. Other items that are questionable for transportation will be looked at individually. Ultimately the bus contractor and the driver have discretion in what is safe and what is not.

Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.

The transportation supervisor monitors bus stops and the regular school disciplinary code applies for conduct at bus stops.

GENERAL PROCEDURES AND ROUTINES

A. Family and Student Expectations

Good Habits

We hope each child has learned good eating, sleeping and playing habits before entering school. A good diet, especially a nourishing breakfast, a good night's sleep and play outdoors will help students to be healthy and happy and able to learn well in school.

Habits and attitudes of courtesy and respect that are modeled and promoted at home will help each child develop successful relationships with teachers, school personnel, and other students.

Students are expected to:

- arrive at school on time and prepared
- comply with school rules and procedures
- use respectful words and tone of voice
- respect the personal space and personal property of others
- respect each other's individual differences
- follow the directions of the adult in charge
- cooperate with classmates, team mates and study or project group mates
- use school materials and property carefully

B. Dressing for School

Clothing for school should be chosen for comfort, health, safety and appropriateness. Outer clothing should be labeled with a student's name. Whenever possible, students should wear outer garments that can be taken on and off easily with minimal or no assistance. Clothing should be suited to the weather and support attitudes of respect for others and an educational environment.

Certain modes of dress are discouraged for elementary aged children including very high chunky or stacked heels, flip flops, tops and dresses with spaghetti straps, tops that are very tight, that expose the stomach or midriff, that contain disrespectful language or images, and jewelry and paraphernalia that imitate gang symbols, or other styles that are not appropriate for young children. There may be times when children are asked to make changes to their dress by removing a questionable item, covering up with a sweatshirt, sweater or jacket, or calling home for a change of clothes. Caps and/or hats, and similar forms of headgear are not permitted in classrooms. Only headgear worn for religious purposes is permitted.

Health regulations require that footwear be worn at all times. Outdoor boots may not be worn all day in school; however slippers are permitted in classrooms with teacher permission. Sneakers are required for PE classes.

Young children can have soiling accidents at school. Parents of kindergartners may want to send children to school with a change of clothes. There is always a collection of clean useable clothes in the nurse's office in cases of emergency.

C. Lost and Found

There is a "Lost and Found" in each school where one can look for lost articles. Students often bring personal items such as toys, hats and other things of value with them to school. The school cannot be responsible for the loss of these items. Personal items of value to students should remain at home. If a student brings such an item to school, he or she should be encouraged to keep it in his/her desk or pocket at all times. Items left in the hallway, bathrooms, and cafeteria or on the playground are not frequently recovered. *The chance of recovering any lost item is greatly increased when the item is clearly labeled with a child's name.*

D. Keeping a Student After School

A teacher or administrator may keep a student after school when he/she needs additional academic help, or for disciplinary purposes. The teacher may detain a student up to one-half hour as a disciplinary consequence. The student will be given one day's notice in order to arrange for transportation. In all cases, parents will be notified prior to the event. Failure of student to remain after school for disciplinary reasons will result in additional disciplinary consequences.

E. Care of School Property

Pride in the school building and property is necessary in order to keep the building and grounds clean and attractive. Students who deface, damage, or destroy school property will have to pay the cost of repairs or damages.

F. Party Invitations, Valentines and Presents

Children love to share special events and occasions with their friends. In order to make these pleasant for everyone at school parents/guardians are asked to check with the classroom teacher about bringing "treats" for snack time. There may be special dietary restrictions required for classmates and anything provided for the class must be inclusive of all children in the room.

Party invitations, valentines and similar things cannot be distributed in class unless each child is receiving one and unless permitted by the classroom teacher. Check with the school office for help with finding addresses if invitations must be mailed.

Children should not bring individual gifts to school for birthdays or holidays to share with friends. Gift giving cannot take place during school time.

Families and children want to share their appreciation with teachers and staff during holidays and at the end of the year. A personal note of appreciation is sincerely welcome. Other gift giving is discouraged. As alternatives to gifts families can provide a book for the school library, make a donation to the PTO or student activity fund, or a favorite charity.

G. School Pictures

Each year a professional photographer is invited to take pictures of the students in Northampton Schools. Detailed information is sent home in the event a parent wishes to take advantage of this service.

H. Items Disruptive to the School

Many items have been found to disrupt the educational process and thus will not be allowed in classrooms and/or on school grounds. These include phones and most electronics, playing cards, collecting cards, skateboards, and roller skates. Other

restricted items can include toy guns, caps, water pistols, swords, handcuffs, pocketknives, bullets and bullet casings, nails, tacks, wands, large sticks, hardballs, and baseball bats. In addition, items that spray have been found hazardous such as perfume, mouthwash, deodorant, crazy string, and similar products. These and other items that are unsafe or being used in a manner that is unsafe will be confiscated and may be reclaimed only by parents or guardians.

I. School Grounds

School grounds are public property and maintained by the Northampton Public Schools and the City of Northampton. During the day the playground is for the exclusive use of the children attending school. When school is not in session, the grounds and play equipment is open to the public.

During school hours students are to remain in designated areas and within sight of the playground supervisors at all times. Students are to use the playground equipment in a safe and appropriate manner. Students may not eat or bring food out on the playground. Bicycles, skateboards, roller blades and scooters may not be used during recess. Snowball throwing is not allowed at any time

Cigarette smoking, use of tobacco products, possessing and/or consuming alcohol or illegal substances are unlawful on school property at all times.

J. Discipline

Each classroom reviews expectations for appropriate school behavior in September and posts reminders for appropriate behavior in the class. Schools develop procedures and expectation for recess periods, lunch periods, assemblies and performances, field trips and other school sponsored events. These will be provided to students and parents each September.

The Northampton Public Schools have developed a Code of Conduct for all students in grades K-12. Each child will receive a copy and it will be reviewed in school at least once every year in the fall. Parents/guardians should also review it with their children. A copy of the Elementary Code of Conduct is included with this booklet.

The Code of Student Conduct seeks to be fair. *The Code will be enforced to help provide a safe and orderly school in which students can learn and grow.* Enforcement of rules emphasizes a positive attitude toward students, teachers, and parents, with the goal that students ultimately discipline themselves. Principals will interpret the Code of Conduct and will apply rules and consequences with particular attention to the individual needs of each student.

Corporal punishment in public schools is illegal in Massachusetts. School staff may not hit, spank, or physically punish students. School staff members may, however, use reasonable force, if necessary, to protect students, other persons, or themselves from an assault by a student.

SCHOOL COUNCIL and SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Each elementary school has an established School Council, which is a representative, school-building-based, committee composed of the principal, teachers, parents and community members. Faculty and parent members are elected for terms of one to three years. Community members volunteer to serve on the committee or are recruited by the principal. Councils generally meet once a month during the school year.

Areas of Responsibility

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act outlines four major areas of responsibility for School Councils. Councils assist principals in:

- Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
- Identifying the educational needs of students attending school
- Reviewing the annual school building budget
- Formulating an annual school improvement plan

School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan is submitted annually to the School Committee and outlines the goals, action plan and assessment of accomplishments for the previous school year.

School Improvement Plans can include:

- The impact of class size on performance
- Student-teacher ratios
- Ratios of students to other supportive adults staff
- A professional development plan for faculty and staff
- Enhanced parent involvement
- School safety and discipline
- A school environment characterized by tolerance and respect for all groups
- Extra-curricular activities
- Means for meeting the diverse needs of as many children as possible within the regular education program
- Any further subjects the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate

ELEMENTARY CURRICULA AND PROGRAMS

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to adopt the Common Core State Standards at its [meeting on July 21, 2010](#). You can read

more about the development of these standards at www.corestandards.org. Commissioner Mitchell Chester's July memorandum to the Board recommending the Common Core State Standards is accompanied by [reports analyzing the standards](#).

The Commissioner will reconvene the English Language Arts and Mathematics Curriculum Framework Review Panels in September to consider augmenting the Common Core State Standards with additional standards and other features.

Since the enactment of the [Education Reform Act of 1993](#), a great deal of work has gone into developing the Curriculum Frameworks.

What has made the process so effective is the grassroots involvement of thousands of people statewide. The task could not have been accomplished without the commitment, energy, and dedication of teachers, administrators, associations, parents, business, students, higher education faculty, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education staff, the [Board of Education](#), and the public.

As a result of this process, the Curriculum Frameworks are of high quality, results driven, and focus on world class standards. What is important to remember is that each of the curriculum frameworks will always be considered as works in progress, and we will continue to refine them to strengthen them and to keep them current. Local communities will use the frameworks to develop more specific curriculum. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will base the new student assessment program on the frameworks.

A. English/Language Arts K-5

The ELA curriculum addresses reading, writing, spelling, oral language and handwriting. The overarching goal is to ensure proficiency in each area of literacy for all elementary students. Various materials are used to implement the curriculum objectives and include: *The Writer's and Reader's Workshop*, *Scholastic*, *Rebecca Sitton* and *Handwriting Without Tears*. The particular skills are outlined by grade level and are available for parent/guardians through the classroom teacher and/or the school office.

B. Mathematics

The elementary math curriculum address skill areas in (a) number and operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), (b) patterns, functions, and algebra, (c) geometry and measurement, and (d) data analysis, statistics and probability. The math curriculum is a hands-on/minds-on inquiry-based model designed to ensure that students develop a conceptual understanding of mathematics as well as proficiency in the essential skill areas of calculation, estimation and problem solving. Materials used to implement the math curriculum objectives include the *Investigations Math* program developed by TERC and published by Pearson and supplemental materials to address the needs of the Common Core State Standards.

C. Science

The elementary Science curriculum is a hands-on, inquiry-based approach to understanding how the world works. Major areas of study include (a) life science, (b) physical science, (c) earth and space, and (d) technology and engineering and follow the Next Generation Science Standards.

D. Social Studies

Elementary Social Studies includes topics in history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, civics, and culture. Our curriculum follows the outline in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks which emphasizes US history and geography at the elementary level. Specific categories for study at each grade level include: (a) History of the Americas including pre-Columbian civilizations, Native American cultures, European explorers, European settlement and immigration, the American Colonial period, the American Revolution, (b) Geography of the North, Central and South America including climate, map and globe skills, topography, natural resources and the interaction with the cultures of these areas, and (c) civics and government. Units are designed to be multidisciplinary and experiential to meet the developmental cognitive abilities of elementary students.

E. Music/Art

Both music and art instruction are important aspects of a complete education. Northampton Public Schools has courses of study appropriate for elementary learners that emphasize the areas of art and music appreciation, understanding of the basic components of each discipline, opportunities to learn and practice skills, and demonstrate their learning through displays and performances.

F. Physical Education

State law mandates physical education. Exemptions: 1) Students may bring a written note from home excusing them from one but not more than two gym classes due to illness or injury. 2) Any extended illness or injury requires a doctor's note stating length of absence from class, nature of injury and returning date to class. All medical excuses are kept on file in the nurse's office.

The elementary PE program emphasizes lifetime habits of physical activity and wellness as well as gross motor skills in the context of games and sports.

G. Related Areas:

Differentiated Instruction

The primary way in which the elementary schools provide enhancement and enrichment for the individual learning needs of students is through a differentiated approach to instruction. Differentiated instruction takes into account the individual learning style of each child and his/her readiness to understand the concepts and

skills under study. Differentiated instruction does not mean that each child has a completely individualized program but it does mean that teachers may use specific accommodations to ensure that each child has equal access to the course of study for his/her grade level.

The constructive instructional approach used in all curricula areas allows for a broad range of skill levels within a heterogeneously grouped classroom because it centers on each individual student's mental construction of the concepts and ideas that are being taught. The teacher uses assessment and testing to identify where each student is in relation to the concepts under study and then determines what each student needs to learn next in his/her progression to expert or adult conceptual understanding. The teacher provides a range of ways the instruction is provided:

- visual presentations: text, charts, graphs, pictures, videos, overhead schematics, graphic organizers
- auditory presentations: lecture, discussion, pair-share, videos, cds, tapes
- Hands-on presentations: in demonstrations, experiments, manipulatives, constructing models, use of real life objects and materials.

Teachers provide a similar range of options for students to demonstrate their understanding of the material under study in addition to simple paper/pencil assessment.

Enhancement and Enrichment

At times students may require *enhancement* (remediation) or *enrichment* of the classroom program of study to enable them to make effective academic progress. Teacher evaluations and test results assist in identifying students who require these services.

Each elementary school also provides a range of options for enriched study for students who are ready to deepen their study of grade level curriculum. Options for enrichment may include expanded assignments, specialized interest groups and clubs, peer tutoring, and independent study.

Both enhancement and enrichment strategies can also include mentoring by school volunteers.

English Language Learners

Under G.L. c. 71A, Sheltered English Immersion is the method used to provide instruction and support the English language acquisition process for young children in which all classroom instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language. English learners will be provided language support services until they are proficient enough in English to participate meaningfully in the district's education program. Some English learners will reach this level of English proficiency within one year, but some will not. Since students acquire proficiency in English at different rates, districts cannot limit to one year the provision of language support services to English learners who are not yet able to participate meaningfully in the district's

programs in English, and all reading, writing, and subject matter are taught in English.

Sheltered Immersion (ELL)

Under G.L. c. 71A, all textbooks and other instructional materials are to be in English, no subject matter shall be taught in any language other than English, and students learn to read and write solely in English. However, teachers may use an English learner's native language when necessary for clarification purposes.

Sheltered immersion programs for elementary English language learners in Northampton are provided at all of our elementary and secondary schools.

Instruction and curriculum are designed to permit active engagement by ELL students throughout the school day. English learners can bring personal and educational backgrounds and experiences to their classrooms that are different from those students born and educated in the United States. Teachers design instruction to link academic concepts to each student's prior knowledge and experience. Classroom instruction emphasizes English vocabulary by combining the teaching of vocabulary and the teaching of content. Teachers adapt content, including texts, assignments, and assessments. Content is presented in all modalities, including written texts which are within the student's English proficiency level. Testing and informal classroom assessments are also appropriate for each student's English proficiency levels. Regular classroom activities provide opportunities for students to practice and apply new language and content knowledge in English with frequent opportunities for students to demonstrate their mastery of English and content in English.

Early childhood

The NPS Early Childhood Centers which are located at Bridge Street School and Leeds Elementary School offer half day (morning and afternoon) integrated preschool classes for three and four year old children who live in Northampton, Florence and Leeds. The program includes children who are typically developing as well as those with special needs. The Northampton integrated preschool settings allow all children to participate to their fullest capacity in mainstream education. Special support services are provided within the classroom as needed. The program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our preschool curriculum is aligned with the MA Preschool Learning Experiences. (Please refer to NPS Preschool handbook for additional details)

Children who are typically developing are selected through a lottery. Contact the Early Childhood Office (587-1471 or bblack@northampton-k12.us) for applications. Depending on income and family size, a fee may be charged for preschool. Fees range from 0 to \$60/week.

Kindergarten: As with our preschool, kindergarten is based on a developmental model. There are daily opportunities for exploration and learning. Curriculum is

aligned with the MA Kindergarten Learning Experiences. (Please refer to the kindergarten "flipbook for additional details)

Family Engagement

Through a Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant from the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), NPS offers a variety of family support and engagement activities. Contact the Early Childhood office (587-1471 or bblack@northampton-k12.us) for information and referrals on child care, child development issues and concerns, parenting education, family support resources, and family activities.

Special Education

In Massachusetts, the special education system is based on the federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in combination with the state's special education law (MGL c. 71B). These laws protect students with disabilities who are eligible for special education and guarantee them an Individualized Education Program (IEP) designed to meet their unique needs.

Students ages 3-21 suspected of having a disability affecting her/his ability to progress effectively in education can be referred for a full evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. The referral can be made by school personnel, a parent/guardian, pediatrician, nurse and/or therapist. Prior to a referral all efforts will be made through the Student Service Team (SST) process. This may include Tiered Intervention and Response to Intervention where reasonable accommodations and modifications are made for the needs of a student within the regular education setting, utilizing regular education services such as Title I, ELL, and before/after school enhanced instruction. In addition, a parent/guardian has the right to request the services of the building based pre-referral support team in each school. If a school refers a student for a special education evaluation, parent/guardians will be notified in writing and written parent/guardian consent for an evaluation will be obtained. Evaluations will be completed by qualified Northampton Public School Staff.

The Northampton Public Schools are committed to providing Special Education services to students in the least restrictive environment. This means that, to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities must be educated with children who do not have disabilities. Special Education services will be provided to the child with a disability in the regular classroom when appropriate. Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of a child from the regular education environment will occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

If a parent/guardian feels his/her child may be eligible for services under Special Education, a referral can be made directly to the school principal. Further explanation of parental/guardian rights under IDEA and/or Special Education programs that are available in the Northampton Public Schools can be obtained from either the school principal or the Director of Pupil Services

504

The Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide protections for the civil rights of students with diagnosed disabilities that substantially limit their ability to access an education without specific specialized (Instructional) accommodations. The purpose of the law is to ensure that all students have equal access to an education regardless of a disability. Unlike special education eligibility, a student does not have to demonstrate a lack of academic progress to access classroom and school accommodations and services. Student eligibility is determined through an evaluation by a 504 Team who determine eligibility. The 504 team consists of the students, teachers, parents, the Principal or his/her designee, and other school providers as necessary. A specialist (ie. physician, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, allergist, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc.) provides a diagnosis of the disability. The 504 Plan is written by the team if the student is determined eligible or through the special education core evaluation process. The principal or a designee is responsible for writing and monitoring the 504 accommodation plan.

Health Services

Health Services Overview

The mission of the health services department of the Northampton Public Schools is to promote and protect the physical and emotional health of students and staff. The Health Services Department, through the School Nurses, provides comprehensive health programs that advance the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of all students.

Each school in the Northampton Public Schools has a full time registered nurse. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school nurse of any health condition that may impact their child while at school. It is the responsibility of the school nurse, working with parents/guardians, teachers, and other staff, to develop an individualized health care plan for any student who has a significant health care need.

The school physician is available to the school nurses for consultation.

Counseling

Our elementary schools are staffed by certified Counselors who provide social-emotional support to students who need such support to make effective academic progress. Priority for counseling services is given to students with learning disabilities identified through the special education and/or 504 evaluation process. However, crisis counseling and other on-demand short-term counseling for all students is available as schedules permit.

Counselors are trained to provide crisis intervention as well as to assist students in meeting their developmental social-emotional needs. Counselors provide service through individual and small group counseling and classroom presentations. The counselor also serves as a consultant to school staff, parent/guardians and referral agencies in the community.

Confidentiality for students and families is an essential component of counseling services. School counseling cannot address major and/or chronic mental health issues. Parent/guardians are encouraged to seek outside professional help for children with substantial needs. Parent/guardians are encouraged to communicate frequently with school counselors regarding the progress toward individual student goals.

Homework

Homework assists students to gain mastery in content areas and strengthen specific skills. Homework is also useful in developing independent study skills, self-discipline, and responsibility. Homework may be given each night. However, the amount of homework and the length of time available needed to complete it will be appropriate to the age and maturity of the student. If parent/guardians find their child is spending excessive periods of time on homework, they should discuss this situation with the classroom teacher.

Make-up work

The principal's office should be contacted to request assignments if a student is absent. Home assignments will then be made available. If you wish to call the school's office for assignments when a student is absent, the call should be made before 10:00 AM.

ASSESSMENT and TESTING

A. State Testing

Massachusetts requires that all public school students participate in the MCAS testing program. Students are tested in reading in third grade. Fourth graders are tested in English/Language Arts including a written composition and Mathematics. Students in fifth grade are tested in History and in Science/Technology. Testing occurs in the spring, generally from April through May. Results are mailed home to families in the fall. Students on special education IEPs, students on 504 plans, and students participating in ELL (English Language Learning) are expected to fully participate in the testing program. Schools will provide testing accommodations through the individual accommodation plan for each student as required.

B. Report Cards and Progress Reports

Work Sampling System

The Work Sampling System is a comprehensive approach to evaluating and keeping track of student learning and progress in preschool and kindergarten. Work Sampling replaces traditional report cards and standardized tests with a system that helps teachers observe, assess, and document your student's achievements. Work Sampling charts the performance of young learners in the following areas:

- Personal and Social Development
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematical Thinking
- Physical Development
- Scientific Thinking
- Social Studies
- The Arts

The Work Sampling System has three interrelated parts:

- Developmental Guidelines and Checklists -- Lists of age or grade-level expectations that are used for guiding teachers' observations.
- Samples of student work that show progress and demonstrate special interests and talents as well as areas in need of development.
- Summary Reports -- A profile of school performance based on the Checklist observations and work samples. It includes brief comments from the teacher about student progress, strengths, and areas of concern and is sent home twice per year. *The Summary Report serves as the kindergarten report card.*

The Work Sampling System does not compare children to other students. Instead, it compares each child's school performance to standards of excellence in areas of the curriculum and shows individual growth over time. Work Sampling encourages students to become actively involved in evaluating their own work. This helps them develop critical thinking skills and the ability to set personal learning goals.

Work Sampling Summary Reports are issued in January and June. Pre-school and Kindergarten parent/guardians will be given oral progress reports during the two conference times in October and March.

Report Cards

Report cards for grades 1 through 5 are distributed three times a year: at the beginning of December, in March and in June. Samples of the report cards are available through the school office. The report card should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school by the child for the first two marking periods. After the third marking period, the report cards become the permanent possession of the family.

In addition to the scheduled parent/teacher conferences in the fall, teachers are always available by appointment to meet with parent/guardians to review the report cards and on-going progress during the year.

Progress Reports

By law, all students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) must receive a progress report at the same time as report cards are distributed. Progress reports allow parents/guardians to check on their children's progress toward the IEP goals

at set times throughout the year. Special education progress reports help parents/guardians decide whether or not their children are making progress toward the annual goals that were developed during the IEP process. If a parent/guardian believes his/her child is not making the expected progress the parent/guardian should speak with the child's special education teacher or ask the Team to meet again to discuss whether changes in the IEP are needed.

A parent/guardian of any child who is not making adequate progress will be informed by the classroom teacher prior to the close of the grading period. The teacher and/or parent/guardian can refer the student to the building's student support team. The team will review the student's progress and make recommendations designed to help the student improve his/her academic performance.

C. Parent/Teacher Conferences

In the fall there are regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences. Each student's parent/guardians are invited to meet with the teacher for a specific appointment to discuss the progress and potential of the student. These conferences are planned for the benefit of the parent/guardian, teacher, and ultimately the student.

Parent/guardians should not hesitate to contact a teacher and/or schedule a conference at any time. In order that teachers can give parent/guardians time to answer questions and address concerns, it is requested that parent/guardians make appointments to meet with teachers. Appointments can be made through the school office or directly with individual faculty. Because of the tightness of the daily school schedule, it is very difficult for classroom teachers to meet with parent/guardians without 24 hour notice so that appropriate planning and coverage arrangements can be made.

D. District and School Report Cards and AYP requirements

The Massachusetts Department of Education (DESE) has developed a School Performance Rating Process to assess the extent to which all Massachusetts public schools are successfully preparing students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to perform at an acceptable level on the MCAS tests in core academic subjects and meet the goals of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. This may be changing due to the adoption of the Common Core and the possibility of PARCC Testing. While schools perform other important functions, such as supporting the healthy growth and development of children, preparing students to meet Massachusetts performance standards is at the core of every school's mission.

The School Performance Rating Process measures each school's performance and improvement on the MCAS tests. At the end of each cycle, a school will be assigned an overall performance rating and an overall improvement rating based on the school's performance for the year. Consequences for schools are based upon the

rating. The rating allows schools to formulate and implement specific improvement strategies and provides a statistically reliable measure of a school's progress over time toward meeting State targets.

The Northampton Public Schools and each elementary school provide annual "report cards" that outline the performance of the district and the schools on the indicators identified by the No Child Left Behind Act and DESE. These report cards are printed in local newspapers and are available for all parents/guardians and community members through the school offices.

CLASS ASSIGNMENT

A. General Procedures

The main purpose in class assignment is to construct the best possible learning environment for each child. Classes are balanced in terms of achievement, socio-economic levels, gender and friendship groupings that bring out the best in each child. There is an optimal size for classes recommended by the school committee ranging from a low of 15 at the Kindergarten level to a high of 26 at the fifth grade level. Wherever possible the special interests and needs of students and faculty are also considered.

Teachers, special subject teachers, remedial teachers, special education teachers and counselors meet in the spring to discuss and make recommendations for class placement. Teachers take into account learning styles, achievement, friendship groups, and similar criteria in assembling their lists. The classroom teachers submit a final list of recommendations to the principal before the end of the school year.

Class assignment is a painstaking process that balances the needs of both the individual student and the class group as a whole. Once placement decisions are made, principals rarely make changes to the assignment. Switching a single child can negatively affect the learning environment for the entire class group.

B. Promotion and Retention

The Northampton Public Schools strive to provide an appropriate response to all students' learning needs in the context of an educational setting, and to respond creatively to the array of educational, physical, social, emotional, and socio-economic needs which Northampton students and their families represent. Students are encouraged to excel to their personal best.

Promotion from one grade to another is based on the individual child's completion of the grade level work to the satisfaction of the classroom teacher. Throughout the school year, assessment data and observations will be collected by the teacher and a recommendation for retention will be discussed with the principal. In supporting

the retention the principal will notify the parents/guardian of the recommendation.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Schools are most successful in meeting their goal of educating all students when families support schools and schools support families. Parent/guardians are encouraged to support the Northampton Schools in many ways: by attending parent/teacher conferences and communicating with teachers throughout the year; serving on established ad hoc committees and councils; becoming working members of a PTO, PAC, or other parent/teacher group; volunteering as individuals or through VINS; and attending sporting, cultural and other kinds of events and presentations. Parent/guardians support the schools at home by taking an active interest in their child's day; assuring the health and well-being of their child; helping with homework; and being available to talk with and listen to their child talk about his/her school experience.

A. Parent/guardians and Visitors to School

Parent/guardians, community members and other visitors are encouraged to visit the schools and acquaint themselves with the wide variety of exciting learning experiences taking place. Please telephone the school office to make an appointment for a mutually convenient time. All visitors to schools are asked to report to the office upon arrival. If this is a first visit, please bring picture ID.

Visitors can make brief visits to observe classrooms. Each school will provide visitors with classroom visiting guidelines when they arrive at the school office. Visitors are reminded that the classroom is a workplace for both teachers and students. It is important that visits do not disrupt the instructional process. Please see Visitor Policy in Policy Section.

B. PTO

Parent/Teacher Organizations help parent/guardians meet other parent/guardians and share in programs of common interest that support their children and the school. Often the PTO offers enrichment projects for the benefit of all the school students and plans money-raising projects to help finance such enrichment projects.

Parent/guardians are encouraged to inquire at the school office about the existence of the PTO in their child's school. Notices will be sent home with each student concerning PTO meetings, usually held in the evenings at the school. All parent/guardians are encouraged to join and participate. Childcare is generally available.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE NORTHAMPTON SCHOOLS (VINS)

Volunteers in Northampton Schools were established in 1981. It is a resource for teachers in finding community members who would like to come into the schools as volunteers.

VINS recruits volunteers who are available on a regular basis as well as on a one-time or occasional basis. Regular volunteers, those who are available at least an hour a week, work in classrooms with individual or small groups of students, usually in a specific subject area. Resource volunteers, those available on a one-time or occasional basis, may visit a classroom to provide additional information on a topic the students are studying by talking about their hobbies, travels to another state or country, or their careers. There are also opportunities for clerical work and participation in special projects.

All volunteers including parents/guardians are part of the VINS program. VINS provides a general screening to match volunteer skills and interests with needs in the schools, an overall orientation to the school volunteer experience including norms of the work environment and confidentiality requirements. All volunteers undergo a mandatory criminal background check.

No specific educational or work experience is needed to be a volunteer; enthusiasm and willingness to help is all that is required. Volunteers work under the supervision of a classroom teacher or other staff member.

During an individual's volunteer activities, he/she may see, hear, or use confidential student or personnel information; all volunteers are subject to the same standards of confidentiality as school employees, namely, that the volunteer may not divulge any student or employee information to which he/she had access while volunteering.

Northampton Public Schools Visitors in the Schools

The School Committee encourages parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals. While the School Committee encourages the involvement of parents and community members in the education of students, we have a duty to protect the safety and confidentiality of our students as well as to ensure that the educational processes are not unnecessarily disrupted. As a result, certain rules and procedures must be followed to ensure that visits are beneficial to the visitors and not harmful to the students or the educational process.

The following guidelines to classrooms and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end, such requests should be made at least 5 days in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. All visitors to the Northampton Public Schools must report to the main office immediately upon entrance into a school building. All visitors whose destinations are other than the main office must sign in, noting the time of their arrival and identifying the location and purpose of their visit. These visitors must wear a visitor badge at all times while in the school building. The building principal will designate a staff member to escort visitors to their appropriate destination.
4. Upon completion of their pre-arranged meetings, visits, or observations, all visitors shall proceed directly to the main office. They must sign out, noting the time of their departures, and return their visitor's badges. Visitors may not proceed to any areas of the building other than the designated locations of their meetings, visits, or observations, without first returning to the main office and obtaining express administrative approval to access other areas of the building. The Superintendent and the building principal may from time to time implement other security measures with prior approval of the Superintendent.

Please see "Visitor and Observation of Educational Programs IHBA" for more detailed procedures regarding arranging and attending an observation or visit of a program or classroom.

Adopted: Feb. 8, 2007
Revised: Oct. 12, 2010

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A. Illness and Injury

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES (*Policy JLC*)

Activities may include identification of student health needs, development of health care plans, health screenings, communicable disease prevention, surveillance, and control, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety

education, liaison with parents and health care providers, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services to the school nurses and administrators.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parents/guardians shall supply information indicating the name, address, and contact phone numbers for family, friends, or neighbors to be contacted in case the parent is not available; and any allergies or health care problems the student may have.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of significant illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to provide transportation home or to further medical care.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Adoption date: September 14, 2006
SOURCE: MASC Policy Manual
LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:53;54;54A;54B;55;55A;55B;56;57
CROSS REF: EBB, First Aid

B. Guidelines for Attendance

- In the event of fever >100 degrees, vomiting/diarrhea, please keep your child home until 24 hours fever/vomiting/diarrhea-free
- For any diagnosis of infectious disease (such as strep throat or pink eye), please keep your child home until 24 hours on the appropriate antibiotic therapy.
- If your child is taking a narcotic pain reliever for an illness or injury, in most cases your child should not attend school.
- Please contact your school nurse and/or primary care provider if you have further question regarding whether your child should attend school.

C. Emergency Forms

An emergency form is sent home the first week of school. It is vital that the form be completed properly and signed so that the child will be able to receive needed treatment. Emergency information must be as accurate and up to date as possible for student safety. Parent/guardians must keep the school nurse informed of any changes to the emergency form. Changes can include alternate emergency contact people, phone numbers, street addresses, medications, new allergies or medical conditions.

D. Immunization Policy

IMMUNIZATIONS OF STUDENTS (*Policy JLCB*)

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present an immunization certificate or record that indicates they have been immunized according to the Massachusetts requirements for school entry. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization is contraindicated due to a medical condition; or, the student's parent/guardian provides a written statement that immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the parent or student.

Following the recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, students who are not in compliance with the immunization requirements for school entry, will be excluded from school until the appropriate documentation is received.

Adoption date: September 14, 2006
LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 76:15
CROSS REF: JR, School Admissions

E. Health Screenings & Physical Examinations

The regular state mandated screening schedule can be found on the Health Services website:

<http://www.northampton-k12.us/health-services/policies-and-protocols#TOC-Health-Screening>

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS (*Policy JLCA*)

The purpose of screening is to identify and take appropriate actions with respect to disabilities and medical conditions of school children as soon as possible. In addition, non-identifiable aggregate data from screenings may be used to support the health of students. It is the desire of the Northampton School Committee to enable all children to obtain the fullest benefit of their educational opportunities and to identify and take appropriate action with respect to contagious or communicable

diseases among students. School screenings under this policy are intended to supplement, not supplant, oversight of care by the student's primary care provider.

Students will receive screenings according to the guidelines and schedules developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Results of screenings will be reported to parents/guardians per state regulations. Parents and legal guardians shall be provided with an opportunity to request, in writing, that their child not participate in the program.

Regular physical examinations are also required according to the schedule developed by the Department of Public Health. The school nurse will review and keep copies of these forms. The results of these examinations may be the basis for determining what, if any, modifications in school activities are recommended.

Before participating in any form of practice, every candidate for a school athletic team (includes the cheerleading club) will present the signed consent of parent/guardian in order to participate and will present a copy of a recent (within the past 13 months) physical exam. It is the strong recommendation from the Department of Public Health that pre-sports physical examinations be conducted by the student's own health care provider. In case of injury or illness to a candidate already examined, the candidate shall be reexamined before resuming practice at the next formal meeting of the team. Documentation of fitness to resume activity must be presented to the appropriate school personnel.

The school physician will make a prompt examination of all children referred to him/her by the school nurse. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

The school physician will examine school employees when, in his/her opinion, the protection of the student's health may require it.

Adoption date: September 14, 2006
Revised: February 14, 2013
LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:53; 71:54; 71:56; 71:57
105 CMR 200.000: PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

F. Sexuality Education

The school nurses present puberty education classes to the fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. Parents are encouraged to speak directly with their school nurses regarding the curriculum for the classes and parents may choose to opt their children out of these classes. This must be done in writing to the school nurse.

G. Medications

Parents/guardians are required to bring in all medications and discuss the administration plan with the school nurse.

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS (*Policy JLCD*)

Medications may only be administered to students by the school nurse under the specific written request of the parent and under the written directive of the student's health care provider. The school nurse will develop and maintain the medication administration plan. In some cases a student may be allowed to self-administer a medication, but this can only occur with written parental permission, a comprehensive assessment by the school nurse of the student's ability to self-administer, and if requested by the school nurse, written permission from the health care provider. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide adequate medication supplies to the school nurse.

For field trips, the District has full medication delegation authority and it is the responsibility of the school nurse to set up an appropriate medication plan in these circumstances.

Adoption date: September 14, 2006

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:54B

Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00

H. School Safety Plan

Each elementary school has an individualized school safety plan using the template designed by school district staff and the Northampton Fire and Police Departments. The school safety plan details procedures to follow in cases of emergency such as fire, earthquake, bomb scare, and similar unlikely but serious occurrences. The elementary schools have each assembled a school safety committee composed of the principals, secretaries, nurses, head teachers, custodians, counselors, teachers and paraprofessionals. The safety committees meet regularly to assess the safety of the school environment, receive training in preparedness and plan and conduct safety drills with students and faculty.

Except for required fire drills conducted during surprise visits by the fire department several times each year, parent/guardians will be informed in advance of planned safety drills as is possible. The first fire drill and lockdown drill are announced in advance to children and staff. All drills are designed to make students and faculty aware of what steps to take, assess the overall preparedness level of the school, make necessary adjustments to the plan, and limit the stress to children.

In all schools, all doors are locked on the outside except for designated doors monitored by office personnel. In case of an emergency, children have access to the outside. If individuals enter the building on non-school business and appear threatening in any way, the police and the Superintendent will be notified immediately.

In the event of an emergency involving the police or fire department, the Principal will work closely with personnel from each department. The trained police and fire professionals will assume control of the site when it is deemed necessary. If

dismissal of students is required, only those adults listed on a child's emergency card will be allowed to dismiss a student.

I. Safety Procedures

The safety of students and adults in the school building is a primary concern of the Northampton Public Schools. Parent/guardians are asked to encourage children to respect safety procedures and to model safe behavior for children.

- **Sign-in/out**

All visitors, volunteers and parent/guardians are expected to check into the office and sign in/out. It is the responsibility of the office staff to know which adults are in the building at any given time and to maintain an accurate sign-in list which they will bring with them if the building needs to be evacuated.

- **Badges and Buttons**

All faculty and staff are expected to be wearing identity badges in a visible location when school is in session. All visitors, parent/guardians, volunteers, and substitutes will also be expected to wear appropriate identification. Adults in the building without visible identification may be asked for ID by faculty and/or asked to return to the office.

- **Building Security**

In each building most outer doors will remain locked during the day while school is in session. Entrance can be made by designated entrances only. Students are instructed not to allow anyone to enter the building by non-entrance doors. Students are not to be asked to open locked doors or prop doors to allow unrestricted access.

Individuals who need to use alternate entrances, for instance to allow handicap access, should contact the school office ahead of time so that arrangements can be made.

- **Non-custodial Parents and Designated Caregivers**

Occasionally non-custodial parents or designated caregivers will be picking students up at school. For everyone's safety, these individuals will be asked to provide a picture ID and in no case will students be released to a stranger unless specific permission has been given by the custodial parent/guardian.

J. Gender Identity

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. NPS will respect student wishes to be referred to by a different name and gender marker than is on their student record based on an affirmed change in gender identity. NPS will share this information with parent/guardian unless students expressly do not give us permission to do so. However, in cases where we feel student safety is at risk, we may need to share the information with parent/guardian. Generally,

NPS will not change the name and/or gender marker on the student record without the parent/guardian's knowledge. However, the District does recognize that in certain cases, the general rule of parental knowledge may not be required based upon an individualized assessment of each student's situation.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

All elementary schools participate in the National School Food Service Program. Breakfast and lunch is available every day. Bag lunches are available every early-release day when students are dismissed at 12:20 pm. Menus are available in each school and are published weekly in the Daily Hampshire Gazette and the Springfield Union News. They are available on the Gazetteline, and are also shown each morning on TV 22's morning news.

Meal tickets can be purchased in school each day in accordance with each school's procedures. Free and reduced price meals are available to those who qualify. Please contact the school office for an application.

Meals are offered with milk. Students who bring their lunch may purchase any of the milk if they wish. Milk is also available for purchase at snack time.

Related Issues:

- **Food allergies**

Information about food allergies should be part of a student's medical file in the nurse's office. This information is shared with the affected student's teacher and with the cafeteria staff. Cafeteria staffs maintain a confidential list of students with food allergies and take steps to ensure that allergic student's needs are attended to with regard to school meals.

Teachers may inform classroom parents about food allergies present in a classroom without identifying individual students so that parents/guardians can provide special snacks that all children can enjoy.

Because of the potential danger to allergic students as well as other safety risks, all students are discouraged from sharing food and/or snacks with friends.

- **Dietary Restrictions**

The Food Service is limited in its ability to accommodate dietary restrictions and students with specialized needs may have to bring their lunch to school. However, there are limited choices available for elementary children in addition to the main lunch menu. These include sun butter and jelly sandwiches, cheese sandwiches and salads.

General Procedures and Regulations

A. Publication of Student Information

Under Department of Education regulations, the school may release for publication certain information concerning school students without first obtaining your consent. This information is likely to include student's name, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, awards, photographs, videotaping and news films. Parent/guardians who would prefer not to have this information released should inform the school of their wishes.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (*Policy ACAC*)

Guiding principle:

The Northampton School Committee believes that preventing bullying and/or harassment is critical for creating and maintaining a safe, secure and positive school climate and culture, which in turn supports academic achievement, increases school engagement, respects the rights of all individuals and groups, and purposefully builds community.

Goals:

The Northampton School district will not tolerate bullying or harassment of/by any student, teacher, administrator, staff member, parent or community partner participating in any sanctioned school activity.

This policy will:

- comply with state law
- clearly define what constitutes actions of bullying and/or harassment
- reinforce the district's commitment to respond to bullying and harassing behaviors
- through the development of a prevention and intervention plan and procedures, clarify the response of the district to reports of such behaviors
- clarify the extent to which the administrators of the Northampton Public Schools are directed to apply disciplinary actions, as specified in the following Northampton School Committee policies and school district procedures: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Code of Conduct, Student Discipline, and the School Safety Plan

Definitions:

Aggressor is a member of the school community who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards another member of the school community.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more members of the school community of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Cyber-harassment is defined as any willful and repeated harm inflicted through, but not limited to, Web pages, social networking sites, email, instant messaging or text messaging using computers, cell phones and other electronic devices which is motivated by the target individual or individuals membership in a protected group, whether real or perceived.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome, intentional, unprovoked discriminatory behavior toward an individual or individuals, motivated by membership (real or perceived) in a protected category including: race, color, religion, ethnicity/natural origin, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and age. Harassment includes **cyber-harassment** (see definition above).

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a student directed against any student, staff or other individual for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation under the district's Policy, or for taking action consistent with the policy.

School Community Member is defined as any student, district or school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, school volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a student, or a visitor on school premises or at a school-related or school-sponsored function or activity.

School Staff includes, but is not limited to: educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Sexual harassment is defined in Massachusetts as: sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions or decisions regarding student evaluation or participation in school programs or activities (**quid pro quo** sexual harassment); or,
2. such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment (**hostile environment** sexual harassment).

Sexual harassment may occur student to student, adult to student, student to adult, adult to adult, male to female, female to male, female to female, and/or male to male.

Target is a school community member against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Policy scope:

Any form of bullying, harassment, cyberbullying, and/or cyber-harassment is prohibited, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, traveling to or from school, or at school-sponsored events, whether or not held on school premises.

"Traveling to or from school" includes on a school bus or other school related vehicle, at official school bus stops, and walking to or from school within a reasonable time before or after school hours.

Bullying or harassment, including cyberbullying and/or cyber-harassment, that is not conducted at locations noted above are covered by this policy if the incident results, or could result, in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more individuals and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of the school.

Reporting and Investigations:

Each member of the school community is responsible for reporting any observations of bullying or harassment, or credible information that such an act has taken place.

Reports of bullying or harassment incidents, including cyberbullying and/or cyber-harassment, occurring outside the scope (see above) of the school/district will be investigated to determine if the incident(s) resulted in a potential or actual disruption of the school learning environment for one or more individuals and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of the school.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of both targets and alleged perpetrators of bullying or harassment incidents, including cyberbullying and/or cyber-harassment, will be notified of such incidents within a timeframe that will be set per the district's procedures. Results of investigations of incidents will be communicated to parent(s)/guardian(s) of both targets and alleged perpetrators within a timeframe that will be set per the district's procedures, and also within the restrictions of the Federal Educations Rights and Privacy Act. If additional time is required to conduct the investigation, this will be communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and no more than two such extensions shall be permitted under this policy.

District Procedures:

The Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, will define the guidelines and procedures to implement this policy in the district's "Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention Plan and Procedures". The written plan and procedures developed by the the Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, to enforce this policy shall comply with applicable laws, including without limitation the Federal Educations Rights and Privacy Act, as amended.

The plan shall provide for schools, at each level, appropriate procedures for reporting and investigating incidents of bullying and/or harassment. Specific staff positions responsible for receiving and following up on reports will be identified in these procedures. The procedures will include a standard reporting form that may be used by any school community member for all incidents and types of bullying and/or harassment. The purpose of the reporting form is to trigger an investigation, which protects the safety of the target, bystanders, and/or concerned family/community members.

The plan will also specify procedures, in conjunction with the district's memorandum of understanding with the Northampton Police Department and

Northwestern District Attorney's office, for notifying local law enforcement where criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator.

Within the requirements of FERPA, the guidelines and procedures to implement the Bullying and Harassment Policy shall include a specific amount of time within which parents will be informed of a complaint and a specific amount of time for investigations to be completed.

Additionally, the plan will include procedures for communicating with parent/guardians, including dissemination of prevention information; a professional development plan for all staff; and instruction for students at all school levels in social-emotional learning and violence prevention.

Consequences:

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying and/or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion as outlined in the schools' Codes of Conduct.

Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the target of bullying and/or harassment, those who are witnesses to such behavior or those who are investigating such behavior will be subject to discipline as outlined in each school's student Code of Conduct and the Staff Handbook [to be developed].

Acts of bullying or harassment allegedly committed by adult members (including teachers, administrators, staff members, other school personnel, parents/guardians, community partners, or other visitors to the school) of the school community will be reported to school administrators and/or the Superintendent's office, for investigation and consequences, in accordance with applicable procedures, including appropriate legal actions.

Retaliation or threats of retaliation by adult members (including teachers, administrators, staff members, other school personnel, parents/guardians, community partners, or other visitors to the school) of the NPS community in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying or harassment, those who are witnesses or those investigating an incident of bullying or harassment, will be subject to additional consequences, in accordance with appropriate procedures.

Oversight and Accountability:

The "Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan" will be reviewed and revised by the district administrative team every two years and such revisions will subsequently be presented to the School Committee.

The Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, will report on the total number of complaints, investigations, verified acts and any trends of bullying, harassment, cyberbullying and/or cyber-harassment district-wide at least annually to the School Committee.

Other Legal Remedies:

Any school community member may also pursue legal remedies or other avenues of recourse, including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with:

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700.

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

Adoption Date: July 8, 2010
Revised: May 14, 2015
LEGAL REFS: Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010: AN ACT RELATIVE TO BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

M.G.L. 71:37H STUDENT CONDUCT

M.G.L CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

M.G.L. Chapter 71, S. 37H and 37L;
M.G.L. Chapter 76, S. 16 and 17;
Chapter 380 of the Acts of 1993 and Chapter 766 Regulations, S. 338.0
also Mass. Dept. Of Education, Advisory Opinion on STUDENT DISCIPLINE

M.G.L. 71:37H STUDENT HANDBOOKS

M.G.L. 71:55C and Acts of 1985c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00 SCHOOL SAFETY

Title II, ADA of 1992
Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 1993
M.G.L.76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
Board of Education Chapter 622 Regulations Pertaining to Access to Equal Educational Opportunity, adopted 6/24/75, as amended 10/24/78
Board of Education 603 CMR 2600

Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 3/28/78 RELATING TO DISCRIMINATION

Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et. seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00 RELATING TO SEX
DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

APPENDIX A:

Northampton Public Schools

ELEMENTARY CODE OF CONDUCT

KIDS' CODE OF CONDUCT

There are three main goals of the Northampton Public Elementary Schools' Kids' Code of Conduct:

- 1) to have a respectful environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity,
- 2) to have a safe and orderly environment where all students can learn, and
- 3) to teach and model behaviors of responsible citizenship in school, community and country.

Northampton Public Schools Elementary Kids behave like this most of the time:

Treat everyone with respect:

- Speak in a courteous tone of voice (no whining, yelling, or dissing)
- Use respectful language (no curses, swears, putdowns, name-calling)
- Disagree without being disagreeable
- Take turns
- Wait patiently
- Listen when someone else is speaking

Behave safely:

Keep control of your body (no hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, tripping)

- Walk in the hallways, classrooms, library, offices and cafeteria
- Leave dangerous objects out of school (weapons, matches, and lighters)
- Follow safety rules for playground games and equipment
- Follow safety rules for walking on the street, riding bikes, scooters or skateboards to school and riding the bus

- Follow directions of the adults in charge of the bus, playground, cafeteria, classroom

Act Responsibly:

- Come to school on time, prepared for class, and ready to learn
- Tell the truth
- Speak up when you see someone being treated disrespectfully
- Follow school rules even when alone
- Take care of school property (books, materials, etc.)
- Get help from a grown up when you are in trouble or someone else needs help
- Don't take or "borrow" anything that doesn't belong to you
- Help everyone learn by not interfering or disrupting during work time
- Help out when someone asks for help or needs help

Following school rules, treating everyone respectfully, and acting responsibly are not always easy to do. Many things get in the way of acting responsibly. Sometimes we are really angry because someone treated us with disrespect or because we could not get what we wanted. Sometimes we are tired and unhappy and "having a bad day". Sometimes we are confused and afraid. Sometimes we are sick and tired of other people telling us what to do. Sometimes we are feeling silly and get "out of control". Sometimes we are really trying our best and things go wrong anyway. Sometimes we act without thinking and are sorry later. Sometimes we are feeling left out or ignored. Sometimes we want to be "cool" and we are afraid that if we don't do what our friends are doing or what they say that they won't like us any more.

All people, children and grown-ups, sometimes feel this way. All people, children and grown-ups, have a hard time doing the "right thing" when they aren't feeling OK. Even when kids make mistakes and bad choices, it doesn't mean that they are bad or that they will always be getting in trouble. It means that they need more help to remember how to think first and how to use self – control.

Being a Kid in the Northampton Public Schools Elementary Schools is learning how to use self-control even when inside feelings are yucky. Kids use self-control when they stop and think before they act. They ask themselves questions like: Why am I so sad, mad, silly, confused, etc. right now? If I hurt someone back, will that make me feel better? If I get caught, what will happen? If I do it, will I feel proud of myself or ashamed? Is there a way I can feel better and follow the rules at the same time?

Northampton Elementary Public Schools' Kids use these ways to help themselves when things are going wrong and when they are tempted to make a bad choice. These actions are using self-control.

1. Take a deep breath and count to ten.
2. Walk away

3. Say something loud like, "I am mad right now", or "Leave me alone", or "I don't like that" or "Stop it, right now" or "That hurts my/his /her feelings", or "Whatever"
4. Tell a grown up and ask for help
5. Think about something that makes you really happy
6. Find a friend and tell them about what happened
7. Run around really fast to get the angry energy all used up
8. Find a place where you can calm down
9. Draw a picture
10. Think of what you want to say but if it's disagreeable or insulting, don't say it out loud.

Consequences are one way to help kids remember to use self-control. Consequences are a way of "getting back to normal", for the kids who broke the rules and for the kids who were hurt or who witnessed what happened. Consequences make everyone feel safer.

The consequences and interpretation of the rules are up to the discretion of the Principal and/or Head Teacher.

The decisions regarding interpretation of the rules and imposition of consequences are made at the discretion of the Administration. Particular attention will be paid to the individual needs of the student in the determination of appropriate responses. These needs may include but are not limited to:

- Age of student
- Honesty and accountability
- Remorse
- Conduct History or Discipline Record
- Impact on learning
- Disability
- Age of student
- Witness testimony
- Social dynamics
- History of such behavior
- Circumstances under which behavior occurred

The list of infractions presented here is not to be considered all-inclusive. The administration reserves the authority to discipline for other violations not listed. Additionally, the administration reserves the right to modify the consequences as stated in this Code of Conduct.

Such responses may include but are not limited to: verbal warnings and conferences; meetings with a school counselor; detentions; suspension, suspension

from *extra-curricular and* after-school activities; community service; restitution; restorative practices; and police involvement.

Within the Code of Conduct, violations of school rules are divided into four (4) sections beginning with the most serious. These rules apply to students on school premises, school buses and vans or at school sponsored events.

This is the list of major offenses and the consequences when they happen:

Section 1: Suspension, Expulsion, Loss of Bus Privileges, Pay for Damages (all consequences in Section 1 may include police notification and/or intervention).

- Having a weapon on school property or buses.
- Having, using or trying to get alcohol, drugs, or other illegal substances on school property or school buses.
- Setting a fire or having matches or other fire setting materials.
- Smoking or having cigarettes on school property or school buses.
- Making a false fire alarm or bomb threat.
- Threatening violence or acting violently toward any member of the school community.
- Taking anyone's possessions, money, or other items by threatening or bullying.
- Taking anything that doesn't belong to you.
- Deliberately destroying or damaging school or bus property (breaking windows, writing on walls, ripping up books) or anyone's personal property (toys, clothes, school work, books).

Section 2: Conference with the Principal, Verbal Reprimand, Loss of Recess, Note Home, Office Time Out/Detention, Lunch Detention, In-School Suspension, Up to 3 Day Suspension, Loss of Bus Card, Suspension from the Bus, Loss of Bus Privileges (all consequences in this section generally are progressive in nature and at the discretion of the principal).

- Using disrespectful language and/or images in speaking, writing or drawing. Including, but not limited to: swears, offensive or obscene words, name-calling, teasing, insults, verbally harassing.
- Bullying.
- Defying teachers, aides, or other school staff when they are giving you directions (talking, refusing to cooperate).
- Writing a fake note, signature, permission slip or other school paper.
- Giving a fake name to a supervising adult.
- Skipping school.
- Leaving class without permission.
- Leaving the school and/or school property without permission.
- Behaving unsafely (pushing, shoving, throwing things, knocking over chairs, running away).

- Disrupting the classroom, library, cafeteria, bus or bus stop.
- Fighting.
- Cheating.
- Gambling.
- Trading cards in school, on the playground, or on the school bus.

Student Discipline

In accordance with Chapter 222 of the acts of 2012: Student Discipline Law, all Massachusetts public schools, will be required to ensure that students who are suspended or expelled from school are able to continue learning. Schools will be obligated to provide educational services to those students, and are encouraged to seek disciplinary alternatives to suspension or expulsion.

The law which went into effect for the 2014-2015 school year is highlighted below:

G.L. c. 71, §37H

Offense:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance
- Assault on a member of the educational staff

Consequence: The student may be subject to suspension or expulsion by the principal.

G.L. c. 71, §37H ½

Offense:

- A felony charge or felony delinquency complaint

Consequence: The student may be subject to indefinite suspension if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Offense:

- Conviction, adjudication, or admission of guilt with respect to a felony

Consequence: The student may be subject to expulsion if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾

Offense:

- *Any offense not covered by G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H ½*

Consequence: The student may be subject to suspension as provided by the school discipline code. The statute prohibits schools from suspending a student for more than 90 school days (total) in one school year. Principals are to exercise discretion in deciding consequences, consider ways to re-engage the student in school, and avoid using long-term exclusion unless alternatives have been tried.

Definitions: Words and terms, when used in this Code shall have the following meanings:

Bullying	Bullying is any behavior that is used to intimidate another person and/or control their behavior and/or access to places, persons or activities. Bullying can include physical intimidation and threats of force. It can also include exclusion, rumor and innuendo.
Detention	Detention is staying after school with supervision for up to one hour.
Disrupting class	Engaging in behaviors that interrupt and distract other students from being able to pay attention and complete their work and/or the teacher from teaching
Fighting	Physical contact with another student without that student's consent knowingly or recklessly causing harm to another, physical contact with another while knowing or believing that the other person will regard such contact as offensive or provocative
In-school suspension	A student spends a period of time (from one hour up to several days) in the office or designated place under the supervision of the Principal or designee. During in-house suspension, the student is expected to complete all assigned class work homework, tests, etc. If on an IEP, the student has access to modifications, accommodations and specialized services as outlined in the plan. The student has a break and snack but does not participate in recess, special subjects, special events (performances, field trips). The student eats lunch in the office.
Office time out	The student spends a period of time (from 5 min. to an hour) in the office or designated place under supervision of the principal or designee. The student is expected to complete any class work or homework provided by the teacher.
Suspension	The student is excluded from school for a designated period of time as determined by the Principal. A re-entry conference with the parent/guardian, student and Principal is required before the student can return to school
Threat/assault	Any verbal, written or drawn communication or gesture or act that reasonably causes the other person to feel fear for his/her safety and/or property that is intended to intimidate another by suggesting that some harm, either physical or psychological, will be used against him/her.
Verbal harassment	Use of derogatory, demeaning and/or discriminatory language including but not limited to racial or ethnic slurs, sexual or gender based insults.
Violence	Serious, deliberate physical harm to another person or property

FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

As children move through elementary school, it is expected that they will learn to work out differences through nonviolent means with the help of the home and school community.

Conduct is a standard of personal behavior that supports effective learning and intellectual growth. Discipline is a system of rules, which produces responsible and self-disciplined adults. Both are dependent upon cooperation between home and school. Therefore, parents, students, and staff are asked to share the following beliefs about conduct and discipline:

All have the right to expect a safe and secure school environment.

Therefore, all students, parents, and staff must know the rules of the school and the consequences for violating them. Clear and specific definitions of expected behavior help students take responsibility for their actions in school and in society.

Learning is our primary goal.

Therefore, prompt action must be taken when unacceptable behavior interferes with teaching and learning.

We strive to teach mutual respect among all members of the school community by recognizing the dignity of each individual.

Therefore, enforcement of rules emphasizes a positive attitude toward students, teachers, and parents, with the goal that students ultimately discipline themselves. The Principal will interpret these rules and will apply them with particular attention to the individual needs of each student.

The following Code of Student Conduct seeks to be fair. ***The Code will be enforced to help provide a safe and orderly school in which students can learn and grow.*** Particular attention will be paid to the individual needs of the student in the determination of disciplinary actions.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Although it is understood that some of the rules and regulations might be more appropriate at one age than another, nonetheless, ***all rules and regulations apply to the entire elementary school population.*** The expectations and penalties described in this Code of Conduct also apply during all school-sponsored activities.

Principals and teachers have the option of using other penalties such as loss of recess and other privileges, after school detention, notes or telephone calls to parents, and request parent conferences as needed.

Whenever any penalties arising from violations of the Code of Conduct are assigned, there will be communication between the student, parent/guardian and principal.

After a suspension for drug and alcohol possession, use and/or sale, students will be required to receive counseling on substance abuse. For other serious suspensions, the principal may require the student receive counseling or intervention from an appropriate individual or program related to the offense (i.e. Juvenile Fire Setters, Anger Management, Police Department, Department of Social Services)

The principal will interpret these rules and regulations.

Other behaviors not specifically covered in the following rules and regulations will be considered on an individual basis.

The School Committee reserves the right to impose any of these penalties on the first offense.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

1. When a student is suspended, the following procedures, and any other procedures required by law, will be followed:
 - A. Students will be suspended only to the custody of the parent(s) guardian(s) or another person designated by the parent(s) or guardian(s)
 - B. Prior to suspension, an informal hearing before the principal or designee will be held. At this hearing, the student will be informed of the reason(s) for the suspension, and will be given an opportunity to respond. In an emergency situation, which requires the immediate removal of a student, the informal hearing will be held as soon after the suspension as possible.
 - C. The principal or designee will make every attempt to notify parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student about the suspension and state the cause(s) leading to it. If the suspension is imposed during the school day, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may be required to transport the student home. A conference with the parent(s) or guardian(s) may be required before readmission.
 - D. The principal or designee will send a letter to the parent(s) or guardian(s) confirming the suspension. This notification shall contain:
 1. the reason(s) for suspension
 2. the number of days of suspension
 3. the re-admittance date
 - E. The student will be given an opportunity to complete any class work, including examinations that may have been missed during the period of

suspension. A time limit equal to the number of days of the suspension will be allowed for the completion of such work.

- F. A suspended student (internal or external) may not participate in any school-sponsored activities or events.
- G. After suspension, students may be referred to a guidance counselor for follow-up counseling. Student may be required to meet with the principal or vice principal before re-entering school.

APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSIONS

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal student suspensions to the building principal. Appeals must be put in writing by the parent/guardian and must be given to the principal before the date of the suspension or before the school day begins on the day of the suspension. The appeal letter must include the reason for the appeal. The student will be allowed to attend classes until the principal has rendered a decision. If safety is deemed an issue resulting in disciplinary action, the student will be suspended immediately with the appeal to be filed before the end of the suspension. The student will not be allowed to attend school until the suspension ends or the principal makes a decision. The principal's decision may be appealed to the Superintendent within five (5) days of the principal's decision. The appeal to the Superintendent shall only be on the basis that the hearing was not in accord with this Code and Handbook.

STUDENT EXPULSION

There are two laws pertaining to student expulsion. The first law (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H) pertains to expellable offenses, such as possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance; assaulting staff or faculty.

Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

Any students who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal

may, in his or her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b). Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

If a student, who is expelled under the provisions of this section, applies for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

The second law concerning student expulsion pertains to felony complaints or convictions (M.G.L. Chapter 71, section 37H ½). Student expulsions pertaining to a felony complaint or conviction – upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal if said principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent (in regards to a felony complaint or conviction). The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of this request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the

school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of the request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and student's parent/guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

STUDENT EXPULSION PROCEDURE

The following procedures, and any other procedures required by law, will be used when a recommendation is made for the expulsion of a student.

Written notice of intent to take action will:

Be served upon the student and parent or guardian by certified mail by the principal;

List the reason for the expulsion hearing;

State the date, time and place of the hearing for expulsion;

Describe alternative educational programs accorded the student prior to commencement of the expulsion proceedings;

Inform the student and parent or guardian of the right to:

have legal counsel at the hearing (at the parent/guardian expense)

examine the student's records before the hearing

present evidence and witnesses; give testimony,

In the case of Special Education Students set for the following: the nature of the Special Need; the relation of the Special Need to the grounds for expulsion, if any; and the nature and adequacy of the alternative Special Education services.

The principal's decision pertaining to the outcome of the student expulsion will be put in writing

APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION

Any student who has been expelled from school has the right to appeal to the superintendent. An expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian within five calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall have the final decision.

Procedures for the Discipline of Special Education and Students on 504 Plans

Discipline of Special Needs Students

All students are expected to meet the requirements as set forth in this handbook. Massachusetts General Laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an Evaluation Team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students.

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass General Law requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an IEP team to have a special needs and whose program is described in an Individual education Plan (IEP). Students with special need may be suspended for up to ten (10) days as fully outlined under M.G.L., Ch. 71B, and the Individual s with Disabilities Education Act, the IDEA. The due process procedures, in addition, will reflect all state and federal laws as they come into effect.
2. The IDEA allows school personnel to remove a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if that student has brought a weapon to school or a school function or is on school grounds, possesses or uses illegal drugs (including prescription drugs which are not prescribed for the student) or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance or what the student says is a controlled substance, while at school or a school function or on school grounds, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP Team.
3. The IDEA also allows school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days. If they are substantially likely to injure

- themselves or others in their current placement.
4. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, relevant members of the IEP Team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination.
 5. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offenses of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

Discipline for Students Not yet Found Eligible for Special Education

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is “deemed to have knowledge” that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if: (1) the child’s parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child’s parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services. If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Discipline of 504 Students

Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten(10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination shall be done.

APPENDIX: B

Other District Policies

NONDISCRIMINATION (Policy AC)

The Northampton Public Schools are committed to promoting multi-cultural understanding, appreciation and harmony, to insuring that no student is denied access to any educational program or other activity of the Northampton Public Schools for reason of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, gender or gender identity, and to compliance with all applicable state and federal law, including state and federal civil rights and anti-discrimination laws relating to the employment practices, the educational programs and all other activities of the Northampton Public Schools. Northampton Public Schools shall comply with all such law, all-applicable federal and state law pertaining to individuals with disabilities.

Students and staff of the Northampton Public Schools shall not, at any time, do or say anything that would, in any way, tend to cast aspersion on the race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, economic status or ethnic background of any individual or group or otherwise engage in other racist or other discriminatory behavior.

This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of School Committee intent to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youths and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all decisions made within the school system, the potential benefit or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.

6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of non-discrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of the city of Northampton, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If you have a complaint or feel you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, register your complaint with the Title IX compliance officer.

Adoption date: March 13, 2003
Revised: November 12, 2015
LEGAL REFS: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L. 76:16
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REFS: ACA-ACE Subcategories for Nondiscrimination
GBA, Equal Opportunity Employment
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (Policy ACAB)

It is the goal of the Northampton Public Schools (NPS) to promote learning and working environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees or students occurring in the work or learning environment or in other settings in which employees and students find themselves in connection with their employment or school sponsored activities will not be tolerated by the NPS. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve the goal of providing a learning and working environment free from sexual harassment, the conduct described in this policy will not be tolerated and a procedure has been provided by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with, if encountered by students or employees.

Because the NPS take allegations of sexual harassment seriously, there will be a prompt response to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such conduct constituting sexual harassment has occurred, prompt action will be taken to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth the goals of promoting a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which is deemed unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment:

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this: "sexual harassment" means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions or decisions regarding student evaluation or participation in school programs or activities; or,
- (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment, constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and, in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work or learning environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers/students may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not;
- unwanted sexual flirting;

- sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comment on an individual's body, comment on an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- stalking;
- unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- inquiring into one's sexual experiences; and
- discussion of one's sexual activities.

All students/employees should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the NPS.

Sexual harassment may involve behavior which is student-to-student, student-to-staff, staff-to-student, and staff-to-staff.

Complaints of Sexual Harassment:

If any of the employees or students of NPS believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the individual has the right to file a complaint with the NPS. This may be done in writing or orally.

All staff may report allegations of sexual harassment against them to the building principal or the direct supervisor or to the sexual harassment coordinator.

Any other person alleging sexual harassment may contact the sexual harassment coordinator. All reports of sexual harassment will be reviewed by the sexual harassment coordinator and referred as follows: Reports alleging sexual harassment by staff will be referred to the superintendent. All other reports will be referred to the principal of the school where the alleged harassment occurred. If at any time during an investigation a complaint concerning any abuse of a child is substantiated, then as mandated reporters the school department will file a 51-A with the Department of Social Services.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting:

Sexual Harassment Coordinator
 Northampton Public Schools
 380 Elm Street
 Northampton, MA 01060
 Telephone: (413)-587-1361
 FAX: (413)-587-1374

This person is also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about the NPS policy on sexual harassment and the complaint process.

Sexual Harassment Investigation:

When a complaint is received, the allegation will be investigated in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The person alleged to have committed sexual harassment will also be interviewed. When the investigation has been completed, to the extent appropriate, the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct, will be informed of the results of that investigation.

The building principals and the superintendent will refer complaints of sexual harassment to the sexual harassment coordinator for investigation.

Disciplinary Action:

If it is determined that conduct constituting sexual harassment has occurred, prompt action will be taken to eliminate the offending conduct. If it is determined that conduct constituting sexual harassment has been committed by a student or an employee, such action as is appropriate under the circumstances will be taken. Such action may range from counseling to termination of employment or suspension/expulsion, and may include other forms of disciplinary action. The consequences for students are outlined in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. The Northampton Public Schools will take whatever action is appropriate to preserve a learning/work environment free from sexual harassment from outside vendors and visitors.

State and Federal Remedies:

In addition to the above, if anyone believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment, he/she may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using the NPS complaint process does not prohibit anyone from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC-300 days, MCAD-300 days).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC),
One Congress Street, 10th floor, Boston, MA 02114, (617) 565-3200.
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD):
Boston Office: One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108
(617) 994-6000
Springfield Office: 424 Dwight Street, Room 220, Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 739-2145.

Adoption date: May 12, 2005

SOURCE: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

LEGAL REFS: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et. seq.(Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY (504) (Policy ACE)

The Northampton Public Schools are committed to ensuring that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the district, or be subject to discrimination because the district's facilities are inaccessible or unusable by individuals with disabilities. The Northampton Public Schools will adhere to the regulations set forth in Title II of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504). The district will set procedures in compliance with these regulations to include prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. ADA and Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Both Acts define a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working).
2. Has a record of such an impairment.
3. Is regarded as having an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under ADA and 504, the Northampton Public Schools recognize a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system. The district shall make reasonable modifications in policies or procedures, as necessary, to avoid discrimination, and to include accommodations in the manner of communication and in the use of auxiliary aids and services.

The Northampton Public Schools will have procedures to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also specifies rights related to educational records.

The procedural safeguards will include the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

Notice:

The Northampton Public Schools shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of ADA and Section 504, and its applicability to the services, programs, or other activities of the district. The information shall be made available in such a

manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by these Acts.

The Northampton Public Schools shall designate at least one employee to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under ADA and 504, including any investigation of complaints. The district shall make available to all interested individuals, the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated.

Adoption date: March 13, 2003
Amended: August 12, 2004
LEGAL REFS: Title II of The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, M.G.L. 71B: et. seq., 603 C MR 28.00, Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.
CROSS REFS: IHB, Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT POLICY (*Policy JKB*)

The Northampton School Committee is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and orderly school climate which supports academic achievement while respecting the rights of the individuals comprising the school community. Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. At times, physical restraint of a student may be necessary to protect that student or other individuals.

Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Physical restraint shall only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the Northampton Public Schools community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Furthermore, any such physical restraint shall be administered so as to prevent or minimize any harm to the student.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and provided to Northampton Public Schools staff and made available to the parents of enrolled students. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee, or agent of the Northampton Public Schools from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

I. Methods for Preventing Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide

- A. Individual Crisis Planning/Crisis Intervention Plans: When students present as in crisis or aggressive, their case will be discussed with the Student Study Team (SST) to determine a plan of action and who will carry that out. This plan may include, but is not limited to, a functional behavior assessment, clinical assessment, a behavior intervention plan,

safety plan, and/or support from related service providers.

- B. De-Escalation Techniques: Verbal or non-verbal de-escalation strategies are used when a student is showing signs of agitation, anxiety, and defiance. These behaviors may include shutting down, pacing, work refusal, inappropriate verbalizations, and destroying academic materials. The de-escalation response is to offer assistance, a break, space and quiet time to calm down, setting clear limits, or providing other positive choices to the current behavior.

II. Methods for Engaging Parents

Any parent with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within the Northampton Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or the Superintendent to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure described in Section X, below.

III. Alternatives to Physical Restraint and Methods of Physical Restraint

A. Alternatives

Physical restraint shall not be used unless the following, less intrusive behavior interventions and supports have been unsuccessful or deemed inappropriate by school staff:

- Verbal redirection
- Verbal directive to cease behavior
- Opportunity for a break
- De-escalation techniques
- Loss of earned tokens/rewards/privileges
- Opportunity for time-out

B. Methods of Physical Restraint:

Physical restraint shall not be used as a means of discipline or punishment; if the student cannot be safely restrained due to medical contraindications which have been documented by a licensed physician and provided to the District; as a response to property destruction, disruption, refusal to comply with rules or staff directives, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint shall not be used as a standard response for any individual student. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

The following forms of physical restraint shall only be administered by trained personnel, using only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or other member(s) of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. The staff member(s) administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation. Staff shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student during restraint, and the student shall be

immediately released from the physical restraint if the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress.

All physical restraints must terminate as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger, or if the student indicates that he/she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress. If any physical restraint approaches twenty (20) minutes, staff will obtain the approval of the building Principal to continue the restraint based upon the student's continued agitation. All physical restraints shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.00.

1. Description of Physical Restraint Hold Used by District: All staff members conducting restraints are trained by personnel certified by the Districts training agency. The District only supports standing restraints where the person being restrained is not constricted in the areas of the chest or abdomen.

IV. Prohibited Forms of Restraint

- A. Medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint, and seclusion restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, are prohibited in the Northampton Public Schools.
- B. Any form of physical restraint used in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 is prohibited in the Northampton Public Schools.

V. Staff Training, Physical Restraint Reporting, and Follow-Up Process

A. Staff Training:

1. All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the District's physical restraint policy within the first month of each school year, and employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment.
2. Required training for all staff will include review of the following:
 - a. The Northampton Public Schools Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy
 - b. School building-level physical restraint procedures, including the use of time-out as a behavior support strategy;
 - c. The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing physical restraint;
 - d. Interventions which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and alternatives to restraint;
 - e. When in an emergency, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety consideration, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used;
 - f. Identification of Northampton Public Schools' staff who have received in-depth training (as set forth below in section (a)(iii)) in the use of physical restraint.
3. In-Depth Training
 - a. At the beginning of the school year, the building Principal will identify

those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.

- b. Designated staff members shall participate in at least sixteen (16) hours of in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually.
- c. In-depth training will include:
 - i. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
 - ii. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
 - iii. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
 - iv. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
 - v. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
 - vi. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

B. Physical Restraint Reporting

1. Report to building Principal:
 - a. Staff shall verbally inform the Principal of any physical restraint as soon as possible, and by written report within one (1) school day.
 - b. The Principal or designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint.
2. Report to Parent(s) of Physically Restrained Student:
 - a. The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's Parent of the physical restraint within twenty-four (24) hours.
 - b. The Principal or designee shall provide the Parent a written report of the physical restraint within three (3) school days. This written report may be provided via email, if the Parent has provided the District with an email address.
 - c. The Parent and/or student may respond to the Principal or designee to comment on the use of the physical restraint and the information in the written report. The Parent and/or student may also pursue the Grievance Procedure described in Section X, below.
3. Report to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE):
 - a. Whenever a physical restraint results in injury to the student or

any school community member, the District shall send a copy of the written report to DESE within three (3) school days. The district will also comply with whatever additional requirements are promulgated by DESE.

- b. The Northampton Public Schools shall also report physical restraint data annually to DESE, as directed by DESE.
4. Report to Law Enforcement and Other State Agencies:
 - a. Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from reporting a crime to the appropriate authorities;
 - b. Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter under M.G.L, c. 119, §51A.
 5. Contents of Written Report
 - a. The written report of any physical restraint shall include:
 - i. Name of the student; name(s) and job title(s) of staff who administered the physical restraint, and observers, if any; the date, time restraint began, and the time that restraint ended; the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint, and who approved continuation of the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, if applicable.
 - ii. A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of the physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
 - iii. A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, and any medical care provided.
 - iv. Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
 - v. Information regarding opportunities for the student's Parent(s) to discuss the administration of the restraint and any consequences with school officials.

C. Follow-Up Procedures

1. After a student is released from a physical restraint, staff shall implement follow-up procedures, including:
 - a. Reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the physical restraint;
 - b. Reviewing the incident with the staff member(s) who administered the physical restraint to ensure proper restraint procedures were followed; and

- c. Consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the physical restraint, if any.

VI. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement Procedures for Period Review of Physical Restraint Data.

- A. These procedures shall include weekly review of physical restraint data to identify individual students who have been restrained multiple times during the week, and if any such student(s) is identified, to convene a review team to assess the student's needs.
- B. These procedures shall include monthly, administrative review of school-wide physical restraint data.

VII. Building Principals Shall Develop And Implement Procedures To Ensure that the Reporting Requirements of this Policy and 603 CMR 46.06 Are Met.

VIII. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement Procedures for Providing Timely, Oral and Written Notice to the Parents of Any Student Who Undergoes Physical Restraint.

IX. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement a Procedure for the Use of Time-Out.

- A. Such procedure shall include the process by which staff will obtain the Principal's approval for any time-out lasting longer than thirty (30) minutes. Such approval shall be based on the student's continuing agitation.

X. Grievance Procedures.

This grievance procedure is established to ensure procedures are in place for receiving and investigating complaints regarding physical restraint practices. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may file a complaint by utilizing this procedure:

The complaint must be submitted in writing or electronic record to the Director of Student Services.

The Director of Student Services will meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint.

A thorough investigation will be conducted which may include interviewing witnesses, staff involved and/or the student; reviewing all written documentation leading up to and pertaining to the incident and all reports filed with the Director of Student Services and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

A written report will be developed by the Director of Student Services and provided to the complainant.

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July 8, 2010
December 10, 2015
LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. Chapter 71: 37G
603 CMR 46.00

Northampton Public Schools Directory

SCHOOLS

Bridge Street School.....587-1460
2 Parsons Street Fax...587-1474
Northampton, MA 01060
Beth Choquette, Principal

Jackson Street School..... 587-1510
120 Jackson Street Fax...587-1524
Northampton, MA 01060
Gwen Agna, Principal

Leeds Elementary.....587-1530
20 Florence Street Fax...587-1539
Leeds, MA 01053
Sal Canata, Principal

Robert K Finn/Ryan Road School.....587-1550
498 Ryan Road Fax...587-1561
Florence, MA 01062
Sarah Madden, Principal

John F Kennedy Middle School.....587-1489
100 Bridge Road Fax...587-1495
Florence, MA 01062
Lesley Wilson, Principal

Northampton High School..... 587-1344
380 Elm Street Fax....587-1374
Northampton, MA 01060
Bryan Lombardi, Principal

SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE:

Northampton Public Schools:.....587-1331
General Information Number

Superintendent's Office Fax Number.....587-1318

Superintendent.....587-1331
Dr. John Provost

Business Administrator.....587-1331
Candice Walczak

Director of Student Services.....587-1451
Laurie Farkas

Associate Director of Student Services: Special Education.....587-1451
Dr. Pamela Plumer

Associate Director of Student Services: Early Childhood.....587-1471
Barbara Black

Director of Curriculum and Assessment.....587-1321
Dr. Nancy Cheevers

Director of Health Services, Health Education and Safety.....587-1361
Karen Jarvis-Vance

Director of Innovative Instruction and Technology.....587-1317
Angelo Rota

Registrar and School Choice Coordinator.....587-1328
Jennifer Towler

Transportation Supervisor.....587-1337
Joy Winnie

Food Services Director.....587-1487
John Tranfaglia

Volunteers in Northampton Schools Coordinator.....587-1332
Marlene Pearson