# TAHANTO REGIONAL MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

## Disclaimer

The policies, rules, and provisions in this handbook are intended to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. If any policies, rules, or provisions contained in this handbook conflict with any federal or state law or regulation, the law or regulation shall be the controlling body. Moreover, the policies, rules, and provisions contained in this handbook cannot and do not anticipate every situation that may arise in the administration of the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School, and where no policy, rule, or provision of the handbook directly applies to a situation, the School Committee, Superintendent, Principal, and, where appropriate, their designees, retain the discretion and authority to take reasonable action in accordance with or not inconsistent with federal and state laws and regulations. Disciplinary actions recommended by the disciplinary guidelines herein are for advisory purposes only and do not bind the Principal, Superintendent, or School Committee. The Principal, Superintendent, or School Committee may take greater or lesser action depending upon the totality of the circumstances.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness, or any other class protected by state or federal law.

## Translations

If you need assistance translating this document into a language other than English, please contact 508-869-2333

Se necessita auxílio traduzindo este documento numa linguagem outro que inglês, por favor contata 508-869-2333

Si necesita ayuda truduciendo este documento en un idioma aparte de inglés, contáctenos por favor 508-869-2333

تحويلة 5088692333إ ذا كنت بحاجة إلى المساعدة ترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى لغة أخرى غري اإلنجلر . Вы Если ٍبية، يربج االتصال

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如果你需要除了英语将这份文件翻译成一种语言的帮助，请在联系 508-869-2333

分机 당신이 영어가 아닌 언어로이 문서를 번역 도움이 필요하면 508-869-2333
문의하시기 바랍니다

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# WELCOME

Dear Students,

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Tahanto Regional Middle/High School, I would like to welcome back all students and extend sincere hope for a productive and enjoyable year! Additionally, we look forward to establishing productive partnerships with all of our families which is vital to ensuring all students achieve their highest potential.

A special welcome is extended to all our new students and families. We are excited to share all that Tahanto has to offer and believe that you will soon learn that Tahanto is a special place to learn and grow for all students. Our intention is to offer support to each student and their family as they begin their academic journey at Tahanto.

Our mission at Tahanto is to support and challenge all students in achieving personal and academic excellence in a safe, collaborative and student-centered environment. Tahanto has earned a reputation for academic excellence in the Worcester County area which reflects our commitment to providing challenging curricula and a wide range of educational and extracurricular opportunities. It is our greatest hope that all students will realize their potential through consistent hard work, motivation, striving towards high standards, and embracing a growth mindset.

This student handbook contains the basic rules and procedures to provide a school atmosphere that is conducive to learning. It has been reviewed and updated to be as accurate and helpful as possible. Please make note of the new additions including the school calendar and changes in the code of conduct. We hope you and your families will take the time to review all information including our philosophy and goals. If anything needs clarification, feel free to contact us.

A new school year brings the promise of a renewed dedication, focus and energy to the mission of teaching and learning. We hope that each of you will make the commitment to get the best education possible, to become involved in school activities, and to cultivate respectful and supportive relationships with your classmates.

Sincerely,

Lisa Sequeira

Principal
Tahanto Regional Middle/High School
508-869-2333

# CONTACT

**Tahanto Regional Middle/High School**
Berlin Boylston Regional School District
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505

Administration/Main Office: 508-869-2333, ext 2300
Counseling Department: 508-869-2333, ext 2116
Nurse's Office: 508-869-2333, ext 2303
Report Absence: 508-869-2333, press 1
Preschool: 508-869-1919
Fax: 508-869-0175
Website: www.tahanto.bbrsd.org

## Administration Contact Information

**Principal**
Lisa Sequeira
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2333

**Assistant Principal / Section 504 Coordinator**
Richard Cameron
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2333

**Assistant Principal / Section 504 Coordinator**
Joe Barnas
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2333

**Athletic Director**
Julie Lee
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2333

**Guidance Department**
Ilene Rodman, Katie Schmidt, Gregory Picariello, Kara Ford, Kim Trainor
Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2333

**Superintendent**
Al Ganem, Interim Superintendent
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**Executive Assistant to the Superintendent**
Jennifer Fortune
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**Director of Curriculum Grades 6-12**
Renee Legendre
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**Director of Finance and Operations**
Aaron Osborne
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**Director of Pupil Personnel Services / Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator**
Jannel Fitzpatrick
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**Director of Technology**
Joseph Sposato, Interim Director of Technology
215 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837

**School Committee**
Michael Totman, Chair
Meagan Grill, Vice Chair
Lori-Anne Hart
Jessica Moore Deglialberti
Lisa Mair
Beth Mancini

You can learn more about the school committee and access meeting agendas, notes, live streams, and recordings by visiting their page on the school district website www.bbrsd.org/school-committee/home.

## Assistance Directory

For help with any of the below topics, please contact the Main Office at 508-869-2333 and ask for the corresponding contact listed below.

| Topic | Contact |
|---|---|
| Absenteeism | Mr. Cameron and Mr. Barnas |
| Change of Address | Ms. Ojeda |
| Changing Schools | Ms. Ojeda |
| College/Career Information | Ms. Rodman |
| Discipline Matters | Mr. Cameron and Mr. Barnas |
| Employment/Work Study | Ms. Rodman |
| Health Concerns | Ms. Lamoureux |
| Locker Problems | Mrs. Angiulo |
| Lost and Found | Mrs. Angiulo |
| Parking | Mrs. Angiulo |
| Scholarships | Ms. Ojeda |
| School Adjustment Counselor | Ms. Ford and Ms. Schmidt |
| School Psychologist | Dr. Trainor |
| Student Advisory Council | Ms. Sequeira, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. Barnas |
| Student Council | Mrs. McCarthy and Mrs. Rinker |
| Tardiness | Mr. Cameron and Mr. Barnas |
| Transcripts | Ms. Ojeda |
| Truancy | Mr. Cameron and Mr. Barnas |
| Tutoring Due to Prolonged Illness | Ms. Rodman, Ms. Schmidt, and Mr. Picariello |
| Work Permits | Mrs. Angiulo |

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Statement of Purpose

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is a community composed of students, faculty, administration, parents, and staff committed to working cooperatively and respectfully to provide a supportive, yet academically challenging environment in which each student can achieve his/her full intellectual and social potential. Students are encouraged to strive to their highest level of achievement.

## Mission Statement

Our mission is to support and to challenge students in achieving personal and academic excellence in a safe, collaborative, student-centered environment.

## Vision Statement

Our vision is to create a tradition of developing responsible citizens who are college and career ready.

## Core Values

Tahanto Regional High School's core values guide our decisions and anchor our actions in the pursuit of learning. We are committed to fostering the core values of Determination, Education, Enrichment, and Responsibility.

**Determination**

- Problem solving
- Perseverance
- Desire to succeed
- Pride

**Enrichment**

- Creativity
- Extra-curricular opportunities
- Confidence applying knowledge outside of school

**Education**

- Critical thinking
- Access to resources
- Technology
- Effective communication

**Responsibility**

- Strong sense of community
- Positive contributions to the community
- Service to others
- Respect & empathy
- Self-reflection
- Collaboration

## School Performance Objectives

The school demonstrates its commitment:

- To fostering and expanding community involvement through the Principal's Newsletter (Tahanto Today), Parent Advisory Council, Annual Open House, School Council, Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC), Tahanto Parent-Teacher Organization, Tahanto Music Parents Organization, Booster Club, and Tahanto Scholarship Committee.
- To developing curriculum through a five-year review of each curriculum area, setting of annual teacher goals, setting of annual department goals, setting of school goals and system-wide goals, and the use of release time devoted to curriculum development.
- To interacting with the larger community through collaborations with the Audubon Society, The Worcester Art Museum, WPI, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, The Museum of Science, Atlantic Shark Conservatory and The Cape Cod National Seashore.
- To providing career level educational opportunities through its work with local colleges, work-study, school banking program, community service, and early childhood education/preschool program.
- To serving students through College Services software and Naviance.
- To supporting the special needs population through its unique programs including the Collaborative High School Program, the Peer Assistance Program (ACE), the Oral Interpreter and Speech/Language Pathologist Program, The L.I.F.E. Skills program, the Wilson Reading Program, and inclusive education.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Bell Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:15 | Students Arrive |
| 7:30 | Warning Bell |
| 7:35-8:23 | Period 1 |
| 8:26-9:14 | Period 2 |
| 9:17-10:05 | Period 3 |
| 10:08-10:56 | Period 4 |
| 10:59-12:33 | Period 5 |
| 10:59-11:33 | Lunch 1 |
| 11:33-12:03 | Lunch 2 |
| 12:03-12:33 | Lunch 3 |
| 12:36-1:24 | Period 6 |
| 1:27-2:15 | Period 7 |

**Note**: Periods 1 through 7 cycle through a six-day rotation.

An interval of three minutes is scheduled between classes. Students should be in their seats when the bell rings for the beginning of any period. Otherwise, they will be considered late for class. If a student is detained by a teacher, he/she should receive a pass from that teacher in order not to be considered late to class.

## Bus Procedure

Bus transportation is provided for all students who are residents of Berlin and Boylston only. A few simple rules must be observed by all riders to provide overall safety.

- Pupils must obey the driver promptly and willingly.
- Proper conduct must be observed.
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes) and eating on the bus are prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from extending any object or part of their body out of a bus window.
- Pupils must cross the highway or street only in front of the bus.
- Be on time to the bus stop.
- Stay off the road while waiting for the bus.
- Students at bus stops and on the bus must comply with all other school rules, policies, and the code of conduct including but not limited to the rules/policies prohibiting bullying, hazing, smoking, weapons, and drugs/alcohol.

Failure to observe the above rules can result in a loss of bus privilege. The bus driver or Principal may also assign a student to a particular seat.

## Calendar

Please visit www.bbrsd.org/our-district/calendar for our Academic School Calendar. Our calendar is updated regularly to reflect any school changes due to inclement weather or any unforeseen circumstances.

## Cancelation/Delay of School

In the event of inclement weather, school may be either delayed or canceled. The Superintendent of Schools will send an automated phone message to all families and staff in the Tahanto community announcing school cancelations or delays. Television coverage of delays or cancelations may be broadcast by channels 4, 5, and 7 in Boston, and on area radio stations.

## Class Dues

For grades 9-12, the amount of class dues is established by the class advisor and class officers. It is currently $40 per year. A student is expected to pay class dues each year. After four years, class dues help to defray the cost for a graduating student's diploma, cap and gown, and yearbook. Class dues also may support other class activities at the choice of the class, class advisor, and class officers.

## Communications from Parents

Phone calls, text messages, and other messages from parents to their students during the school day should be reserved for emergencies only. Furthermore, as directed under "Dismissals" in the Handbook, dismissals require a written note from parents delivered to the main office by 8:00 AM.

## Fire and Evacuation Drills

Fire and Evacuation Drills will be held regularly during the school year. The drill instructions are posted in each classroom. Students are to follow these instructions under the direction of the teacher. While passing to and from the exit in a single file, there will be no talking or running.

## Lockers

Each student is assigned a corridor and a gym locker. They should be kept clean and neat at all times since a locker inspection will be held periodically. The school District is not responsible for any belongings stored in lockers. Further, the school District cannot be responsible for any belongings which might be lost through student failure to keep the locker secure at all times. Students shall have no expectation of privacy in their lockers.

## Parking

**Parking is only available to eligible seniors**. Each year, all seniors who wish to drive private vehicles to school will be charged a parking fee. Administration will review enrollment annually to determine if others are eligible. Registration forms, a copy of the applicant's driver's license, as well as copies of all vehicle registrations must accompany the payment prior to a parking spot being assigned.

Students are authorized to drive private vehicles to school for regular sessions on school days or for extended school days as long as the following rules are adhered to:

- Parking on school grounds during the regular or extended day is considered a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be revoked at any time for a student's violation of the school's rules and regulations and/or violation of any regulations on this form. NO REFUNDS WILL BE GRANTED FOR A VIOLATION OF A RULE.
- The speed limit on school grounds is 10 mph and passengers and drivers must wear seat belts.
- Any student who has more than 4 unexcused absences or 4 unexcused tardies in a semester will lose their parking privileges until the next semester, where their name will be put on the waiting list.
- In order to maintain parking privileges, a student must secure a passing grade (numerical grade of 65 or above) in at least all but one of the major subjects that he/she is taking. Major subjects are those classes that meet five days per week.
- Students will park in an assigned numbered space only. Any unauthorized vehicle parked in a non-assigned space will be towed at the owner's expense. The area will be kept clean and orderly by those students who park there. Violators of this regulation will be reported to the office for disciplinary action.
- Students are not to be in their cars, or anyone else's car, or in the parking lot during the school day without office approval.
- Any student who leaves school without permission will automatically lose their privilege to park for the remainder of the school year.
- Student vehicles parked on school property may be subject to search.
- Any student participating in a scheduled school activity, game or program held off school property will not be allowed to use a private vehicle for transportation to that function.

## Rights of 18 Year Old Students

The eighteen-year-old student has the right to sign school documents (i.e. field trip permission slips, excusals, and dismissals from school) when required by general school policy. The school reserves the right to keep parents informed about student progress and attendance to the extent permitted by law.

## School Security - Background Checks

It shall be the policy of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools that, as required by law, a state and national fingerprint criminal background check will be conducted to determine the suitability of all current and prospective school employees, volunteers, chaperones, coaches, interns, apprentices, subcontractors, laborers, or others who may have direct and/or unmonitored contact with children. For more details, please see the full policy referenced below.
*Reference*

- School Committee Policy ADDA

## Senior Privilege

The Senior Privilege program is designed to support seniors in their transition beyond high school. If a student has a directed study first or last cycle of the day, the student may sign in prior to the beginning of second cycle or after the start of the last cycle without being marked tardy or absent. Students may participate in Senior Privilege during their senior year if they meet the following academic and disciplinary criteria:

- Permission slips must be filled out and signed by an administrator prior to participating in the Senior Privilege program.
- Students must be in satisfactory academic standing with no failing grades in any course. To be eligible for the first quarter of the senior year, no failing grades will be allowed in any course either the 4th quarter or final grade of a course at the end of the junior year. No failing grades will be allowed in any quarter of the senior year. If a student is failing one class, the student will be required to attend their scheduled study halls during the school day.
- Students must be in satisfactory disciplinary standing with no out-of-school suspensions in the 4th quarter of the junior year or in any quarter of the senior year.
- Students must not have more than 4 unexcused absences or more than 4 tardies to school in a semester. First semester senior year eligibility will be determined by second semester junior year.
- Students may go to the cafeteria or café for their directed study. Students must report to their scheduled directed study to sign in prior to reporting to the cafeteria or café.
- If a student is found in any other area of the school during their directed study, they will lose their privilege for 2 weeks on the first offense. The second offense will lead to permanent loss of the privilege.

## Student Shadowing Requests

Students wishing to shadow another student should contact the Guidance Department to schedule a visit.

## Voter Registration

Verbal and/or printed announcements will be made at the Tahanto Regional High School to notify students of the upcoming local, state, and national elections. Any student who will be 18 years of age at the time of an election will be able to register to vote with the administrative assistant at Tahanto and fill out the required forms at the school. Notification of the cut-off dates for registering for a particular election will be provided by the Town Clerks of Berlin and Boylston and made known to the school registrar. Subsequently, notice will be given to students and eligible students will be encouraged to register.

## Work Permits

If you are seeking employment and are under the age of 18, you will need to obtain a work permit prior to starting work. Work permits may be obtained at the school office for students 14 years of age and older.
Once you secure a job, you can obtain a Work Permit Application at the school office. Please bring the form to your employer and they will complete the first page. On the second page of the application, you and your parent or guardian will sign. Each of these signatures are required. If you are 14 or 15 years old, you will also have to obtain your physician's signature.

Once your Work Permit Application is complete in its entirety, you can bring it to the school office with your birth certificate. Once you receive the Work Permit, you can bring it to your employer and begin your job.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM

A varied curriculum is offered to meet the needs of students of all levels of ability. Recognizing the different ways that students learn, we are committed to providing learning experiences using a variety of educational models, such as cooperative learning, projects, debates, group discussions, inquiry and investigation, discovery, open-ended questions, student-centered learning, and differentiated instruction.

- The core curricula including ELA, Social Studies, Math and Science reflect a comprehensive and sequential development of concepts structured around social-emotional and cognitive objectives.
- The Music and Art curricula offerings educate students to appreciate ideas and emotions conveyed in sound and image with the goal that they will understand and know the nature of the creative process and the role of the arts in reflecting and shaping the cultural heritage.
- The World Language department offers a four-year sequential study of French and Spanish.
- Advanced Placement courses are offered in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Physics, Psychology, Calculus, Statistics, U.S. History, European History, and English.

Library media and technology are used throughout all levels of instruction.

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Course overviews are distributed by each teacher at the beginning of the school year. Performance objectives are measured by a variety of teacher constructed forms of evaluation and teacher observation. Student achievement is measured in the classroom, by district determined measures, and by studying and analyzing the results of standardized testing.

We strive to keep the average class size small.

## Comprehensive Examinations

Comprehensive examinations are given both at mid-year and at the end of the year to students in grades 9-12. These examinations are given a value of one-fifth of the semester grade. All students in grades 9-11 are required to take finals regardless of their average.

**Senior Exam Exemption**

Seniors may be exempt from the semester exams in January and May if the following conditions are met:

- The student must achieve a minimum grade of A- (90-92) average for the two quarters in the semester.
- The student must have no more than 4 days of unexcused absences for the semester.

- The student must have no class cuts in the course.
- Seniors who are in AP courses and do not take the AP exam are required to take a final exam, regardless of their grade.

It is important to note that any senior who qualifies for the exam exemption with a minimum grade may, however, take the final exam if he or she chooses to do so. The course grade including the final exam grade will be included in the final course grade.

## Course Levels

All courses at Tahanto are divided into four levels.

| Level | Name | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | Advanced Placement (AP) | AP courses are based on college-level standards and provide the most advanced learning opportunities offered at the high school level. Upon completion of an AP course, a student should be prepared to take a final comprehensive exam in the respective study area. If the student does not take the AP exam in May, they must, regardless of their grade, take a final exam in that AP course. Eligible AP exam scores may enable students to receive college or university credit. |
| 1 | Honors (H) | Honors-level courses challenge qualified students who demonstrate the ability to perform at advanced degrees of rigor beyond the college preparatory level. Honors level courses demand extraordinary quantities of reading, homework, and application of analytical skills. To ensure success, students should exhibit outstanding work habits and study skills. |
| 2 | College Preparatory (CP) | College Preparatory courses are taught at grade and skill appropriate levels that will prepare students for entrance into 4-year and 2-year colleges and universities, vocational, and technical institutions. |
| 3 | Life Skills (TLC) | Life Skills courses provide students with basic skills. |

## Dual Enrollment Program/ACE 12th Year Program

The Dual Enrollment Program was authorized by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993. Qualified public high school juniors and seniors can earn both high school and college credit through this program. Students are required to pay the applicable tuition and fees. Tahanto juniors and seniors who meet state and Tahanto qualifying criteria will be allowed to enroll. Only students with a minimum of a 3.0 are eligible to apply.

Students who do not qualify academically for the Dual Enrollment Program may apply for Quinsigamond Community College's 12th Year Program.

Interested students should meet with their school counselor the semester before they plan to enroll.

## Extra Help

Teachers are available one day per week until 2:50 PM. Students who desire assistance in any subject area are encouraged to avail themselves of extra help sessions. Extended time for extra help may be arranged through consultation with the individual teacher.

## Grades

Interim and final grades will be updated and made available online via PowerSchool four times during the school year, each marking period being approximately ten weeks in length. In the case of an incomplete mark, the "INC" will be replaced with a letter grade if the missing work is completed within two weeks. If the work is not completed within the stipulated time, the student will not receive credit for all non-completed work.

## Homework

I. Purpose

Homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline, and lifelong learning habits. It is the intention of the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School staff to assign relevant, challenging, and meaningful homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives. Homework should provide students with the opportunity to apply information they have learned, complete unfinished class assignments, and develop independence. Students are encouraged to pursue non-assigned, independent, leisure reading.

II. Time

Actual time required to complete assignments will vary with each student's study habits, academic skills, and selected course load. If your child is spending an inordinate amount of time doing homework, you should contact your child's teachers.

III. Late Work Policies

Students are expected to turn work in on time. Students who turn in late assignments will receive any of the following based upon individual teacher discretion:

- Partial credit
- No credit
- Missed reward activity
- Communication with parents

Please refer to other sections of the handbook regarding policies for missed work due to illness or absence.

IV. Responsibilities of Staff

- Assign relevant, challenging and meaningful homework that reinforces classroom learning.
- Give clear instructions and make sure students understand the purpose of the assignment.
- Give feedback and/or correct homework.
- Communicate with other teachers regarding major assignment dates.
- Set varied, challenging and meaningful tasks related to class work that are appropriate to the students' learning needs and to the intended outcomes of the unit of work being taught.
- Give students enough time to complete homework, taking into account home obligations and extracurricular activities.
- Involve parents and contact them if a pattern of late or incomplete homework develops.

V. Responsibilities of Parents

- Set a regular, uninterrupted study time each day for your child.
- Establish a quiet study area.
- Monitor student's organization and daily list of assignments in their agenda.
- Help students work to find the answer, not just get it done.
- Be supportive when the student gets frustrated with difficult assignments.
- Contact the teacher to stay well-informed about the student's learning process.

VI. Responsibilities of Students

- Write down assignments in his/her agenda book.
- Be sure all assignments are clear; ask questions if necessary.
- Set aside a regular schedule/time to study.
- Find a quiet place to study.
- Work on homework independently so it reflects his/her true ability.
- Produce his/her best work.
- Make sure assignments are done according to the given instruction and completed on time.
- Prepare and develop a schedule to complete long term/major assignments and tests.

## Honor Roll

The Tahanto Regional Middle/High School honor roll will be determined on a quarterly basis as follows:

- **Highest Honors** - Average of A (4.0) or higher. A student may receive lower than an A– in only one subject and said grade shall be no lower than a B+.
- **High Honors** - Average of B+ (3.3) or higher. A student may receive lower than a B– in only one subject and said grade shall be no lower than a C+.
- **Honors** - Average of B (3.0) or higher. A student may receive lower than a B– in only one subject and said grade shall be no lower than a C.

In addition, the following conditions must be met:

- All major courses will be considered.
- A student must carry a full course load.
- There can be no incomplete grades.

## Make-up Work

For any absences due to illness, a student is expected to have work made up within a period not longer than twice the length of the absence. The major responsibility lies with the student to request make-up work and to complete the work. For an extended illness, the school will provide assignments upon request.

For unexcused absences, work is due the day the student returns. If a test or quiz was missed and the student does not have an excusal note upon return, the student will receive a zero.

## National Honor Society

The purpose of the National Honor Society (NHS) is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students at Tahanto Regional High School.

- To be eligible for membership, the candidate must be a member of the junior or senior class.
- Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.6.
- Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character.
- The selection of each member of the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the five appointed members If the faculty council and shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of the NHS.
- Students who are eligible scholastically will be notified and told that for further consideration for selection to the NHS chapter, they may complete the student activity information form.

## National Junior Honor Society

The purpose of the National Junior Honor Society is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students.

- To be eligible for membership the candidate must be a member of the 7th or 8th grade.
- Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.6 in all five major core classes in BOTH 7th and 8th grade. The final average for each major core class for 7th grade is used in this calculation. Grades from quarters 1, 2, and 3 in each major core class for 8th grade are used in this calculation.
- Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character through a student activity information form. The student activity information form must be completed and returned to the main office by the deadline.
- Students will be notified of their acceptance during 8th grade recognition practice.

## Post Graduate Pathways

Students are encouraged to continue schooling beyond high school and are assisted with that venture. The Counseling Department coordinates college visitations and career day activities and provides related technological software for students.

The school is involved in the school-to-work transition through the Assabet Collaborative.

The Tahanto Preschool offers a community service for preschoolers, as well as a comprehensive study in child development for the high school students.

Tahanto students also have the opportunity to become certified bank tellers through the Clinton Savings Bank School-Bank program, which is held at the Tahanto Branch of Clinton Savings Bank.

## Process for Failing Grades

If a student fails a major subject (English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science), he or she will be required to attend an approved summer school program for the failing course. In order to be eligible for summer school, a student must have a minimum of a 50 average in the course. If a student fails one subject and does not show proof of passing an approved summer school program, the student will be required to repeat the failing course. If a student fails two or more major subjects, the student will automatically be retained and summer school will not be an option. This requirement may also be subject to change at the discretion of the Principal and/or Assistant Principal.

## Promotion and Graduation Requirements

**Credits Required to Advance and to Graduate**

| To advance to | Credits required |
|---|---|
| Grade 10 | 25 |
| Grade 11 | 55 |
| Grade 12 | 80 |
| To Graduate | 115 |

**Graduation Requirements**

Tahanto diplomas are awarded at a graduation ceremony in June. Only students who have completed all requirements for graduation are eligible to participate in the graduation exercises.

Students must earn 115 credits to graduate, in addition to passing specific courses and MCAS tests shown below.

**Courses Required to Graduate**

All middle school students are required to take 3 years of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Elective choices vary year to year.

| Course | Years | Credits |
|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 20 |
| Math | 4 | 20 |
| History | 3 | 15 |
| Science | 3 Years of Lab Science | 15 |
| Physical Education | 2 | 5 (2.5 per year) |
| Health | 1 course | 2.5 |
| Technology | 1 course | 2.5 |

Although not required for graduation, students are **strongly encouraged to study a world language** for at least two years. Preferably, students will study a world language for four years to be competitive for 21st century college admissions and employment. Knowing a world language also helps students become global citizens.

For more comprehensive information, see the Program of Studies or check with the Counseling Department.

**MCAS Requirements for Graduation**

To be eligible for a Tahanto Regional High School diploma, all students must receive passing scores on the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Biology tests.

**Failure to Fulfill Diploma Requirements**

A student who is unable to fulfill diploma requirements because of emergency conditions, such as prolonged illness, may appeal to the Principal to participate in graduation exercises. The Principal may also, in extraordinary circumstances, grant a waiver of this rule. However, under no circumstances will a diploma be issued until all requirements are fulfilled. A student who does not receive a diploma at graduation is encouraged to complete the graduation requirements as quickly as possible.

## Schedule Changes

Each spring, students will choose courses for the following year with the help of their counselor, parents/guardians, and teacher recommendations. In most cases, these schedules will remain valid, but changes will be made:

- If a student does not meet the prerequisite or fails a required course which is not made up in Summer School.
- If circumstances have changed, subject to the advice of the counselor and with approval of the parents, teacher, and/or Department Chairperson.

- Within the Drop/Add period (two weeks from scheduled school start date), schedule changes can be made if a student did not request a course into which they were scheduled.

## Student Learning Expectations

**Creativity and Innovation**

*Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products.*

- Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes
- Create original works as a means of personal or group expression
- Identify trends and forecast possibilities

**Communication and Collaboration**

*Students communicate and work collaboratively to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.*

- Interact, collaborate, and publish information and ideas, using effective communication, sometimes employing a variety of digital environments and media
- Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures

Contribute to project teams, including distance learning, to produce original works or solve problems

**Research and Information Fluency**

*Students apply a variety of learning strategies to gather, evaluate, and use information.*

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation
- Gather relevant information from multiple sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information responsibly
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research

**Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making**

*Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions.*

- Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation
- Collect and analyze data when identifying problems, exploring solutions, making informed decisions, and completing tasks
- Use multiple processes and diverse perspectives when approaching research, projects, and problem solving

**Citizenship**

*Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues and practice legal and ethical behavior.*

- Practice active care for the world and for those with whom we share it
- Demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning
- Advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology

## Student Performance Objectives

Our graduates are able to:

- Read effectively
- Write effectively
- Communicate effectively
- Listen and view information critically
- Analyze, interpret, and evaluate information
- Acquire, integrate, and apply essential knowledge
- Apply skills (mathematical, literacy, scientific, historical, linguistic) to interpret information and solve problems
- Use technology and a variety of resources to acquire, organize, and communicate information
- Demonstrate responsibility for one's own learning and behavior
- Treat others with respect regardless of their philosophy, culture, or religious belief
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and independently
- Make informed and responsible judgments regarding personal health
- Understand and demonstrate a sense of community
- Understand and respect the individual's rights and responsibilities in the school, community, and nation

## Summer School

For high school students only, the school will give credit toward graduation for work completed during the summer at a recognized summer school, only if such study is undertaken in order to make up a failing mark in a subject taken during the school year just completed.

A student who fails a course during the school year must have received an average of no less than 50% in order to be able to take that course in summer school. Before undertaking such summer work, the student must clear the matter with the Counseling Department in order to ensure that the material covered in summer school is similar in content to the subject matter undertaken during the school year at Tahanto.

In order to fulfill requirements for credit, the student must present to the Counseling Department evidence of faithful attendance and a passing grade at summer school. Students may wish to enroll in summer school for purposes of enrichment and self-improvement. Such undertaking is commendable, but the school cannot grant credit towards graduation for this type of study.

# ATTENDANCE

It is the intent of the Tahanto Regional High School Attendance Policy to support the school's performance objectives in the areas of academics and personal responsibility.

The Education Reform Act of 1993 describes the relationship between student performance and attendance. The Act also emphasizes the inherent responsibility for school attendance by all three parties: the student, the parent/guardian, and the school. The Act describes the student as a productive contributor and an active participant in order to fulfill the purpose of the school in providing for student achievement. In the end, if students are present and on time, they will be prepared to enter into a future workforce as both competent and effective contributors to society.

School is compulsory for students under the age of sixteen (16). A student may be considered truant and court proceedings initiated when the student accumulates seven (7) unexcused absences in a six-month period.

For any student who has missed 3 or more days in a school year, the Principal or designee shall meet with the student and that student's parent/guardian. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve the student's attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health, and human services, housing, and non-profit agencies.

## Responsibility for Attendance

In supporting student achievement, punctuality and attendance at school are recognized as the primary responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian. The school, through its attendance policy, monitors absences to ensure regular attendance.

- **Student responsibility**. School is an essential part of your social, emotional, and cognitive development and attendance is required to actively engage in these activities.
- **Parent responsibility**. In accordance with school practice and Massachusetts General Law, parents or guardians may call to inform the school of the absence of a pupil and the reason for the absence. To report an absence, call 508-869-2333 and select option 1. The school's main office is prepared to receive calls starting at 7:30 AM. Unless a call is received, a parent/guardian will be notified. Calling the school does not necessarily excuse an absence.
- **Faculty Responsibility**. Faculty members will record all absences from or tardiness to class. After the third absence from class in one semester, the teacher will notify the office who will in turn notify the parents. On the fifth absence the teacher will notify the Administration.

## Types of Absences

I. Class Attendance

A. A student who is enrolled in school/course is expected to be present each time school/course is in session. The maximum absence limit in the middle/high school is five (5) per class/per

semester. Absences will be treated as follows: In the middle/high school, after four and eight absences from class, a form letter will be sent to the parent/guardian. When a student reaches 5 unexcused absences in a semester, they are issued a Saturday School Session.

B. Although all absences are kept on file, tabulation of absences will begin each semester.

C. Vacations taken during school time will be counted as unexcused absences. No vacations, sports camps, etc. should be scheduled prior to July 1 as the last day of school is not determined until the Spring due to snow days.

D. All notes will be given to the Main Office on the day the student returns to school following an absence. Notes from parents do not excuse absences, tardiness, or dismissals. The only exception is three parental excuses for illness as described in Section II F. The notes are important documentation should a waiver be requested.

E. Any student who is not in attendance for more than one-half of the class period will be considered absent.

F. Calling the school nurse DOES NOT excuse the absence.

G. Students may make up absences beyond 5 by attending Saturday School at the administration's discretion.

II. Excused Absences (Absences Not Counted Toward Maximum Absence Limit)

A. Death in the family (parent, sister, brother, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin).

B. Doctor/dentist appointment - Obtain proof from physician or dentist.

C. School sponsored activities such as field trips, or post- secondary interviews

D. Post-secondary visitations (maximum of three for Juniors and Seniors) and must be approved by the Counseling Department 2 days prior to the planned visit. Excusal will not be granted if paperwork is not completed 2 days prior. Verification of the visit must be provided from the school visited upon return.

E. The observance of religious holidays.

F. Parent excusal (three per semester for illness)

G. Out-of-School Suspension

III. Extended Medical Absences

The following guidelines have been established in the unfortunate event of a medical diagnosis which renders a student unable to attend school for an extended period of time. A note will be provided to the school nurse from the student's health care provider documenting the reason and outlining the expected return to school date. The physician's signature, as well as the date, is required.

If a student is absent 14 or more school days, the parent/guardian will provide the school nurse with medical updates from the physician every three weeks. It is imperative that the notes continue to be provided by the medical provider who initially excused the student.

The school nurse may remind parents/guardians to provide the school with updates every three weeks. Parents may authorize direct communication between the school nurse and the student's medical provider, to discuss student progress.

Students who experience an extended medical absence will not be allowed to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities until a back-to-school transition plan has been completed and signed by the student's primary care provider.

Students and their parents should be in close contact with teachers and administration regarding missed work and appropriate timelines for completion.

As frequent and prolonged absences may result in possible loss of credits, it is important for students, parents and school personnel to communicate frequently regarding the student's academic status.

IV. Tardiness

A. Four tardies to school/class will be considered an absence.

B. At the middle/high school level, tardiness that results in tardiness to class will count as both tardy to school and tardy to class.

C. Students must check in to the main office if arriving at school later than 7:35 AM. Failure to do so will result in an office detention.

V. Dismissals

If a student needs to be dismissed from school, he/she must bring in a note from home signed by a parent and containing the date, time and reason for dismissal, and phone number where a parent can be called. This note must be in the main office no later than 8:00 AM. on the day of the dismissal. Dismissals occurring during the school day in which the student leaves and then returns will be allowed only for doctor's appointments, family emergencies, or legal matters. Any dismissal of this kind that does not fall into these categories must be cleared with the administration before dismissal may take place. In permissible cases where a student has reason to leave the building during the school day, he/she must report to the main office upon returning to school. Requests to leave for lunch, to get homework, gym clothing, etc. will not be honored. In general, early dismissals for other than the prescribed reasons are not condoned.

Telephone calls from parents prior to a dismissal will be accepted only on an emergency basis and any arrangement for transportation will be the responsibility of the parent. The student must then report to the office prior to dismissal to verify the dismissal. In cases where a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be dismissed by the nurse. A dismissal by the nurse for illness will be considered an excused absence.

The student must be reminded of the possible loss of credit associated with dismissals that are determined by the Attendance Policy to be unexcused absences.

VI. Loss of Credit

A. In any case where a student fails to receive credit for any course, the final grade will still be recorded on that student's permanent report card.

B. In the case where a student receives a passing grade for a course required for graduation (e.g. English) but due to absences receives no credit, the graduation subject requirement will be considered fulfilled. The student may have to take an additional course in order to achieve the minimum credits required for the Tahanto Regional High School diploma.

VII. Request for Waiver

A. Waiver of the attendance policy will be heard by a Review Board consisting of the Administration and the Discipline Review Committee. The Review Board will be permitted to waive or modify the class attendance policy where, in their judgment, reasonable grounds for the absence exist.

B. All requests for waivers must be made in person to the Principal and/or Assistant Principal by the parent or guardian within 10 school days of notification of loss of credit.

C. Decisions made by the Review Board may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately to the School Committee if not resolved at the Superintendent's level.

VIII. Other

A. For students who transfer to Tahanto Regional High School after the start of a semester, the maximum absence limit will be equal to 10% of the remaining days of the semester.

B. Suspensions:

1. Class periods spent in the in-school suspension room do not count toward the maximum absence limit.

2. Days absent due to out-of-school suspension do not count toward the maximum absence limit.

C. If a student changes classes during a semester, the total accumulation of absences will be carried over into the new class.

D. Students will be given two days for each one that they are absent (excused) from school in order to complete all make-up work.

E. Loss of credit due to excessive absences may be made up by attendance and successful completion of a Summer School Course. Prior approval from the student's school counselor and the Principal/Assistant Principal is needed.

F. Students are prohibited from attending any after-school functions if they have been absent for that day with an unexcused absence. Attendance is predicated on a student being present for 6 out of 7 classes.

*Reference*

- Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76

## School Choice Students and Snow Days

In order for consistency to be maintained in the attendance policy for all students, no school choice student will be given an “excused absence” when Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is in session even though the town from which a student is coming to Tahanto has announced “no school” for that day. The decision made by parents who choose not to drive a son or daughter to Tahanto due to road conditions in their town is respected. Under Class Attendance of the Attendance Policy, Section I, Item A, students are allowed 4 unexcused absences per semester before loss of credit would occur on the 5th absence. In the event that such a decision at the time or at a later date would lead to a loss of credit, a parent may appeal for a waiver of the policy to the Principal/Assistant Principal and the Discipline Review Committee as stated in Section VII of the Attendance Policy.

## Skip Days

Tahanto does not support or encourage in any way “skip days” or “breakfast days.” When a group of students choose not to attend school it has an impact on classes and disrupts the educational process. Students who participate will receive a two-day in-school suspension.

# CO-CURRICULAR INFORMATION

## Athletic Program

The athletic program provides our students with a variety of interscholastic sports at both the middle school and high school levels with emphasis placed on developing each student's scholastic and social skills as well as athletic abilities. For more information, please see Tahanto's Athletic Handbook in the Appendix of this handbook.

## Dances

Dances for high school will take place from 6:00-9:00 PM. Homecoming and Prom will take place from 7:00-10:00 PM. No student will be admitted to a dance after 8:00 PM unless previously approved by the Administration.

Only Tahanto students are allowed at dances unless permission has been previously secured through the Administration. No middle school student may attend a high school dance nor high school student attend a middle school dance.

All students attending a school dance or prom must be in attendance the day of the dance for 6 out of 7 periods. Students attending a Prom or Dance scheduled on a Saturday must be in attendance the day before.

All students should behave in accordance with the students' code of conduct at dances and proms.

## Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities

**Academic Requirements for Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

The primary reason for a student to be in school is for academics. Extra help and academic activities take precedence over the participation of the student in an extracurricular activity. Students are strongly encouraged to and expected to notify the Advisor in advance when they will not be at an extracurricular activity due to academic reasons.

A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the extracurricular activity (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade (numerical grade of 65 or above) in all but one major subject. Major subjects are those classes that meet five days per week. At Tahanto, this means that students cannot fail more than one (1) major subject. Eligibility for fall extracurricular activities is determined by the final year marks. Incomplete grades do not count as passing grades. The academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the date when the report cards for that marking period have been issued to the parents of all the students within a particular class. Academic eligibility is required for a student to participate in any extracurricular activity with the exception of Homework Club. A student cannot count towards eligibility for any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been taken and previously failed.

If a student is failing one course and is participating in any extracurricular activities, to support

academic success the student must attend ACE Club and/or an extra help session two times per week until they are no longer failing that course during the next quarter or interim report whichever comes first. If a student misses 2 sessions, the student will meet with the advisor and administration, and if a student continues to miss sessions after this meeting, the student will not be able to continue participating in extracurricular activities.

**Participation in Student Government**

To participate in student government, including becoming a candidate for a leadership position as class officer, student council member, or student advisory committee member, a candidate must be a member of the class he/she will be representing. If, at the beginning of a given year, a student does not meet the above membership qualifications, a new election will be held to replace that student. A candidate must be a member of the class he/she will be representing. If, at the beginning of a given year, a student does not meet the above membership qualifications, a new election will be held to replace that student. Eligibility will furthermore depend on the quality of the student's daily conduct, as judged by the Administration. Any major violation of the code of conduct will result in the student being removed from their elected office.

**Participation in Athletics**

Students participating in voluntary co-curricular activities, including but not limited to intramural or interscholastic athletics, are required to return a signed release of liability (see the Athletic Handbook in the Appendix) to the director of the event/activity prior to engaging in the activity, event, or the commencement of the athletic season. As these activities are voluntary, the student's participation in an event, activity, or athletic season is conditioned upon receipt of the signed and returned release of liability form. Massachusetts law permits use of such releases for school-related voluntary co-curricular activities, including but not limited to athletics. Release forms will be distributed by the Athletic Director and/or by the administrator overseeing the activities.

The student's participation in any co-curricular activity, including but not limited to intramural or interscholastic athletics of any nature, is conditioned on compliance with all applicable laws, district policies (including but not limited to policies relative to student conduct and discipline, bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination), all MIAA policies, and district values, and behavioral expectations.

In the interest of student safety and compliance with these laws, policies, values, and expectations, coaches and/or other school staff will routinely monitor locker room activities. Such monitoring may include physical presence by coaches or other staff in locker rooms. While monitoring students in locker rooms, all coaches and staff will give appropriate consideration to student privacy. Students seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach or building principal.

## Field Trips

Students who miss classes due to a school-sponsored field trip are not considered absent on that day. Therefore, they are expected to be fully prepared to participate in every class the day following the field trip. It is the student's responsibility to see each teacher on the day of the field trip, or before, to

ascertain what work they will miss. A field trip does not excuse a student from a quiz or test given the next day. School-sponsored field trips require a signed permission slip from parents in order for students to participate. Any major violation of the code of conduct, including excessive absences, may affect a student's eligibility to participate in school-sponsored field trips. Students must obtain permission from their teachers and an administrator before they are allowed to attend any field trip. Students are not allowed to drive other students on any school-sponsored field trip or school-related activity. All school rules apply.

## School-to-Career Program

Tahanto is a member of the Assabet Valley School-To-Career Partnership and participates in the programs which it offers. Internships, externships, job shadowing experiences, career pathway development, and other programs may be available to students. The Tahanto School Counselor can provide more information to any interested students.

## Student Advisory Council

The purpose of the Student Advisory Council is to communicate to the School Administration specific items of concern to the student body. The Student Advisory Council works on behalf of the student body, and in conjunction with the student government, presents projects and proposals to the School Administration. Interested students are encouraged to participate and reach out to either the principal or assistant principal(s).

## Student Council

The purpose of the Student Council is to develop qualities of leadership and responsibility in the students of the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School, to promote school spirit, to encourage cooperation among the classes, and to establish understanding between the student body and the faculty and administration. The general goal of the organization is to engage in activities that benefit students and the school. Student Council elections are held in the spring (late March or early April) for the following school year.

## Teacher Assistant (TA) Program

Juniors and seniors may apply to be Teaching Assistants (TAs) for specific teachers for credit and experience. The student TA will be in the agreed-upon class with the teacher each day unless asked to work with a particular student or to perform specified duties for the class.

The teacher may also decide on a topic for a report or assign a report on the TA experience. A teaching unit or series of classes could be a course responsibility agreed upon by the teacher assistant and the lead teacher. At least one of these options should be a part of the course. The teacher is expected to develop a contract detailing what is expected and a rubric for the final grading.

The administration will meet with all TAs during the first week of school to discuss all responsibilities and grading. Grading will be in accordance with standard grading A through F. The student will receive 2.5 credits per semester. The course is "neutral" and will not affect the GPA.

# STUDENT SERVICES

## Cafeteria

The cafeteria operates a hot lunch program for the entire school. Choices are available daily either from the daily lunch line or the deli line. All students are responsible for cleaning their table area as soon as they are finished eating. Appropriate decorum and respect for one another is expected at all times. Infractions may result in detention or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Tahanto code of conduct or exclusion from the cafeteria for a period of time.

The cafeteria area is the only place students should be during lunch.

## Counseling Department

The Counseling Department's role is to assist the students in assessing their interest, abilities, and aptitudes, and in directing them to develop their inherent talents to the fullest.

Counselors are readily available with issues of an educational, vocational, or personal nature. Counselors may help students overcome issues or problems they encounter that interfere with their education. At certain times in our lives, we all encounter obstacles that impede our progress. Typical issues addressed include school, work or family issues, depression, anxiety, anger management, loss, grief, harassment, abuse, relationships with parents and loved ones, and substance use and abuse. Our ability to work through or overcome these obstacles is what builds positive self-esteem. Counseling is usually short-term and directed toward helping a student to reach his/her self-defined goal. The focus is on what students can do to help make things better for themselves.

If students are interested in finding out more about counseling services, they should speak to the school psychologist, school adjustment counselor, school counselor, school nurse, or leave their name with the Counseling Department administrative assistant. Students wishing to see a counselor can make an appointment with the administrative assistant in the Counseling Department. Parents or teachers can also make referrals.

If an appointment conflicts with a class exam or experiment, the student should see the administrative assistant for rescheduling.

Individual or group support sessions are ongoing.

## Health Department

A registered school nurse is employed full time and available for consultation. The school physician is not on duty at the school. The nurse is scheduled to work between the hours of 7:25 AM until 2:20 PM. The school follows the recommendations of the MA Department of Public Health School Unit. The School Health Unit amends these recommendations as illness trends change in the state.

**Concussions and Head Injury**

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools have established policies in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws to protect the safety and wellbeing of student athletes. Annual training will be provided as defined in the regulations. The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools will provide protocols to standardize procedures for persons involved in the prevention, treatment, and management of head injuries, including return to activity decisions, by exercising extraordinary care in assuring the health and safety of their student athletes. This applies to students who incur head injuries while participating in extracurricular athletic activities as well as during the regular school day.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JJIF
- Massachusetts General Laws "An Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletic Program"

**Medication Policy**

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). If a student has been approved for self-administration, a student who needs medication during the school day may be reminded to take the medicine by the school nurse or another individual designated by the school nurse in the student's medical administration plan. This provision only applies when the school nurse has a medical administration plan in place for the student. Only the school nurse, and those listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student. Students who are 18 years old may give permission and transport their medication to and from the school, but they will still need a physician's order.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JLCD.

**Physical Examinations**

A current physical (within the past 13 months) is mandatory for all students entering the school and then again when entering the 10th grade. All students who participate in sports must have a current physical on file completed within 1 year of the sports season that they are participating in. A sports note is not acceptable.

**Pregnant Students**

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools are committed to preserving educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities. Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools do not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school. Every effort will be

made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JIE

**School Immunization Requirements**

Massachusetts school immunization requirements can be found on the following website: www.mass.gov/dph/imm. Religious exemptions must be on file in the nurse's office.

**Screenings**

In accordance with mandated requirements by the MA Department of Public health, the following screenings will take place during the school year:

- Vision and Hearing: Grades 7 and 10
- Height/Weight/Body Mass Index: Grades 7 and 10
- Postural Screenings: Grades 6-9
- SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) Grades 7 and 10

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidence-based practice used to identify, reduce, and prevent problematic use, abuse, and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs. The SBIRT model was incited by an Institute of Medicine recommendation that called for community-based screening for health risk behaviors, including substance use. SBIRT screenings are conducted by trained staff, including school nurses, school adjustment counselors, school counselors and school psychologists. It consists of three major components:

1. Screening - a healthcare professional assesses a patient for risky substance use behaviors using standardized screening tools. Screening can occur in any healthcare setting.
2. Brief Intervention - a healthcare professional engages a patient showing risky substance use behaviors in a short conversation, providing feedback and advice.
3. Referral to Treatment - a healthcare professional provides a referral to brief therapy or additional treatment to patients who screen in need of additional services.

If you do not want your child to participate in one or more of the screenings, please notify the school nurse in writing at the beginning of the school year.

## Homeless Students' Enrollment Rights and Services

To the extent practical and as required by law, the District will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided District services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Being abandoned in hospitals
- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the District's Liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the District.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the District's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The District's Liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute. Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to District policies.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the District Liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to District policies.

Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with District policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student or will divide the costs equally.

The District's Liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The District's Liaison will also review and recommend amendments to District policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JFABD
- Title I, Part C, No Child Left Behind Act, 2002

## Library

The school library is to be used as a quiet place for study, research, and reading. The library opens daily at 7:30 AM. Students may also use the library after school but need to check with the librarian. The library remains open only one day after school per week and this day varies week to week.

No food or drink is permitted in the library at any time.

Books and back issues of magazines may be borrowed for two weeks. Materials are renewable if not reserved for other students. Everyone is asked to cooperate in sharing library resources by returning borrowed materials on time. Students who lose or damage a book or magazine are charged the amount necessary to replace or repair the item. Students who violate the rules of the library will be denied the privilege of its use during the school day.

## Student Records

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information. All individual student records, including addresses and telephone numbers, are kept strictly confidential.

**Student Records Regulations**

All records are available to students and parents with reasonable notice. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, records must be provided to both parents or legal guardians in custody of the child, or in the case of a non-custodial parent with the authorization for release. Copies of records may be released to third parties only with written permission from the student/parent or guardian. To release a record to or for a student who has graduated or left school requires the student's signature on a Transcript Request Form.

**Transfer Procedures**

- Student takes a copy of their immunization record. An unofficial copy of the transcript (unsigned and without the seal) may be taken upon request.
- Official transcripts, standardized test scores, special education records and all temporary records will be sent upon written request by the student or parent/guardian on a form provided by the school to where the student intends to transfer.

**Retention and Destruction of Records**

- Transcripts for graduates will be retained for sixty years.
- Standardized test scores and special education records will be retained for five years.
- Student temporary records will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school system.
- Records for transfer students and students who have withdrawn will be retained according to the expected date of graduation.

**Release of Information**

- According to Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 23.07, Tahanto may release student names, addresses, telephone listings, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, weight and height of athletic team members, class and club participation in officially recognized school activities and sports, degrees, honors, awards, and post high school plans. However, parents and students have the right to request, in writing to the Principal, that this information not be released without prior consent.
- According to Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 23.10, authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's record without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to the school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- According to Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 71.34, parents or guardians have the right to inspect student records. A parents or guardian may "inspect academic, scholastic, or any records concerning such student...regardless of the age of such student."

*References*

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
- Public Law 93-380, Amended
- Public Law 103-382, 1994

- Massachusetts General Laws 66:10 and Title XII, 71:34 A, B, D, E, H
- 603 CMR: 23.00 through 23:12
- Mass Department of Education publication: Student Records; Questions, Answers, and Guidelines
- School Committee Policies JRA and KDB

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Bullying and Cyber Bullying

The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools. The District prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment of school community members for reasons related and unrelated to their race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, genetic information, homelessness, disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions. For the detailed Bullying and Cyber Bullying policy, please see the Appendix of this handbook.

## Care of Textbooks

Textbooks are issued to the students with the understanding that care will be taken to keep them in good condition. All textbooks must be kept covered. Book covers may be available in the Counseling Department. Students may utilize suitable book covers from other sources. It is especially important that books are not stuffed with quantities of paper or with bulky items such as pencils or rulers, since this practice can ruin the binding of a book. Any kind of writing in the book will be considered damage to the book. Students will be charged for lost or damaged books.

## Cheating

Academic integrity is important at Tahanto Regional High School. The expectation that students will always do their own work is essential. Cheating is obtaining information or copying another's work for the purpose of presenting it as one's own work, or providing information to others who have not acquired it through work of their own. The middle/high school faculty considers plagiarism to be the intentional use of material (from books, magazines, the Internet, journals, electronic media, etc.) without properly crediting and citing the original source or author. This includes copying of papers, paragraphs, ideas, parts of sentences, sentences, and calling the work one's own. Paraphrasing material without proper documentation is also plagiarism. Both cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable, dishonest, and indicate a lack of integrity. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in the following disciplinary action:

- The paper will be collected and the course instructor will issue no credit (or a zero).
- The matter will be referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal and a letter will be sent home to the parent(s).
- The National Honor Society (if applicable) will be notified if a member is judged or observed to be cheating.
- The incident will be recorded in the student's file.
- The student will receive a Saturday School assignment.

## Dress Code

We believe that all Tahanto students should be empowered to take pride in their personal appearance. With this in mind, appropriate dress should be worn for both the school day and all events that are sponsored by the school.

Tahanto Administration is committed to engaging in conversation with students regarding dress when necessary to come to an understanding of the students' clothing selection. Every effort will be made to ensure these conversations maintain the privacy and comfort of the student.

This dress code has been written with consideration of equity and interpersonal respect, which should be reflected in enforcement of this dress code.

The Tahanto dress code prohibits the following:

- Exposure of undergarments and private parts.
- Clothing that includes obscenities; words, pictures, or symbols that are vulgar and/or suggestive of vulgarity, that promote or advertise weapons, violence, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, prejudice, sexual innuendo, that encourage inappropriate behavior, that knowingly will incite others, or that disparage the beliefs or heritage of others.
- Hats, bandanas, hoods, sunglasses, handkerchiefs, or other items that cover the head or face and/or interfere with identifying a student are not allowed. Upon consultation with the administration, exceptions may be made for items worn due to religious or medical circumstances.

A student who is reported to be in violation of this dress code will be asked to speak with an administrator. If a violation is determined, the student will be required to change into acceptable clothing. If there is none available, parents will be required to bring appropriate clothing to school.

## Electronic Devices

Students may bring cellphones to school; however, these devices shall be used at the teachers' discretion and for educational purposes only during school hours. Students must comply with individual teachers' requirements regarding cell phones.

A student whose cell phone goes off in class or is observed using the cell phone for non-educational purposes will be required to turn his/her cell phone into their teacher who will submit the phone to the administration. Cell phones and electronic devices that are turned over to the administration will be held in the office until the end of the day for the first offense. After this, the cell phone will be held in the office until a parent is able to pick up the device. A student who does not turn in his/her cell phone will be referred to the office for disrupting the learning environment and insubordination. Please see Disciplinary Guidelines in this handbook for discipline related to cell phone use.

**Headphones/Earbuds** - For safety reasons, headphones/earbuds should not be used/visible in the hallways between the hours of 7:30 AM - 2:15 PM. Use during class is at the teacher's discretion. Any student seen using headphones/earbuds not in accordance with the above will be asked to turn them over to the teacher or administrator who will submit them to the main office.

## Explosives Policy

Students are prohibited from possessing, carrying, transporting, and/or storing explosives on the student's person, in a school bus, in a vehicle operated by the student on school grounds, in a vehicle parked by the student on school grounds, or in a school locker or other container or location in a school or on school grounds.

For the purposes of this policy explosives include, but are not limited to, combustibles, fireworks, firecrackers, M-80s, propane gas, gunpowder, dynamite, crude petroleum or any of its products, or any other explosives, or any substance having such properties that it may spontaneously, or acting under the influence of any contiguous substance, or of any chemical or physical agency, ignite, or inflame or generate inflammable or explosive vapors or gasses to a dangerous extent, any other dangerous material and/or igniting explosives.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to expulsion. The procedure to expel a student for violations of this policy shall be the same procedure followed for students possessing dangerous weapons on school property.

## Felony Charges and Convictions

The Principal may suspend any student charged with a felony and expel any student convicted of a felony if he or she 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 the disciplinary action prior to an action taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his or her right to appeal to the Superintendent and the process for appealing such suspension. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any hearing. Students who are suspended or expelled for felony-related charges shall continue to be provided educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion.

*Reference*

- Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 Section 37½ and Chapter 76 Section 21

## Gambling

Card playing or any form of gambling will not be tolerated in school or at school activities. Any student caught gambling will be reported to the Principal or Assistant Principal for disciplinary action.

## Harassment and Discrimination

Please see the Appendix of this handbook for the detailed policies on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Discrimination.

## Hazing

No student, employee, or school organization shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses District facilities or grounds shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JICFA
- Massachusetts General Laws 269:17, 18, 19

## Law Enforcement Agencies Coming into Schools

When law enforcement authorities request to question or interview a student in a school district facility, the following procedures shall apply:

I. The law enforcement official shall notify the Principal or his/her designee that he/she wishes to talk to a student;
II. If the situation is such that questioning/interviewing can wait until the student arrives home, the student should be questioned/interviewed at home with the knowledge and cooperation of the parents/guardians;
III. The law enforcement official shall request permission to talk to the student on school property from the student's parents/guardians;
IV. If, after every effort has made, the parents cannot be reached to grant permission to talk to the law enforcement official, the law enforcement official may question or interview the student in the presence of the Principal or his/her designee;
V. The student will not be allowed to leave the school building with the law enforcement official unless:

    a. The law enforcement official places the pupil under an arrest without a warrant for a misdemeanor that was committed in the presence of the officer making the arrest;

b. The law enforcement official places the student under arrest on reasonable grounds that the student has committed a felony;
c. The law enforcement official has an arrest warrant for a misdemeanor or a felony, and the student is 17 years of age or older;
d. The law enforcement official has a juvenile detention order from the juvenile court if the student is under 17 years of age.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy KLG

## Lost or Damaged School Property

Students who lose or damage any school property assigned to them must reimburse the school for the loss or damage. Examples of school property include, but are not limited to, books, locks, athletic equipment, uniforms, and musical instruments. Students who cause damage to the school building or grounds must reimburse the school for the cost of repair or replacement when the damage is directly related to the student's actions. The parent/legal guardian of a student is responsible for paying all reimbursements assessed to his/her child for the loss or damage of school property and the damage to a school building or grounds. Payment must be made when the loss or damage occurs or upon written notification by the Main Office of Tahanto Regional Middle/High School.

## Possessing Drug Paraphernalia

The District works to provide a school environment that neither enables nor encourages students to use, possess, sell, transfer or distribute drugs or drug paraphernalia. To that end, student possession, sale, transfer or distribution of drug paraphernalia during school, at school-sponsored activities, on school grounds, or in school buses is prohibited at all times.

If a student is found in possession of drug paraphernalia during school, at school-sponsored activities, on school grounds, or in school buses:

1. The student and paraphernalia will be taken to the administration or a call for assistance will be made to the main office.
2. Disciplinary action will follow.
3. Police may be notified.

## Public Displays of Affection (PDA)

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School prides itself on maintaining a friendly atmosphere where close relationships are fostered and encouraged, and students are permitted to live their lives without too much intrusive adult intervention. However, it is also a public institution, where appropriate norms and boundaries of interaction need to be maintained. In this regard, any sexual activity, including kissing or inappropriate touching, is not permitted in the school, on the school bus, or on school grounds.

## Saturday School

The Saturday School Program is designed to provide consequences for disciplinary, academic, and attendance problems, without interfering with the students' academic learning time. It allows students to remain in class during the academic week, while still being held accountable for their actions. Saturday School takes precedence over jobs, sports, and other scheduling conflicts students may have.

Saturday School will be held from 8:00-11:00 AM twice a month from September through June. Transportation is NOT provided. Students arriving tardy between 8:00-8:15 AM on their assigned day will be assigned an additional office detention but may serve Saturday School for the day in question. Students arriving tardy after 8:15 AM are not admitted and are assigned an additional Saturday School.

Students are expected to work on academic assignments for the entire 3 hours and therefore must arrive with all necessary materials. Students who cut Saturday School or are asked to leave as a result of behavioral issues are assigned 2 Saturday schools. Students who cut 2 or more Saturday Schools are subject to out-of-school suspension for up to 5 days or at the discretion of the administration.

## Search Procedures

The School Administration retains control over lockers and desk space used by students and regulates parking of automobiles on school grounds or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games. Students have no expectation of privacy regarding items in their lockers, desk space, or automobiles on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school related event, including athletic games, and school officials may search these spaces without prior warning.

A school administrator has the right to inspect and search students'

- Lockers and desks,
- Personal belongings,
- Student and non-student automobiles on school premises, at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, away from school grounds, and
- Person

if the administrator has reasonably trustworthy information creating a reasonable suspicion that performing a search has a moderate chance of finding evidence of wrongdoing, including but not limited to drugs, weapons, dangerous, illegal, or prohibited matter, or if goods stolen from staff or students may be found therein.

Exercise of the authority to search students' possessions places unusual demands upon school officials' judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools. Searches will be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive considering the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Searches will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

## Smoking and Possession of Tobacco Products

The Berlin-Boylston Regional Schools prohibits the use of any tobacco or tobacco-related products such as e-cigarette or vaping devices within the school buildings, the school facilities, on the school grounds, or on school buses by any individual, including students, parents, employees, and visitors.

Any student smoking cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or using e-cigarettes or vaping devices in the school or on school grounds will be required to participate in a smoking/vaping diversionary program if it is the students first offense. Subsequent offenses will result in progressive disciplinary action.

Any student found to be involved in possession, distribution, or sale of any tobacco or tobacco-related products, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices, in the school building or on school grounds will be required to participate in a smoking/vaping diversionary program if it is the students first offense. Subsequent offenses will result in progressive disciplinary action.

*Reference*

- Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 2A and 37H
- Disciplinary Guidelines in this handbook

## Students under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol

The District provides a school environment that is free from the use of drugs and alcohol. Student use of drugs and/or alcohol on school property (including buses) or at school functions is prohibited at all times.

The following information lists procedures to be expected by students, parents, and staff members if an incident of drug or alcohol use occurs on school property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored activities.

**Staff Referral Guidelines**

If a student appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol during school, at a school sponsored activity, or on school grounds:

1. Referral should be made immediately to the administration and/or to the school nurse.
2. A determination will be made as to whether the student is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

**Consequences**

Students using or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be subject to the following:

1. The student will be suspended for 1 to 10 school days with a possible hearing for expulsion.
2. Parents will be notified by phone and by written notice.
3. Police may be notified.
4. A report will be made pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 119, Section 51A.
5. If readmitted, the parents and student will be required to meet with the administration.

6. Any student who is found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol upon arrival at a school-sanctioned activity shall be refused admission to the activity. The parents will be notified immediately, and disciplinary action will follow.

## Student Discipline

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others.

The District believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules, and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Any of the following actions may subject a student to suspension or expulsion by the Principal under the terms of Massachusetts General Laws 71:37H, such as, but not limited to the following:

1. Who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, to be in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.
2. Who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games.

Any of the following actions will subject a student to suspension, expulsion, subject to School Committee action, or other disciplinary measures, such as, but not limited to the following:

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school property; or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
2. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
3. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence of inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

**Suspension**

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried.

Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports. In unusual circumstances, a plan developed by the parent and the Administration may be substituted in lieu of suspension.

A parent must accompany a student who returns from an out-of-school suspension unless other arrangements have been made with the Principal or Assistant Principal. After the second in-school suspension, subsequent suspensions will be out of school.

**Notice of Suspension**

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing, and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to the student and parent(s) in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

**Emergency Removal**

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall:

1. Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice.
2. Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above.
3. Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent.
4. Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.
5. A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

**In-School Suspensions**

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term, out-of-school suspension for disciplinary offenses, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in the related laws and regulations and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by laws and regulations.

In-school suspensions shall not be more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively.

The Principal may substitute in-school suspension (Saturday School) for an out-of-school suspension. Repeated Saturday School referrals for the same offense will result in out-of-school suspension.

**Principal's Hearing for Short-Term Suspension**

The below guidelines apply to the Principal's Hearing for suspensions up to ten (10) days.

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**Principal's Hearing for Long-Term Suspension**

The below guidelines apply to Principal's hearings for suspensions more than ten (10) days but less than ninety (90) days, consecutive or cumulative.

The hearing with the Principal shall be to consider all information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:

- In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not.
- The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense.
- The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so.
- The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district.
- The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing.
- Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal.
- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school.
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation.
- Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension.

Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

**Superintendent's Hearing**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's Hearing for Long-Term Suspension). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal at his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the Suspension.

**Suspending Students with Disabilities**

All students are expected to meet the requirements or behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, requires the following for students who have been found to have special needs by a Team evaluation, and whose program is described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

- Suspension shall be defined as any action which results in the removal of a student from the program presented in his/her Educational Plan, i.e. both in-school and out of school suspensions are included.
- The Director of Pupil Personnel Services will receive a copy of the discipline notice when a special needs student is suspended.

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities up to and after 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days:

1. All students, including eligible students with disabilities, are informed of the school-wide expectations for student behavior.
2. The Tahanto Handbook includes required procedural safeguards, such as opportunity for a hearing.
3. Any eligible student may be suspended up to 10 days in any school year without implementation of procedures described below.
4. After a student with special needs has been suspended for 10 days in any school year, during any subsequent removal the public school provides sufficient services for the student to continue to receive a free and appropriate public education.
5. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days, or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the District.

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern may result in a change in placement.
2. Prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, District personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP – "a manifestation determination."
3. If the district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the district may suspend or expel the student consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer:

    a) Services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals.

b) As appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the team) for up to 45 school days:

    a) On its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances.
    b) On the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.

5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the team reviews it and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for Special Education

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

    a) The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
    b) The parent had requested an evaluation; or
    c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

**Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long-term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

**Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**Reporting**

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race, color, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin,

sexual orientation, genetic information, homelessness, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The DESE Commissioner can investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

**Discipline Review Committee**

A Discipline Review Committee composed of teachers, parents, students, and administration will review the Student Discipline policies each year. In addition, the Discipline Review Committee may serve as an advisory group to the Principal in the case of a student who habitually violates the discipline polies, and as the Board for a hearing if one is requested in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

**Disciplinary Guidelines**

The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District and the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School reserve the right to impose discipline for any conduct which is unlawful or illegal, which is inappropriate in the school setting, which poses any threat of danger or harm to another, or which is disruptive to the educational environment. The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District and Tahanto Regional Middle/High School also reserve the right to impose a level of discipline which is appropriate to the conduct involved based on all the facts and circumstances.

The conduct which is expressly listed in these disciplinary guidelines and the listing of possible discipline which may be imposed for that conduct is not exhaustive or exclusive but is illustrative only. The below guidelines in no way limit the discretion of school officials regarding discipline.

| Offense | First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Fourth Offense |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cutting Class/Study | Detention | Detention | Detention | Saturday School |
| Cutting Teacher Detention | Reassigned teacher detention and office detention 1 day | Reassigned teacher detention and Saturday School 1 day | At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal | At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Cutting Office Detention | Saturday School 1 day | Saturday School 1 day | Parent meeting and action plan developed, community service | At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Leaving School Grounds | Saturday School 2 days | | | |
| Not Checking into School | Office Detention | | | |

| Offense | First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Fourth Offense |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tardiness to School | 4 Tardies: Detention | 8 Tardies: Saturday School | 12 Tardies: Saturday School 2 days | 12+ Tardies: Discretion of Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Truancy (per semester) | Saturday School 2 days | | | |
| Skip Days | Saturday School 2 days | | | |
| Inappropriate Use of Cell Phone | Phone taken from student and returned to student at end of day | Parent MUST pick up cell phone and office detention is issued | Saturday School, Parent must pick up device, and possible loss of phone during school | At discretion of Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Inappropriate use of Bluetooth devices (including but not limited to earbuds) | Device taken from student and returned to student at end of day | Parent MUST pick up the device and office detention is issued | Saturday School, parent MUST pick up device | At discretion of Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Forgery/Plagiarism | Letter placed in file and no credit for assignment | Letter placed in file and no credit for assignment, Parent meeting | Saturday School 1 day | Saturday School 2 days |
| Destruction of Property | Discretion of Principal or Assistant Principal | | | |
| Profanity, vulgarity, harassment or sexual harassment directed at another student | Including but not limited to detention, Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Profanity, vulgarity, insubordination, disobedience, or disrespect directed toward a staff member | Including but not limited to detention, Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Mutual Altercation | Including but not limited to detention, Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Assaulting Another Student | Including but not limited to detention, Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Assaulting a Staff Member | Including but not limited to out-of-school suspension 1-10 days with expulsion hearing, or Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |

| Offense | First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Fourth Offense |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stealing | Including but not limited to detention or Saturday School | | | |
| Failure to return or pay for lost/damaged property | Students will be billed for property or lost materials and/or perform community service | | | |
| Possession or Use of Tobacco, Vaping Products, or E-Cigarettes | Participation in vaping diversionary program | Referral to extended diversionary program and meeting with parents | Including but not limited to Saturday School or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at discretion of Administration | At discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal |
| Use or Possession of Alcohol or a Controlled Substance at School or at a School Function | Including but not limited to out-of-school suspension 1-10 days with expulsion hearing, or Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Sale of Alcohol or Controlled Substances on School Property | Including but not limited to out-of-school suspension 1-10 days with expulsion hearing, or Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Sounding False Alarms (e.g. bomb threat, chemical/biological threat) | Including but not limited to detention, or Saturday School, or appropriate alternative remedies assigned at the Administration's discretion | | | |
| Possession or use of Weapon (e.g. gun, rifle, knife, etc) | Out-of-school suspension 3-10 days with Expulsion Hearing | | | |
| Arson | Including but not limited detention, Saturday School, or other alternative remedies deemed appropriate by administration after referral with the Fire Department | | | |

*Reference*

- Massachusetts Association of School Committees Policy JIC
- Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 Sections 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾ and Chapter 76 Section 17
- 603 CMR 53.00
- DESE

## Technology Acceptable Use

The use of technology is an important part of students being prepared for adult life. As such, the student use of technology part of their education is to be encouraged, as teaching students appropriate use of technology is part of the responsibility of the District.

Annually, all students must agree to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and sign the Technology User Agreement in the Appendix of this handbook. This form must also be signed by the parent or guardian for students under the age of 18.

Students shall utilize digital resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Students are required to abide by the district Code of Conduct in their use, both on and offline, of District digital resources, which should be regarded as an extension of the classroom.

Failure to abide by district policies and procedures regarding the use of District digital resources will result in result in the suspension or revoking of computer privileges and consequences as prescribed in the Code of Conduct in this handbook. Examples of unacceptable uses of technology include:

- Use of computer resources for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts
- Use of computer resources for financial or commercial gain
- Destruction of computer hardware or software
- Degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance
- Loading software onto computers without authorization from the computer coordinator
- Vandalizing the files of another user
- Wastefully using computer resources
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Invading the privacy of individuals, both student and faculty
- Using an account owned by another user
- Posting personal communications without the author's consent
- Use of computer resources for pornographic material
- Giving out a personal account number

**Privacy**

Students are reminded that there is no expectation of privacy in the use of District digital resources.

**Responsibility for Damages**

Due to the complexity and cost of technology within Tahanto Regional Middle/High School, when any student action results in damage to electronic equipment or computer software, all costs incurred for repair will be the responsibility of the student and/or their legal guardian.

*For further guidance please refer to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Technology User Agreement in the Appendix of this handbook.*

# APPENDIX

I. Technology Acceptable Use Policy & Agreement of Understanding
II. Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination
III. Bullying/Cyber Bullying Policy
IV. Parent Groups
V. Athletic Handbook
VI. Extracurricular Activities Consent Form
VII. Student Handbook Parent and Student Acknowledgement

## Appendix I - Technology Acceptable Use Policy

The goal of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network (BBRSDN) is to support and enhance instruction, research activities, administrative management and communication among the staff, students, and parents of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District. The BBRSDN provides computer access to communications resources, shared data resources, and opportunities for collaboration and enhanced communications to members of its educational community. Additionally, access to Internet resources provides responsible members of our educational community links to vast research and other information rich sites globally that enhance the communities learning opportunities. The BBPSN is a data network implemented and overseen by the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District with the ability to link workstations, mobile devices, local area networks (LANs) and/or other external networks and access to a wide variety of globally available educational resources.

Acceptable use refers to whether the use of the network is consistent with the guidelines established for each network, LAN, workstation or other communications application that the data traffic may traverse. Given the changing nature of the technology involved and the demand that users make of networks, acceptable use is a dynamic process. The intent of this policy is to clarify certain cases that are clearly consistent or inconsistent with the intended purpose of the BBRSDN and to establish guidelines for users in the appropriate use of our network. It is not possible to list all possible uses and the following is written to establish a minimum set of standards with regard to all uses of the BBRSDN. Access through BBPSN to data communications carried through other networks is subject to acceptable use policies of those other networks. If other networks are accessed through BBRSDN, the more restrictive and/or conservative policy shall, in all cases, apply, without exception.

Prior to authorized use of network resources, all computer users are required to sign a contract stating that they will follow the BBRSDN Acceptable Use Policy. This agreement spells out in detail our expectations for the ethical and proper use of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network. It must be signed by each user of the school's technology resources, and if a student is under 18 years of age, by that student's parent or legal guardian. School staff should discuss the Acceptable Use Policy with their students at the start of any internet/technology-based curriculum project.

The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District have electronically limited patron access to objectionable or inappropriate materials or sites with the use of a commercial filter/firewall. Limited access systems are not fool proof and we shall also rely upon the end user and careful staff monitoring to adhere to this policy and to monitor appropriate on-line behavior. Random review of individual/system Internet logs, histories and filter logs will be conducted by the administration as a component of this monitoring process.

The use of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of this privilege. In addition, violation of any of the conditions of this policy described here will be cause for disciplinary or legal action if appropriate. Users may be held liable for any cost incurred by the District to resolve any problems caused by their actions. When applicable, law enforcement agencies will be notified and involved. Unauthorized access or attempt to access the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network files shall be dealt with to the full extent of the law. Users will be subject to the same disciplinary review as applies to other infractions of each school's disciplinary policy.

Interpretation, application, and modification of this Acceptable Use Policy is within the sole discretion of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Building Principal or District Technology Coordinator.

**Acceptable Use**

1. All use of BBRSDN shall be consistent with Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network's primary goal. Each user shall abide by such rules and regulations of systems usage as may be announced from time to time by school personnel. The administration of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools reserves the right to add to or change network guidelines for safety or educational reasons without notice.
2. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, and/or material protected by trade secret. The administration of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools in conjunction with the School Committee will be the arbiter of what constitutes obscene or objectionable language or images.
3. Use of BBRSDN shall be approved only for legal purposes.
4. BBRSDN should only be utilized for approved activities. Profit making activities or use by for-profit groups for any purpose should only occur with prior approval of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Administration to include the Superintendent of Schools, Technology Coordinator and other administrative personnel as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.
5. Disruptions to BBRSDN are to be avoided. This includes, but is not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer worms and/or viruses, and using the network to make unauthorized entry to any other machine or device accessible via the network. Recreational computer game playing and similar activities will be considered unacceptable.
6. Users should access only those areas to which they have been given prior approval or authorization. Users are not to attempt to access information to which they have not been given specific approval. If there are any questions concerning access, they should be directed to the District Technology Coordinator.
7. Users shall adhere to appropriate and acceptable standards of conduct. Users shall abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette which include but are not limited to the following:

    a) Be polite. Do not get abusive in your message to others.
    b) Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language, symbols or emojis.
    c) Never reveal your personal address, phone number, social security number, bank information or other personal data to students, colleagues, or network contacts.

8. Users are to respect the rights and property of others and will not improperly access, misappropriate or misuse the files, data or information of others.
9. Users are not to share their account with anyone or leave the account open or unattended. Account codes and passwords are confidential and should not be shared with any other person without the permission of the District Technology Coordinator.
10. Users are responsible for making back-up copies of digital resources critical to them.
11. Professional and legal standards of conduct and ethics should be maintained with regard to the use of copyrighted and licensed software. It is illegal to duplicate copyrighted and licensed software for use by others. Only that software which is legally owned by the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools and which has been approved for use by District Administrators in conjunction

with the District Technology Coordinator shall be loaded onto and utilized on District owned systems. This shall include all technology equipment in use and housed in District facilities for use by school personnel and students of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District unless otherwise documented and approved by the District Technology Coordinator and District Administration.

12. Information and resources accessible via BBRSDN are private to the individuals and organizations which own or hold the rights to those resources and information unless specifically stated otherwise by the owners or holders of rights. Access to information or resources (even when that information or those resources are not securely protected) may occur only with prior permission of the owners or holders of rights to those resources or information. Within the BBRSDN proper (resources residing on equipment owned, loaned to or leased by the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District) this final authority regarding specifically authorized rights to view and or access applications, files and other resources that reside on the system shall be determined by the administration of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District. Specifically, this includes the Superintendent of Schools, Building Principal and the District Technology Coordinator.
13. Subscriptions to Listservs, bulletin boards and On-Line services must be pre-approved by the District Technology Coordinator in conjunction with building administrators and District Administration. BBRSDN shall not assume liability for payment of any subscriptions, royalties or other fees associated with accessing commercial services, bulletin board systems and/or databases without the prior written permission of the District Technology Coordinator.
14. Access and participation to social communication sites and services are specifically prohibited without prior written approval of the school/district administration and the District Technology Coordinator.
15. Misuse or abuse of technology equipment is specifically prohibited. Users who are determined to be abusing or misusing will be held accountable for any damages incurred by the District to resolve any problems or repair any damages caused by said user.
16. Users will respect the rights and property of others and will not improperly access, misappropriate or misuse the files, data or information of others.
17. Users are responsible for taking precautions to prevent viruses on their own equipment and that of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District.
18. District provided E-mail shall be utilized for the sole purpose of exchanging information consistent with the Mission of the District and the Goal of the BBRSDN

    a) Users may not use E-mail for private or commercial offering of products or services for sale or to solicit products or services.
    b) E-mail may not be used for political or religious purposes.
    c) E-mail messages are not considered to be private or privileged.
    d) E-mail messages are subject to District review by an authorized representative of the District Administration at any time. For purposes of this policy, this shall include the District Technology Coordinator and Superintendent of Schools.
    e) E-mail shall be used for school related purposes only.

19. The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District makes no warranty (expressed or implied) with respect to network services or the content of any advice or information received from the BBPSN.

20. All published or transmitted materials must adhere to school policies and are subject to administrative review prior to posting on any electronic media. This includes district and/or school maintained/sponsored web pages or Internet sites.

    a) Written parental/guardian permission is required prior to posting student work in either print or graphic form on any school supported/sponsored web page/site. This includes programs/activities such as Student Council, Athletics and National Honor Society in addition to individual classroom pages.
    b) Use of student photos, graphic likeness, name or other identification is prohibited without explicit written permission from the parent/guardian and student once per school year, in the beginning of the school year. Furthermore, it shall be the policy of this district to limit identifying information to student first name and school district.
    c) Digital Media containing student likenesses, photos or work shall be submitted via email for approval by the building administrator (or their designee) prior to posting on any websites or social media.
    d) The building administration shall keep a record of all school/classroom/school activity-based websites/pages including the name of the sponsoring organization/group, group/program advisor, webmaster (individual responsible for maintaining the site) and URL. A copy of this list shall be forwarded to the District Technology Office and updated bi-annually.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy IJNDB

## Technology Acceptable Use Agreement of Understanding

*Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Network*

School Name: _____

*To be signed electronically*

**User Section**

This section must be completed by ALL USERS of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Network regardless of age or position.

User Name (printed): _____ Grade/Title: _____

I have read the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Network "Acceptable Use Policy" and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions will result in suspension or revocation of system/network access and privileges, legal action, and financial obligations to the District for damages incurred.

User Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Parent and/or Guardian Section**

This section is to be completed for all users under the age of 18.

I have read the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District "Acceptable Use Policy." I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes only. I recognize that it is impossible for the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District to restrict access to all controversial materials and will not hold the school district responsible for materials acquired on the computer network. I accept responsibility for my student's use of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Network and global Internet connectivity. I accept legal and financial responsibility for my child and accept that the information contained on this form is correct.

I hereby release the District, its operators and any institution with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my student's use, or inability to use, the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Network.

I give my permission to issue an account for my student on the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Network including the Internet and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Please continue to second page of this agreement.*

**Parent or Guardian Failure to Consent**

This section must be completed if you DO NOT WANT your son/daughter to have Network access.

I do not want my son/daughter to have access to the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Internet Access. I do not want my son/daughter to have access to the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Local Network.

Student Name (printed): _____
Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Net Orientation**

The student shown above has participated in an orientation on the acceptable use of the network and network etiquette.

Net-Guide-Trainer Name (printed): _____
Net-Guide-Trainer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Original to be kept at each school. Compiled list will be sent to District Technology Coordinator by October 1st and updated at the beginning of each quarter.

## Appendix II - Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination for Students

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools are committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment and/or discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, homelessness, disability, gender identity, veteran status and genetic information. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools require all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students, and all members of the school community.

It shall be a violation of this policy to harass, discriminate, bully, intimidate, threaten, insult, retaliate or otherwise engage in any conduct, whether verbal or physical, against any individual based upon their race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, homelessness, disability, gender identity, veteran status and genetic information.

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools take allegations of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment seriously, and will respond promptly to any complaints of potential violations of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained of, or has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint, about discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment shall not be tolerated. If the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools find that an individual has violated this policy, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct, impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate. Nothing in this policy shall limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct that is deemed to be a violation of this policy.

**Definitions of Discrimination and Harassment**

Discrimination and harassment consist of any unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, homelessness, disability, gender identity, veteran status and genetic information. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets, name calling, physical assaults, threats, intimidation, mockery, insults, ridicule, offensive pictures or objects, or any other offensive conduct that interferes with the educational process. It shall be a violation of this policy to engage in any the aforementioned conduct, or to create an educational environment that is intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

It is also a violation of this policy to engage in conduct that that is construed as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, 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, academic standing, school-related opportunities or as a basis for employment decisions; or,
b) Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's school and/or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational or work environment.

While it is not possible to list all those 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, and which constitute a violation of this policy:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comments on an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, and cartoons
- Inquiring into one's sexual experiences
- Discussion of one's sexual activities

It is also a violation of this policy to engage in any form of retaliation against an individual that has complained about discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, or against any individual that is cooperating in an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment complaint.

Harassment and discrimination in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, volunteers, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. Persons who engage in harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion; or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

**Investigation**

Any individual who believes he/she has been harassed, or discriminated against, or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment or discrimination of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal as soon as possible. If any individual believes that he/she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination, then the individual's complaint may be made orally or in writing. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with the Principal, or if the Principal does not address the problem in an effective manner, the individual should inform:

Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Berlin-Boylston Public Schools
215 Main Street
Boylston, MA  01505
508-869-2837 x1106

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools take allegations of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment seriously, and will investigate and respond promptly to any complaints of potential violations of this policy. The investigation will include interviewing the individual filing the complaint, as well as any witnesses. To the extent practicable under the circumstances, the investigation will be kept confidential. If it determines that harassment or discrimination has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the conduct that is in violation of this policy, and to ensure that it is not repeated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts Law. The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

Any staff member or student who is dissatisfied with the results or progress of the investigation by the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools may discuss his/her dissatisfaction directly with the Superintendent of Schools:

Office of the Superintendent
Berlin-Boylston Public Schools
215 Main Street
Boylston, MA  01505
508-869-2837

In addition to the above, if an individual believes that they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment may file a formal complaint with either or both of these government agencies:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
617-727-3990

Office for Civil Rights
US Department of Education
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0111

**Closure of a Complaint**

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and file a report with the Coordinator for Title IX/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Chapter 622.

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools urge all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment or discrimination to the attention of school personnel so that they can resolve the issue.

**Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The Berlin-Boylston Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ancestry, gender identity, veteran status, genetic information or homelessness in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.

Inquiries regarding the application of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools' non-discrimination policy may be referred to:

Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 for the
Berlin-Boylston Public Schools
Berlin-Boylston Public Schools
215 Main Street
Boylston, MA 01505
508-869-2837 x1105

Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202
800-421-3481

Regional Director
US Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0111

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JBA
- Current administration contact information

## Appendix III - Bullying/Cyber Bullying Policy

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school except when a reported bullying incident involves the Principal or the Assistant Principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

**Definitions**

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Aggressor | A student or member of the school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation. |
| Bullying | Repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:<br><br>(i) Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;<br>(ii) Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;<br>(iii) Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;<br>(iv) Infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or<br>(v) Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.<br><br>Bullying involves a power imbalance.<br><br>For the purpose of this policy, the term "bullying" may be used to denote either bullying or cyberbullying. |
| Perpetrator | A student or member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who is accused of engaging in bullying. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Cyberbullying | Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.<br>Cyber bullying shall also include:<br><br>(i) The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or<br>(ii) The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.<br><br>Cyber bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. |
| Hostile Environment | 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 (as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37O). |
| Retaliation | Any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. |
| 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. |
| Target | A student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated. |

**Scope of Prohibition of Bullying**

Bullying shall be prohibited:

(i) On school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school and
(ii) At a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or

school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made to a staff member shall be recorded in writing.

The school or District will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a dedicated mailing address, and an e-mail address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will:

1. Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
2. Make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and
3. Post the Incident Reporting Form on the school's web site.
4. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including but not limited to, educators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Principal or designee, and the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

**Reporting by Staff**

A staff member will report to the Principal or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the School Committee or designee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the Principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or District policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

**Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Principal or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or the Assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the School Committee or designee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the

basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Principal or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the School Committee or designee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

**Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation – Allegations of Bullying by a Student**

**Ensuring Safety of the Target**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to:

- Ordering interim disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct
- Creating a personal safety plan such as pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus
- Identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target
- Altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target

The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies under the Student Code of Conduct for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

**Obligations to Notify Others**

1. **Notice to parents or guardians**. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
2. **Notice to another school or District**. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR.
3. **Notice to Law Enforcement**. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency and the school resource officer. Notice will be consistent with the

requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

In making this determination, the Principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the Principal or designee deems appropriate.

**Investigation**

The Principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the Principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the Principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or District policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

**Determinations**

The Principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Principal or designee will determine what remedial action is required, if any and what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to

identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

**Notification of Determination**

- **Parents or guardians**. The Principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.
- **Staff members**. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the staff member will be promptly notified.
- **Another school or District**. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR.
- **Law Enforcement**. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency and the school resource officer. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency.
- **Others**. In making this determination, the Principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or District policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the Principal or designee deems appropriate.

**Responses to Bullying**

1. **Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building**. Upon the Principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or District use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Skill-building approaches that the Principal or designee may consider include:

    a) Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
    b) Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
    c) Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
    d) Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
    e) Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and

f) Making a referral for evaluation.

2. **Taking Disciplinary Action**. If the Principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or District's Code of Conduct.

   Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

   If the Principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. **Promoting Safety for the Target and Others**. The Principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

   Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

**Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school staff and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

**Publication and Notice**

- Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.
- Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention plan applicable to the school.
- Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff and bullying of students by school staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.
- The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools website.

**Relationship to Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or District from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or District to take disciplinary action or other action under, or other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

*Reference*

- School Committee Policy JICFB, Bullying Prevention
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
- Massachusetts Law about Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title VII, Section 703
- Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEOC
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- 603 CMR 26.00
- Massachusetts General Laws 71:37H, 37H½, 37H¾, 41, 42 ,
- Massachusetts General Laws 71:37O
- Massachusetts General laws 76:5
- Massachusetts General Laws 265:43, 43A
- Massachusetts General Laws 268:13B
- Massachusetts General Laws 269:14A
- School Committee Policy AC, Nondiscrimination
- School Committee Policy ACA, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex
- School Committee Policy ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability
- School Committee Policy JBA, Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination for Students
- School Committee Policy JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing
- School Committee Policy JK, Student Conduct

## Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form

Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report: _____
Contact Information: _____

***Note**: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

Check whether you are the: □ Target of the behavior □ Reporter (not the target)

Check whether you are a:
□ Student
□ Staff member (specify) _____
□ Administrator
□ Parent
□ Other (specify) _____

If you're a student please provide your: School _____ Grade _____

If you're a staff member please provide your: Work Site _____

**Information about the Incident(s)**
Name of Target (of the behavior) _____
Name of Aggressor (person who engaged in the behavior) _____
Date(s) of Incident(s) _____
Time(s) of Incident(s) _____
Location(s) of Incident(s) (be as specific as possible) _____

**Witnesses** (list people who saw the incident or have information about it):
Name _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other
Name _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other
Name _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other

**Description of the Incident(s)**. Please describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on the back if necessary.

Signature of Person Filing the Report _____ Date _____

***Note**: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

**For Administrative Use Only**

Form given to: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date received: _____

## Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Investigation Form

| | Investigator(s) | Position(s) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| | Interviews | Name | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| □ | Interviewed Aggressor | | |
| □ | Interviewed Target | | |
| □ | Interviewed Witnesses | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor? | □ Yes | □ No |
| If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? | □ Yes | □ No |
| Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING or RETALIATION? | □ Yes | □ No |

**Summary of Investigation**

*(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed.)*

**Conclusions from the Investigation**

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation □ Yes □ No

2. Incident documented as □ Bullying □ Retaliation □ Discipline Referral Only

| 3. | Contacts | Name | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| □ | Target's Parent/Guardian | | |
| □ | Aggressor's Parent/Guardian | | |
| □ | PPS Director | | |
| □ | Superintendent | | |
| □ | Law Enforcement | | |
| □ | Other | | |

4. Action Taken

□ Loss of Privileges □ Detention
□ BPIS Referral □ Suspension
□ Education □ Community Service
□ Other _____

5. Describe Safety Planning

| **Follow-up with:** | **Scheduled for (Date):** | **Initial & date when completed:** |
|---|---|---|
| Target | _____ | _____ |
| Aggressor | _____ | _____ |

| **Report forwarded to:** | **Date:** | |
|---|---|---|
| Principal | _____ | *(if principal was not the investigator)* |
| Superintendent | _____ | |

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

## Appendix IV - Parent Groups

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tahanto Athletic Booster Club** | The Booster Club was founded in 1990. Membership is open to all.<br><br>The purposes of the Booster Club are:<br>● To maintain an enthusiastic interest in all the Tahanto athletic programs<br>● To lend all possible support to the Tahanto athletic programs and the Athletic Director<br>● To enrich the experience of each student participating in any Tahanto athletic program. |
| **Tahanto School Council** | The School Council was founded in 1993. Membership includes parents, teachers, community members, students, and Principals.<br><br>The objectives of the Council are:<br>● To create, through the development of a shared vision and planning, a school environment which unites all members of the school community in a sense of belonging, commitment and growth<br>● To participate in the shaping of policies and programs of the school |
| **Tahanto Music Parent Organization (TMPO)** | TMPO was founded in 1984. Membership is open to all parents and interested community members.<br><br>The objectives of the organization are:<br><br>● To maintain an enthusiastic interest in all programs of the Music Department<br>● To build and maintain an organization which will help promote the general enrichment activities of the Music Department<br><br>TMPO meets on the first Monday of the month starting in September. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tahanto Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** | The Tahanto PTO was formed in 1995. Membership is open to all parents and community members.<br><br>The objectives of the group are:<br><br>● To improve community awareness of Tahanto programs<br>● To assist the Principal in sponsoring parent forums and workshops<br>● To provide assistance for teachers<br>● To promote and assist with enrichment activities and programs for students<br><br>The Tahanto PTO meets monthly. |
| **Parent Advisory Council on Special Education (SEPAC)** | Membership is open to all parents of children with special needs and other interested parties.<br><br>The purpose of the SEPAC is:<br>● To lend support and guidance to parents of students with special needs<br>● To promote programs and services offered through the Special Education Department.<br><br>SEPAC meetings are held on a monthly basis starting in September. |
| **Tahanto Scholarship Committee** | The Tahanto Scholarship Committee was founded over twenty years ago. Its purpose is to award scholarships to graduating Tahanto students. New community members are welcome.<br><br>The committee has the following objectives:<br><br>● To raise and manage scholarship funds<br>● To set the criteria for evaluating qualified scholarship candidates<br>● To select scholarship recipients<br><br>For more information call Tahanto Regional High School at 508-869-2333. |

# Appendix V - Athletic Handbook

**2025-2026**

**ATHLETIC**

**HANDBOOK**



**Mrs. Julie Lee, Athletic Director**

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2025-2026

Welcome to Tahanto Regional Middle / High School Athletics

We believe that the following information will help answer many of your questions regarding Interscholastic Athletics at the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School. Keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question or concern regarding your child's athletic experience. If this booklet does not answer your question or concern, please call the child's coach first as he or she will be able to be more specific with an answer. If your concern has not been addressed, you should then contact the Athletic Director. Please do not let your questions or concerns go unanswered or depend upon answers from people who are not empowered to give them.

We look forward to your association with the athletic program at the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school or any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of age, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law.

I. PHILOSOPHY

The Tahanto Regional Middle/High School Athletic program is an extension of the academic classroom. As such, it is committed to teaching not only the skills and strategies of particular sports, but also the ability to accept success graciously and to handle disappointment maturely. Our coaches are charged with the responsibility to teach the values of accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, tolerance, leadership, organizational skills, participation within the rules, persistence, work ethic, physical well-being, responsibility, sacrifice, self-discipline, social skills, striving towards excellence, taking instruction and teamwork. This is obviously an awesome responsibility, and we will do our best to see that it is never taken lightly.

We look at each particular program in its entirety. The middle school, junior varsity and varsity teams of a particular sport are not considered as separate entities but as part of one sports program. The goals of the middle school and junior varsity teams are to develop a fundamental understanding of the game, improve upon those skills needed to compete in the game and to instill in each participant an appreciation for the commitment and dedication involved in being a member of a team. At the varsity level we look for our teams to compete against opponents at the highest possible level of execution. Emphasis is placed on each student-athlete constantly trying to improve on his/her abilities, working with others as a team and developing positive values that will help him/her become a productive adult in society.

II. GOVERNING BODIES

A. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is a member in good standing of the M.I.A.A. and as such abides by all of its rules and regulations.

The M.I.A.A. serves its member schools in a variety of ways including sports specific rules, academic standards, sportsmanship guidelines, assistance in drug and alcohol education, and post seasonal regional and state tournaments for varsity level competition. When our varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament.

B. The Midland-Wachusett League

The Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is a member of the Midland-Wachusett League that is governed by the rules of the M.I.A.A. and its own constitution.

The League is divided into Divisions according to population and sport. The Divisions are as follows:

| **Golf** | **Field Hockey** | **Girl's Lacrosse** | **Girl's/Boy's Soccer** | **Cross Country** | **Basketball** | **Track** | **Baseball Softball** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | D | B | C | D | D | E | D |
| Ayer Shirley | Clinton | Broomfield | Broomfield | Ayer Shirley | Ayer Shirley | Ayer Shirley | Ayer Shirley |
| Gardner | Broomfield | Groton Dunstable | Littleton | Clinton | Broomfield | Maynard | Broomfield |
| Hudson | Gardner | North Middlesex | Maynard | Gardner | Gardner | Murdock | Gardner |
| Maynard | Maynard | Oakmont | Oakmont | Maynard | Murdock | Narragansett | Maynard |
| Tahanto | Narragansett | Tahanto | Quabbin | Murdock | Narragansett | Tahanto | Murdock |
| | Tahanto | Tyngsboro | Tahanto | Narragansett | Tahanto | | Narragansett |
| | | Westboro | Tynsboro | Tahanto | West Boylston | | Tahanto |
| | | | | | | | West Boylston |

C. BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Berlin-Boylston Regional School Committee and the Principal set additional policies, regulations and rules. Under M.I.A.A guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional policies, rules and or regulations as long as they are not less restrictive than those stipulated by the M.I.A.A.

SPORTS

| **Fall Sports** | **Winter Sports** | **Spring Sports** |
|---|---|---|
| Varsity/JV Girl's Soccer | Varsity/JV Girl's Basketball | Varsity Girl's and Boy's Track |
| Varsity/JV Boy's Soccer | Varsity/JV Boy's Basketball | Varsity/JV Softball |
| Varsity/JV Field Hockey | MS Girl's Basketball | Varsity/JV Baseball |
| MS Boy's/Girl's Soccer | MS Boy's Basketball | Varsity/JV Girl's Lacrosse |
| Varsity Golf | Varsity & MS Cheerleading | Varsity/JV Boy's Lacrosse (co-op with Hudson) |
| MS Golf | Gymnastics (co-op at Hudson) | Varsity Boy's Tennis (co-op at West Boylston) |
| Varsity/JV Football (co-op with West Boylston) | Boy's Ice Hockey (co-op at Hudson)<br>Girl's Ice Hockey (co-op at Auburn) | MS Girl's and Boy's Track |
| Varsity Boy's/Girl's Cross Country | Alpine Ski (co-op at Nashoba) | MS Baseball |

* Please note that cooperative team offerings may change year to year.

III. PARENT INFORMATION

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to the student-athlete. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

A. Communication You Should Expect from The Coach

1. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as other players on the squad
2. Team requirements
3. Procedure followed when your child is injured during participation
4. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation

B. Communication Coaches Should Expect from Parents

1. Concerns and questions expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

As your child becomes involved in the athletic program at Tahanto he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of his/her life. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

C. Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help improve your child
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches take their profession seriously. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain issues can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other issues, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

D. Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

1. Playing time at the Varsity Level
2. Team Strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

In situations regarding a concern of a parent the following procedure should be followed. It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern

E. Procedure for Questions or Concerns from Parents

1. Call the school (508-869-2333) to speak with the coach or to leave a message for the coach to call you.
2. After your conversation with the coach, if your question or concern did not produce a resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director.
3. If a resolution cannot be reached after discussion with the Athletic Director, follow the chain-of-command procedure established by the school committee, which is through the Principal, Superintendent, and finally the School Committee.

F. Cooperative Teams

Tahanto Regional and other area schools have been established through the M.I.A.A. the use of cooperative teams in many sports. Tahanto students may participate in junior varsity football, varsity football, and varsity boy's tennis at West Boylston, boy's ice hockey, gymnastics and boys' lacrosse at Hudson, girl's ice hockey at Auburn, and Alpine Skiing at Nashoba. Students participating in the cooperative program are allowed to drive a car to practice provided they have completed a permission form. They are not allowed to transport other students other than their siblings.

Cooperative student-athletes assume the identity of the host school and are eligible for receipt of athletic awards at the host school. Students participating in the cooperative team program are required to abide by the rules, regulations and athletic fees of the host school.

In all cooperative teams, parents must provide transportation to and from practices to the host school. All cooperative students must pay the user fee at the school that they attend.

G. Directions to Games

Directions to games can be found at the Tahanto athletic website.

H. Game and Practice Schedules

1. Practice and game schedules can be found on the Tahanto athletic web site https://tahantoregional.rschoolteams.com
2. Season schedules of games are available online at https://arbiterlive.com. The dates of the games are subject to change due to weather conditions, availability of officials, schedule of the opponents, etc. Some games may be scheduled on Saturday and during school vacation. A weekly practice schedule can be found at the Tahanto athletic web site. Students can print a copy out of the schedule at the school if they do not have access to a computer at their home.

I. Middle School Students Playing on A Varsity Team

Sixth, seventh, and eight grade students are expected to try out for the middle school team. They may try out for the JV team if there isn't a middle school team or are instructed to do so by the coach.

Sixth and seventh grade students interested in playing football are encouraged to participate on the local Pop Warner or AYF football team.

I. Sports Participation Guidelines

A. 6th–8th Grade (Middle School Students)

1. All middle school students (grades 6–8) are expected to participate in middle school sports as their primary placement.
2. At the discretion of the coach, and with approval from the Athletic Director and Principal, a middle school student may be considered to try out or attend evaluations at the JV and Varsity level.
3. Parent/guardian notification and approval are required before a middle school athlete participates in High School tryouts/evaluations.
4. Varsity participation is generally not expected for middle school students; however, under certain circumstances by coach determination with administrative approval, middle school students may be considered.

B. Playing Up (JV or Varsity Eligibility)

1. Decisions about "playing up" (grades 6–8 moving into JV or varsity consideration) are made first by the coach, and approved by the Athletic Director and Principal.

C. Tryout Process

1. JV and Varsity tryouts are first open to high school students. If, at the conclusion of registration, coaches know that a JV or Varsity team does not have sufficient numbers to field a roster, tryouts may be opened up to all middle school students. Parent/guardian approval is required prior to participation in JV or Varsity tryouts. When appropriate, an open evaluation process (grades 6–12) may be conducted so that all student-athletes are assessed fairly and consistently. The coach must consult with the Athletic Director and Principal before extending invitations to middle school students.

D. Roster Protection

1. No upperclassmen (grades 9–12) may be cut from a JV team to make room for middle school students.

E. Flexibility & Team Needs

1. We recognize that roster sizes and program demands may shift from year to year. Coaches, in partnership with the Athletic Director and Principal, will make thoughtful and transparent decisions that maintain program integrity and provide fair opportunities for athletes across all levels.

J. Tahanto Booster Club

The Tahanto Booster Club was formed to promote and enhance the athletic programs at Tahanto Regional High School. Meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday evening of each month starting at 6:30 PM. in the Tahanto Faculty Room. All parents are welcome and encouraged to join. Any questions or concerns that you have about the athletic program at Tahanto Regional High School can be addressed through this organization or by contacting the Athletic Director at Tahanto Regional Middle/High School

**STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

A. Physical Exam

Each student must have had a physical exam within the past 13 months in order to participate in the athletic program. A physical exam remains in effect for 13 months from the date of the exam. Once the physical expires, the student is ineligible to participate in athletics. If the physical expires during the season, the player will be deemed ineligible the day it expires, and will not be allowed to participate until he/she has an updated physical. The physical exam form must be on file in the nurse's office at the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School. Any student that does not have this form on file at the school will not be allowed to participate in the athletic program.

B. Registration/Permission Forms

Every student and his/her parent/guardian must sign a registration form in order to participate in any of the athletic programs. Forms are available online at the Tahanto Athletic Website. https://tahantoregional.rschoolteams.com

C. Academic Requirements

A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade (numerical grade of 65 or above) in all but one major subject. Major subjects are those classes that meet five days per week.

If a student is failing one course and is participating in any extracurricular activities, to support academic success the student must attend ACE Club and/or an extra help session two times per week until they are no longer failing that course during the next quarter or interim report whichever comes first. If a student misses 2 sessions, the student will meet with the coach and administration, and if a student continues to miss sessions after this meeting the student will not be able to continue participating in extracurricular activities.

Eligibility for fall sports is determined by the final year marks.

Incomplete grades do not count as passing grades.

The academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the date when the report cards for that marking period have been issued to the parents of all the students within a particular class.

Academic eligibility is required for a student to participate in any scrimmage or game.

A student cannot count towards eligibility for any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been taken and previously failed.

D. Transfer / School Choice / Home-School Students

1. Any student that has transferred from another school, is attending Tahanto as a member of the school choice program or is being homeschooled should check with the Athletic Director to determine his/her eligibility status.

2. Home-school students may participate in the athletic program provided they meet the requirements set forth by the M.I.A.A. Parents of home-school students should contact the Athletic director for more information.

E. Athletic User Fees

Students participating in the Tahanto athletic program at Tahanto are required to pay a user fee. The user fees are designed to pay for transportation, game officials, state and league dues, uniforms and supplies required for the athletic program. If a family is unable to pay the user fee, waivers are available. All requests for reduced fees must be submitted in writing to the Athletic Director. If a fee is not paid by the required date, the student will be ineligible to participate in any game or scrimmage until the fee is received.

Fees are nonrefundable after the first scheduled game in that sport. Exceptions to this rule can be made at the discretion of the athletic director and principal,

Fees are $250 for the first sport, $250 for the second sport and a family cap of $600. Once again, co-op participants are required to pay the host school's athletic fees. Fees paid to the host school for a co-op will also be tallied towards the Tahanto family cap. Waivers are available for financial assistance.

IV. STUDENT INFORMATION, REGULATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Academics

The primary reason for a student to be in school is for academics. Extra help and academic activities take precedence over the participation of the student in a practice or game. Students are strongly encouraged to and expected to notify the coach in advance when they will not be at a practice or game due to academic reasons.

B. Attendance at School

1. Students who have an approved excused absence are eligible to participate in the athletic program. Students should refer to the Tahanto Student Handbook or check with the Administrative Assistant of Attendance if they are not positive as to whether an absence is excused or not. Students excused by the nurse or who are absent from school due to illness (whether it is excused or not) are not allowed to attend a practice, scrimmage or game on that day.
2. Students suspended from school, whether it is an in school or an out of school suspension, are not allowed to participate in the athletic program on the days of their suspension.
3. On a regular school day, unless an excused absence, students are required to be in school for at least 6n out of the 7 periods on that particular day and days that school is only in session for half of the day, students are required to be in school for at least 3 out of the 4 periods on that particular day in order to participate in the athletic program.

C. Attendance at Practice

It is extremely important that the student notify a coach if he/she is not going to be present at a practice or a game. The student should speak to the coach directly or in the case where the coach is not in school he/she should speak to the Athletic Director.

Students are excused from practices and games for illness, academics, family emergencies or religious reasons. Prior notification is strongly recommended and expected. However, an excused absence could still affect playing time.

Students are not allowed to miss a middle/high school practice, scrimmage or game to attend a non-school practice, scrimmage or game in any recognized M.I.A.A. sport.

Practices on Sunday are mandatory unless for religious reasons.

D. Behavior

As representatives of Tahanto, student-athletes are expected to be exemplary role models for their peers. The expectations, demands and responsibilities of being a student-athlete are a necessary obligation for all of our athletes. Behavior in the school and in the community, which is offensive to the conduct expected of our athletes, will be brought before the administration for review. The purpose of this review is to make recommendations to aid the student in his/her total development and growth.

1. Teacher detentions and office detentions take precedence over a student's participation in a practice or game.
2. A student is not allowed to change the date of his/her teacher detention, office detention or suspension in order to participate in a practice, game or scrimmage.
3. Students who are on suspension, whether it is an in-school suspension or an out of school suspension are not allowed to participate in the athletic program on the days of their suspension.

E. Bona Fide Team Member Rule

A bona fide member is a student who is regularly present for and actively participates in all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to compete with a non-school team.

The first offense of the bona fide team rule will result in only a suspension for 25% of the season. The second offense will result in a suspension for 25% of the season, and ineligibility for tournament participation.

A coach does not have the right to excuse a team member from a practice or a game so that he/she may play. In special circumstances the principal can apply for a waiver to this rule.

F. Chemical Health

1. During the first allowable day of fall practice, through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later. A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; vaping products; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer." It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.
2. When the Principal confirms, following the opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contest totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.

3. When the Principal confirms, following the opportunity for the student to be heard, that a second or subsequent violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contest totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.
4. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility of the student during the next academic year.

G. Commitment

1. When trying out for a team and after being selected to be a member of a team, Tahanto Regional student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games of that team. Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Students should be aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for the team.
2. Practices for varsity teams may average two hours; junior varsity and middle school practices will average one and half-hours. Varsity practices/games will average 5+ days a week, junior varsity practices/games will average 5 days a week, and middle school practices/games will average 4 days a week.

H. Concussions

Concussion Information:

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has enacted a law concerning concussions which applies to all Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association member schools. The law reads, "ANY ATHLETE WHO EXHIBITS SIGNS, SYMPTOMS OR BEHAVIORS CONSISTENT WITH A CONCUSSION (SUCH AS LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS, HEADACHE, CONFUSION, OR BALANCE PROBLEMS) SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM THE CONTEST AND SHALL NOT RETURN TO PLAY UNTIL CLEARED BY AN APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL."

Before beginning any extracurricular athletic activity, the following people will participate in a training program approved by the Department of Public Health:

- Athletic trainers
- Coaches
- Parent volunteers for any extracurricular athletic activity
- Physicians employed by the school or who volunteer for any extracurricular athletic activity
- School nurses or nurses who volunteer for any extracurricular activity
- Athletic directors
- School marching band directors
- Parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity
- Student athletes

**Education and Training Program for Personnel**

The program will include information on the prevention and recognition of a sports-related injury, including second impact syndrome. The training and education will be repeated each subsequent year.

**Education and Training for Students and Parents**

1. The athletic director will provide current Department of Public Health (DPH) approved materials to all students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities and their parents in advance of the students' participation. Such materials at minimum include a summary of the DPH's rules relative to safety, including but not limited to recognition of symptoms of head injury. The biology and short and long-term consequences of concussion, second impact syndrome, and rules to return to play after a head injury or concussion will all be addressed.
2. The student and parent shall submit a signed acknowledgement of receipt of information and completion of on-line training.
3. The training and education will be repeated every subsequent year.

**Documentation of Head Injury and Concussion History**

1. At or before the start of each sport or band season, all students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities shall complete and submit to the athletic director or band director, a current athletic sign-up form, signed by both the student and the parent, that provides comprehensive history, including any head, face or cervical spine injury history, and any history of co-existent concussive injuries. Students may not participate in these activities until all forms and tests have been completed.
2. The athletic director shall ensure that all forms that are required by 105 CMR 201.009(B) (1) are distributed to each coach and band director. The coaches and band director will ensure that all forms are completed and submitted to the athletic director for review. Copies of forms, which indicate a history of head injury/concussion, must be given to the school nurse.
3. An incident report must be completed by the coach or band director and forwarded to the school nurse and athletic director when a student sustains a head injury or concussion during a game or practice. A parent must inform the school nurse if the injury occurs outside of those settings. The school nurse will forward this information to the athletic director so he/she can inform the coach or band director.

**Suspected Concussion Exclusion from Play**

1. Any student, who during a practice or completion, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall be removed from the practice, game or competition immediately and may not return to the practice, game or competition that day.
2. The student shall not return to play until medical clearance and authorization to return to play are provided as specified in 105 CMR 201.011.
3. The coach/athletic trainer/designee shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone as soon as possible. The coach will also convey this information in a written report available to the athletic/band director, parents, and school nurse by the end of the next business day.

4. The coach or his/her designee shall communicate within this timeframe with the athletic director that the student has been removed from play for head injury or suspected concussion and complete and submit an accident report. The athletic director will give a copy of the report to the school nurse.
5. Each student who is removed from play and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have medical documentation regarding the re-entry to school academics and extracurricular activities given to the school nurse. The school nurse will communicate the plan to the athletic director, principal and/or dean of students, guidance counselor, teachers, and appropriate school staff.
6. The student must be symptom free and medically cleared in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities.

**Medical Clearance and Authorization to Return to Play**

Each student who is removed from play for a head injury or suspected concussion shall obtain and present to the coach/athletic director/band director and school nurse the Return to Athletic Participation Form prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. A physician or one of the individuals as authorized by 105CMR 201.011(A) must complete this form. The only individuals that may authorize a student's return to play are:

1. A certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician; or
2. Neuropsychologist after the student has been examined and cleared by a licensed physician.

**Record Maintenance**

1. The district will maintain relevant and required records in accordance with 105 CMR 201.015.
2. Records will be kept with the school nurse/athletic director as deemed appropriate.

**Reporting**

The district shall be responsible for maintaining and reporting annual statistics on a Department of Public Health form or electronic format that at a minimum reports:

- The total number of Report of Head Injury Forms received by the school; and
- The total number of students who incur head injuries and suspected concussions when engaged in any extracurricular athletic activities.

**Return To Play**

The athlete may complete at most one level per day and may only progress to the next state if he/she remains symptom free. If any symptoms recur during any of the activities, the athlete should rest for at least 24 hours and then return to the previous stage.

| Rehabilitation stage | Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation | Objective of each stage |
|---|---|---|
| **Stage 1**<br>No activity | ● Complete physical and cognitive rest | Recovery |
| **Stage 2**<br>Light aerobic exercise | ● Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate<br>● No resistance training | Increase heart rate |
| **Stage 3**<br>Sport-specific exercise | ● Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer<br>● No head impact activities | Add movement |
| **Stage 4**<br>Non-contact training drills | ● Progression to more complex training drills, eg passing drills in football and ice hockey<br>● May start progressive resistance training | Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load |
| **Stage 5**<br>Full contact practice | ● Participate in normal training activities | Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff |
| **Stage 6**<br>Return to play | ● Normal game play following medical clearance | |

I. Conduct

The conduct, sportsmanship and attitude of our athletes are a reflection of the school and the community. Any misconduct by our athletes will be dealt with immediately. Specific acts such as being expelled from an athletic contest, technical fouls, red cards, etc. will be brought before the Principal, the Athletic Director and the Coach for review. We expect the highest and most exemplary conduct from our student-athletes. Any deviation from the school standards will jeopardize the further participation of the student in any of our athletic programs until the problem is rectified.

A student who is ruled out of a contest shall not participate in the next scheduled competition. (Exception: basketball - five personal fouls.) The disqualified student is ineligible for any contest in that sport until the next contest at the same level has been completed. A two-game suspension will be

assessed to any student athlete who is ejected from a contest for any of the following reasons: fighting, punching or kicking an opposing player, or spitting at someone.

A student ruled out of a contest twice during the same season shall be disqualified from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of his/ her second disqualification. (Exception: soccer- a player receiving two red cards for an offense other than fighting is suspended for two games or two weeks whichever is greater.)

A student who willfully, flagrantly or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall not participate in that sport season for one year.

A student who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the activity immediately and banned from further participation in all sports for one year.

Some of the reasons an official may eject an athlete from a game that would lead to game expulsion are fighting, flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct which is defined but not limited to violent action toward a player, official or spectator, the use of foul or abusive language, taunting, etc.

Officials consider taunting as a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending person from that contest. Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators, which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the words are vulgar or racist.

All athletes on bus trips will behave in a manner that is not distracting to the bus driver.

All athletes are reminded that when visiting other schools to compete in interscholastic events they are guests at the host school. We expect that our young people will act in a responsible and courteous way; therefore, respecting the facilities and equipment of the host school. Any malicious destruction of property will result in dismissal from the team and the athlete responsible will be assessed for damages.

Team members must be on the bench during a contest. When teams travel together, the team waiting to compete or that has finished competing, should sit together. No one is permitted on the bench unless they are a team member or are associated with the team. There should be no abusive language or derogatory remarks from a team bench directed toward officials or opponents.

J. Equipment

Each athlete is responsible for the uniform and equipment issued to him/her. It is the athlete's responsibility to see that the uniform and equipment are returned to the coach. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers being left open, lending equipment to other students and leaving equipment out in the locker room. Equipment must be returned to the coach immediately after the end of the season and in the condition it was received.

If an athlete's uniform is lost or damaged, he/she must reimburse the school for the replacement cost of the uniform. Athletes should be aware that many of the uniforms are custom made and therefore very expensive to replace.

Payment of a lost uniform is required at the time of the loss.

No student will be allowed to try-out for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or paid for.

Equipment should be returned to the coach and not to the main office.

K. Playing Time

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student athlete's participation in high school athletics centers around playing time. Student athletes participating in interscholastic athletics find that practices and expectations are intense and demanding.

1. It is the responsibility of the Tahanto Regional coaching staff to decide which athletes should start a contest, who should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after the coaches have observed the student athletes in practice sessions, game-like situations, scrimmages, and at times, games. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, and of course athletic skill enter into the decisions.
2. At the middle school and junior varsity levels members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. The emphasis at this level is on teaching the fundamental skills and team play.
3. At the varsity level there are many instances where the most competitive, skilled team members will play the major portion of the contest. However, teams cannot and will not be successful without a "team" philosophy and the ability of players to be role players on the team. The success of the varsity team should never be measured in wins and losses but in the drive for each member of the team to perform up to the best of his/her ability and to do so by the rules and regulations of the game. Playing time is not guaranteed.

L. Sportsmanship

Tahanto Regional expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches and spectators are to treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators and teams with respect. The M.I.A.A. reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, coach, team, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship". Tahanto Regional in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship in any of our contests, both home and away.

M. Team Captains

It is the coach's decision as to how team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach. It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and be ready to assume those duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program.

N. "Captain's Practice"

The M.I.A.A. and the Berlin-Boylston Regional School District do not sanction or condone "captain's practice" in any sport.

O. Transportation

All athletes are expected to ride to and from each away contest with the members of his/her team on the school bus. Riding to and from the game helps to develop a team concept and a team spirit.

In an emergency situation a student may travel with his/her parents if a specific request is made to the administration by the parent. A note should be brought to the main office in the morning of the particular day. Students in the Middle School will be allowed to ride home with their parents in non-emergency situations provided that they have brought in a written request to the administration in the morning.

Student athletes are not allowed to bring their cars to away games.

P. Try-Outs

Participation in athletics is a privilege; students try-out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk the chance of not being selected for the team. During the try-out period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet these expectations. Students not selected for a team will be informed as to the reason they were not selected and are encouraged to try out for the team the following year.

Q. School Vacations, Family Vacations and Extended Absences

1. Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and games. Because of schedule parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations.
2. Students who plan to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or any other reason should discuss the situation with their coach well in advance.
3. Students that do go on vacation and miss practices and/or games may miss the opportunity to play in a game or games upon their return upon the discretion of the coach.

V. ATHLETIC AWARDS

A. Athletic Recognition Ceremony

The Athletic Awards ceremony is traditionally held during Memorial Day week in the Tahanto auditorium. Student-athletes and their parents and families are invited to attend. The MS and JV ceremony will take place from 6:00 – 7:00 PM, refreshments from 7:00 – 7:30 PM and the Varsity ceremony will begin at 7:30 PM. The date and time are subject to change.

B. Middle School and Junior Varsity Awards

These awards will be presented depending upon the availability of funds:

1. Certificate of Participation - Each student participating on an athletic team for the entire season will be presented a certificate of participation.
2. Booster Club Plaque -Awarded to the athlete on each team who displays good sportsmanship, a positive attitude, dedication and commitment throughout the season.
3. Most Improved Player Award - presented to the athlete on each team who has shown the greatest improvement since the beginning of the season.

C. Varsity Awards

These awards will be presented depending upon the availability of funds:

1. Certificate of Participation – Each student participating on an athletic team for the entire season will be presented a certificate of participation.
2. M.I.A.A. Sportsmanship Award – Presented to the male and female athlete during each Sport season who best exemplifies good sportsmanship.
3. Booster Club Plaque – Awarded to the athlete on each team who displays good sportsmanship, a positive attitude, dedication and commitment throughout the season.
4. Most Valuable Player Award – Presented to the athlete on each varsity team who is considered to be the most outstanding player of the team.
5. Senior Athletic Award – Presented to each senior who has participated at the varsity level his/her senior year.
6. Outstanding Senior Athlete Award – Presented to the male and female student-athletes of the senior class who are perceived as the “outstanding athlete” by their senior teammates.
7. Athletic Director’s Award – Presented to the male and female senior athlete who has excelled at athletic proficiency, scholastic achievement, citizenship and community involvement.
8. Green & White Award – Presented to the male and/or female of the senior class who best exemplifies the true spirit and ideals of a Tahanto student- athlete as voted on by the Tahanto athletic/teaching staff, the Athletic Director and the Principal.

## Appendix VI - Extracurricular Activities Consent Form

**PARENTAL CONSENT, RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

We, the undersigned parent/guardian of _____[Student's Name] ("Student") and Student, do hereby consent to Student's participation in voluntary athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs of the Berlin/Boylston Public Schools and do forever RELEASE, acquit, discharge, and covenant to hold harmless the _____, a municipal corporation of the State of Massachusetts, and its successors, departments, officers, employees, servants, agents, and volunteers ("Releasees"), of and from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation, inclusive of attorney fees, on account of, or in any way growing out of, directly or indirectly, Student's participation in the voluntary athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs, including but not limited to all known and unknown personal injuries or property damage which we/I may now or hereafter have as the parent(s) or guardian(s) of said Student, and also all claims or right of action for damages which said Student has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after Student has reached majority, resulting or to result from Student's participation in the Berlin/Boylston Public Schools athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs. This release includes, but is not limited to, any claim based on allegations of negligence or negligent supervision, or any related claims arising out of the action or non-action of the District's agents, employees, servants, volunteers, or representatives regarding monitoring or supervising the activity of other students, or transfer of them to, on, or in any District facility including, but not limited to, play or practice fields and facilities, locker rooms, and vehicles used to transport participants. This release expressly excludes claims based on gross negligence or intentional acts, as defined by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 258. Furthermore, we hereby agree to protect the Releasees against any claim for damages, compensation or otherwise on the part of Student growing out of or resulting from injury to said Student in connection with Student's voluntary participation in the Berlin/Boylston Public Schools athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs, and to INDEMNIFY, reimburse or make good to the Releases any loss or damage or costs, including attorney's fees, the Releases or their representatives may have to pay if any litigation arises from Student's intentional, grossly negligent or reckless acts or omissions while participating in said athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs.

By signing below, I further certify that Student has had a physical examination and that Student is physically able to participate in said athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs.

School: _____

Sport/Activity: _____ Season: _____

Parent/Guardian (print): _____ Relationship: _____

Parent/Guardian (sign): _____ Date: _____

On behalf of myself and, if Student is a minor/under my guardianship, on behalf of Student:

Student (sign): _____ Date: _____

## Appendix VII – Student Handbook Parent and Student Acknowledgement

This acknowledgement must be signed by the second week of classes.

| Student Name (print) | Homeroom | Date |
|---|---|---|

This is to acknowledge that I have seen and had the opportunity to read the STUDENT HANDBOOK pertaining to the rules and regulations of Tahanto Regional High School.

I acknowledge receipt of the Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination for Students (Policy JBA in Appendix II) and have read and understand its contents.

Parent/Guardian (sign): _____ Date: _____

Student (sign): _____ Date: _____