

# Norton Elementary Family Handbook 2019-2020



Norton Public Schools  
Dr. Joseph F. Baeta  
Superintendent

Henri A. Yelle  
Elementary School  
Martin Geoghegan  
Principal

J. C. Solmonese  
Elementary School  
Riitta M. Bolton  
Principal

L. G. Nourse  
Elementary School  
Catherine J. Luke  
Principal

*It is the policy of Norton Public Schools to provide a learning environment free from discrimination or harassment. All students, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs including athletics and other extracurricular activities.*

September, 2019

Dear Families:

Welcome back! We hope you and your family had a wonderful summer. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new students and their families!

Our dedicated and caring staff will provide a rigorous, enriching, and age-appropriate educational experience for your child. Our Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science curricula are closely aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the developmental needs of our students. In addition to the core subjects, students will also attend Art, Wellness, Music, Computer, and Library (grades 2 and 3) classes. Please do not hesitate to email or call your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding the educational program.

Throughout the year, there are many formal opportunities for you to visit your child's school – such as special programs and parent conferences. We are also encouraging you to contact us when questions and concerns arise. It is important that we work as a team to solve problems and help our students. To accommodate visits by parents, while providing a safe and disruption-free learning environment for students, we ask that you schedule an appointment ahead of time with a staff member. For a visit of any kind, we ask that you stop at the school office to sign in as soon as you enter the building. All visitors must wear a visitor badge when in the building.

We would like you to review this Elementary Family Handbook as soon as possible, and to refer to it during the year, if you have questions about procedures or policies at your child's school. Please contact the school office, if you would like a paper copy of the Handbook.

The elementary administration and staff look forward to providing every child outstanding opportunities for academic, physical, social, and emotional growth during the coming school year. We look forward to partnering with you in educating your son or daughter!

Sincerely,

Riitta M. Bolton, Principal of J. C. Solmonese Elementary  
Martin Geoghegan, Principal of Henri A. Yelle Elementary  
Catherine J. Luke, Principal of L. G. Nourse Elementary

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**GENERAL DISCLAIMER**

While this handbook serves as a guideline for students, parents, faculty and administrators to follow, the administration reserves the right to react to each situation as unique, and to make decisions at their discretion, on matters of concern which are not explicitly stated in this handbook.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

	<b>Henri A. Yelle</b> 64 West Main Street	<b>J. C. Solmonese</b> 315 West Main Street	<b>L. G. Nourse</b> 38 Plain Street
<b>Main Office</b>	(508) 285-0190	(508) 285-0120	(508) 285-0110
<b>Fax</b>	(508)-285-0187	(508) 285-0130	(508) 285-0109
<b>Principal</b>	Martin Geoghegan mgeoghegan@norton.k12.ma.us	Riitta M. Bolton rbolton@norton.k12.ma.us	Catherine J. Luke catherineluke@norton.k12.ma.us
<b>Assistant Principal/Early Childhood Coordinator</b>		Ann Marie Baker abaker@norton.k12.ma.us	
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<b>Team Chair(s)</b>	Vicki Hasselbacher (508) 285-0189 vhasselbacher@norton.k12.ma.us	Diana Savage (508) 285-0125 dsavage@norton.k12.ma.us	Cassandra Russo (508) 285-0113
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/henri-a-yelle-elementary-school">http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/henri-a-yelle-elementary-school</a>	<a href="http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/jc-solmonese-elementary-school">http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/jc-solmonese-elementary-school</a>	<a href="http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/lg-nourse-elementary-school">http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/lg-nourse-elementary-school</a>

**School Hours**

	<b>Henri A. Yelle</b>	<b>J. C. Solmonese</b>	<b>L. G. Nourse</b>
<b>Student Drop-off</b>	<b>8:10</b> The earliest time students may be dropped off.	<b>9:05</b> The earliest time students may be dropped off.	<b>7:35</b> The earliest time students may be dropped off.
<b>School Start Time</b>	<b>8:25</b> After this time students are considered tardy.	<b>9:15</b> After this time students are considered tardy.	<b>7:45</b> After this time students are considered tardy.
<b>AM Preschool Hours</b>		<b>8:30 – 11:00</b>	
<b>PM Preschool Hours</b>		<b>12:00 – 2:30</b>	
<b>Full Day Preschool Hours</b>		<b>8:30 – 2:30</b>	
<b>Early Release Preschool</b>		<b>10:30</b>	
<b>Early Release Grades K-5</b>	<b>11:40</b>	<b>12:30</b>	<b>11:00</b>
<b>Regular Dismissal Grades K-5</b>	<b>2:45</b>	<b>3:35</b>	<b>2:05</b>
<b>School Office Hours</b>	<b>7:30 – 3:00</b>	<b>8:30 – 4:00</b>	<b>7:00 – 2:30</b>

### **EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL**

Students are expected to be in school for the entire day, unless notes are received from a parent or guardian for early dismissal. A student who is to be dismissed **must** present a **written** request from the parent or guardian stating the reason and the time of dismissal. This request must be approved by the office at the beginning of the school day. If a student attends less than a half of the length of the school day, he or she will be marked absent for that day. Students must report to the office prior to leaving school early. Students **must** be signed out by a parent/guardian. **Phone calls for dismissals will not be accepted, except in an emergency situation and with an approval by the principal.**

### **PARENT PICK-UP**

If you wish to pick up your child and not have them ride the bus home, you must send in a written note. An adult must pick up the child from the parent pick-up location.

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Students in grades K-6 whose legal residence is 2.0 or more miles from their assigned school are eligible for transportation and there is no fee charged. Students in grades K-6 whose legal residence is within 2.0 miles from their assigned school are offered transportation on a pay-to-ride basis. Transportation information is available on the Norton Public Schools website.

Full Day Kindergarten students will ride on the bus in the morning and afternoon with the students in grades 1-3. Kindergarten children will be given assigned seats.

Please review the following bus safety procedures with your children throughout the school year. Bus drivers are not permitted to drop students off anywhere but their assigned bus stop. Students should:

- Be at the assigned bus stop **prior** to bus arrival.
- Wait safely and away from the street.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before moving towards the bus.

An adult **MUST** be present at the bus stop for pick-up and drop-off for Kindergarten students. If an adult is not present at drop-off, the student will be brought back to the main office of the school.

### **BUS PASSES**

Due to space constraints and safety regulations, bus passes will not be honored for any reason. If students are not able to take their regular bus home, other arrangements must be made for students to be picked up from school. Please be aware that bus passes will not be allowed on early release days or regular school days for any reason.

### **KINDERGARTEN SCREENING**

It may be necessary for the school to cancel classes for Kindergarten when we conduct screening for the following year's incoming class. These dates will be announced later during the school year once they have been determined.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

We ask that parents/guardians contact the nurse if their children have allergies and/or other medical concerns. Any medications that need to be administered during school hours should be brought in to the nurse's office by parents/guardians in the original prescription container and will be administered only with written permission from a physician and the parent/guardian. Students should not transport medications for any reason. Parents should ask their physician if medications may be prescribed with a frequency that avoids school hours. Over the counter items such as cough drops, antacids, and aspirin should not be sent in to school. Vision and hearing testing are done according to the State Law timetables.

### **SCHOOL ENTRY MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS**

All students entering school must present a copy of a recent physical exam and a copy of all immunizations received. Kindergarten students must also present proof of a lead test and a complete vision screening including stereopsis.

## **ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

In accordance with the Massachusetts regulation (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 57 and 105 CMR 200.000) Body Mass Index assessments will be conducted in the schools by the school nurses. These assessments will be done for all children in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. Prior notification of BMI screenings will be sent to all parents and guardians of students in the targeted grades. All parents and guardians have the right to waive their child's BMI screening by submitting a written request.

## **WELLNESS/PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Each student is expected to participate in Wellness classes, unless there are reasons that prevent this. Provisions are made for those with special needs. Sneakers should be worn for Wellness class. If a student cannot take Wellness class, a note from the parent/guardian stating the reasons for exclusion is required. In some cases, a parent conference is arranged so that other alternatives may be made for the child.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In order for your child to do his/her very best work, he/she must attend school regularly, eat the right foods, get a good night's sleep, and dress appropriately in cold or wet weather. When a child is absent from school, a parent or guardian must call the school. You may utilize the answering machine at any time. The school will utilize the Blackboard Connect system to contact you if we do not receive a telephone call. Your child must bring a note when he/she returns to school stating the reason for the absence. This note is given to the homeroom teacher and kept on file in the office. This note must contain the dates of absence, the reasons for the absence, and must be signed by a parent or guardian. If a student is absent from school, he/she will not be allowed to participate in any activities of the school that day unless the absence has been approved by the principal.

Per Massachusetts General Law, a student who is absent in excess of seven days for two marking terms or fourteen days for the school year will be considered truant. Parents will be notified after the fifth day of an unexcused absence. If the causes for absences were primarily the student's health or family emergencies, the school principal may grant waivers if all coursework has been completed.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TEAM**

The School Attendance Team is made up of school administrators, the school nurse, and the school counseling staff. The responsibilities of the School Attendance Team are as follows:

- Investigating causes of absences and excessive tardiness
- Studying habitual absentees
- Sending letters to parents if absences/tardiness becomes excessive
- Handling court action for excessive absence/tardiness cases
- Researching reasons why children of school age are not in school

## **EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

**Excuses for absences will be accepted for:**

- An absence excused by a physician, dentist, or school nurse
- Chronic illness documented by a physician - received at the start of each school year or when diagnosed
- Court appearance
- Bereavement
- Religious holidays
- Visitations with prior school approval
- Principal's approved absence

**The following represent some unexcused absences:**

- Family vacations while school is in session
- Illness not requiring a doctor's attention



- Appointments
- Dismissals (not included under excused absence)
- Tardiness (not included under excused absence)
- All suspensions

### **GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS**

- **Fever** of 100 degrees or higher – return after 24 hours of normal temperature
- **Diarrhea** – No loose stools for 12 hours
- **Vomiting** – Return after 24 hours after last episode of vomiting
- **Conjunctivitis** – (pink eye) return after 24 hours of treatment
- **Strep Throat** – Return after 24 hours of treatment and fever free
- **Head Lice** – Return after treatment, and no evidence of live lice

### **MEDICAL CLEARANCE**

Students returning to school after four consecutive days of absence must be cleared by the school nurse or present a Physician's certificate. Parents will have the option to contact the school nurse to describe the illness and symptoms. The school nurse may authorize the student's return to school. The school nurse may also require that the student see a physician to obtain a physician's certificate. Students who are injured will need medical clearance to return to school and school activities, such as physical education and recess. A physician's certificate is required for the medical clearance.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

After an absence of two or more days, and upon the request by the parent, make-up work will be prepared by teachers after a notice of one full school day.

When unexcused absences occur due to vacations, teachers may use discretion in preparing assignments. The student will be allowed one day for each day missed to make up homework assignments.

### **TARDINESS**

When a student is late for school, he/she is to report to the office for a late slip and must be accompanied into the school by a parent. If tardiness becomes excessive, you will be contacted by the main office to meet with us.

### **VACATION ABSENCES**

Vacations while school is in session are not recommended. When a family takes a vacation while school is in session, the student will miss key classroom instruction. It is impossible for the teachers to recreate the learning experiences afforded to students during the school day. If you choose to vacation while school is in session, your child is allowed one day for each day absent to make up missed in-class work, homework, tests, and quizzes for all subjects. Students will not receive assignments in advance. (If the school is made aware of a vacation trip ahead of time, a journal assignment will be given to the student.) A folder of missed work will be prepared during the student's absence. Long term projects due while the student will be out must be completed and passed in before the student leaves.

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

The Norton Public Schools provides space to a private, for-profit company for this service. The company, Knowledge Learning Corporation (Champions), 40 Mechanic Street Suite 101, Foxboro, MA 02035, can be reached for information at their number (800) 246-2154. The tuition costs are the responsibility of the parents. It is also the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any changes in the children's after school care.

### **BICYCLES/WALKERS**

For safety reasons, no child is to ride his/her bicycle to school without being accompanied by a parent or guardian. Also, for safety reasons, PreK-3 students are not allowed to walk to or from the school without a parent or guardian.

### **EVACUATION OF BUILDING**

Whenever the school building must be evacuated for any reason, all staff are assigned to escort and supervise students in designated areas around the building. If, for any reason, the grounds must be evacuated, the District Crisis Plan procedures will be followed.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING**

Announcement of school closing for any reason will be broadcast on local news channels, cable access channel 9, the District website, Twitter, and Facebook. A Blackboard Connect telephone message will be sent to all students between 6:00-7:00 AM with the "no school" or "delay" announcement. Announcements of an early dismissal due to weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances, will also be aired on the local stations, District webpage, Twitter, and Facebook, and a Blackboard Connect emergency message will go out. Parents are urged to make arrangements for their child/children in case they will not be home to receive them. Please share with your child/children possible emergency arrangements that may need to be made should you not be able to meet your child/children in extreme weather situations.

### **DELAYED OPENINGS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If school is delayed due to inclement weather, students will not be picked up by our buses until one hour, 90 minutes, or two hours after the usual start time. The exact time of the delay will be determined by the superintendent of schools in collaboration with other town departments. Students who are dropped off at school by parents should also adhere to the one hour, 90 minute, or two hour delay in start time. When there is a delayed opening, AM Preschool may be cancelled.

### **PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Each school's parent organization will send information regarding meeting times and activities in the beginning of the school year. Parent participation is welcomed and encouraged.

### **SITE COUNCIL**

The Site Council is made up of elected representatives of parents, faculty, and community members as mandated by the Education Reform Act of 1993. Meeting times will be posted on the school calendar.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

We encourage parents to mark coats, lunch bags, backpacks, and sweatshirts with student names. Unclaimed articles will be placed in the "Lost and Found" area located near the cafeteria. At the end of the school year, unclaimed articles are given to charity. Parents are urged to check the "Lost and Found" frequently.

### **VALUABLE ITEMS**

We ask that students not bring money or expensive items/clothing to school with them. This includes toys, electronic devices, and cell phones (unless permitted per BYOD policy and with prior approval by principal). The school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to these items.

### **BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS**

We are asking that students not pass out birthday invitations at school, unless they are inviting everyone in the class or every boy/girl in the class. Passing out invitations to some students, but not others, often creates hurt feelings.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST**

Lunch is served in the school cafeteria every day, except the last day of school. A hot meal, including milk, is available at a daily cost of \$3.00 per student. For children bringing lunch, milk is available for \$.50 a carton. School breakfast is served every day before school and costs \$1.75, including milk. For students who have food allergies, tables will be designated such as "peanut free", etc. and will be monitored by our school nurse. Students may bring in a lunch from home. This lunch should contain items that students can open and eat independently. Please do not send a knife with your child to cut fruit, etc., instead, pre-cut any items that may need to be cut. Free and reduced lunch applications will be sent home.

## **SNACKS**

Students should bring a healthy snack and drink to school with them each day.

## **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Parents should be aware that the school system has no health insurance for children injured during school. School insurance is available to parents at the beginning of the school year and is an excellent investment at a nominal fee, especially for families without medical insurance.

## **ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR**

The School Adjustment Counselor is available to provide social and/or emotional support to students on an “as needed” basis. The counselor is available for conferences by appointment, please contact the main office if you would like to make an appointment with the school adjustment counselor.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

For safety and security reasons, **all** visitors to the school must first report to the main office to receive a visitor's pass before visiting elsewhere in the building. The School Department policy requires all parent volunteers to have a Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) check. This policy does not apply when parents or guardians of enrolled students have been invited to a classroom or assembly program.

- School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent unauthorized persons from entering buildings and from loitering on school grounds.
- A log shall be maintained in each school office for recording the name, address, and purpose of each visitor.

## **VISITATIONS/OBSERVATIONS**

If, for educational purposes, you wish to observe your child in class, a written request should be made to the building principal three days in advance. A mutually agreeable time will be worked out.

## **DRESS REQUIREMENTS**

In an effort to address concerns for student safety and welfare, to create an appropriate learning environment and to reinforce the values of modesty and civility, the administration will be responsible for enforcing this dress code fairly and reasonably. Violations are determined at the discretion of the administration. If students are in violation of the dress code, they will be given the opportunity to correct the violation. If they fail to correct the violation, they may be asked to call home for appropriate clothing and/or may receive disciplinary consequences as determined by the administrative staff. Students should dress in a manner that shows pride in themselves and their school. All students are required to dress and groom themselves suitably for school activities in clothes, which do not disrupt the educational atmosphere of the school. In general, some attire that would not be acceptable would be:

- Hats, bandanas or visors worn in the building and head covering of all kinds for all students
- Jackets worn in the building
- Chains or spikes
- T-shirts, sweatshirts or jackets with vulgar or offensive words, pictures, and symbols or with words or symbols promoting the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- Beach-like attire, bathing suits, bare midriffs, bare backs, halter-tops (grades 4 and 5), low-cut blouses, tube tops and muscle shirts, cut off tee shirts, any shirt exposing the midriff or otherwise revealing, extremely short shorts
- Skirts and shorts should be school-appropriate in length allowing freedom of movement while maintaining modesty appropriate in a school or work setting, i.e. the hem should be just below the fingers when standing
- Sunglasses should not be worn in school unless there is a medical reason to do so
- Undergarments of any kind should not be visible
- Students may be asked to remove jewelry for classes during which jewelry poses a safety issue such as art, wellness, science etc.
- Unsafe shoes, hee-lies, slippers, flip-flops

**A parent/guardian will be contacted if clothing is not appropriate.**

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE**

Our aim is to build a safe, orderly, and productive school environment where students take responsibility, respect themselves and others, and are cooperative. It is expected that students will adhere to the rules in a consistent manner. When a student is having difficulty maintaining appropriate behavior, the staff will make every effort to respond in a reasonable and fair manner. We expect students to understand they are responsible for their actions and consequences for their misbehavior will be applied. In an effort to ensure that students understand expectations for behavior, the staff discusses and reviews the rules of behavior throughout the year. The behavior expectations also apply to student behavior on the school bus, in the cafeteria, in the hallway, and on the playground.

Students are expected to:

- Talk and behave with respect to other students and adults
- Respect the rights and property of others
- Follow the directions of the adults in authority
- Walk at all times in the school
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to oneself
- Use school materials appropriately
- Take care of our school and school property
- Remain seated appropriately while on the bus, keeping the aisle clear
- Talk quietly on the bus
- Bring only safe and appropriate items to school (no toys, trading cards, electronics, weapons)

Students who break school rules will face various consequences, depending on the type and severity of the infraction. When a student is sent to the office due to dangerous or disruptive behavior, either in the classroom, in specials, on the bus, or on the playground, there is a referral form filled out by the referring staff member. A copy of this form may be sent to parents/guardians to be signed and returned to school the following day. Parents/guardians will also receive a phone call about incidents that require an office referral.

Possible consequences are separation from the group, loss of recess or other privileges, school detention, conference with the principal and parents, in-school or out of school suspension, or other consequences determined by the school administration. Students will always be given the opportunity to express their views to the principal prior to any disciplinary action. Parents/Guardians will be notified before any suspension is imposed. If a disciplinary report is filed on a student the same week as an in school or out of school field trip, student participation in that field trip will be at the principal's discretion.

## **STUDENTS RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS IN THE EVENT OF SUSPENSION**

1. Oral or written notice of the nature of the rule, violation of which will result in punishment.
2. Oral or written notice of the nature of the specific violation and the intended punishment.
3. An opportunity for the student in question to "tell his side of the story" to the appropriate school official.
4. If the student denies the charges, the evidence of the violation upon which the school authority is relying on will be explained.

## **SCHOOL BUS**

We consider riding the school bus to be a privilege and expect students to follow the rules of the bus. It is essential that parents/guardians reinforce the rules of the bus with their children regularly to emphasize that we are all working together to create a safe and positive environment for the students. Bus rules and expectations apply to daily bus rides as well as extracurricular trips.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**

1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the principal. He/she will report the incident in writing to the parent concerned, with a copy to the superintendent.

2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal will suspend the student's transportation privileges with written notice to the parent to report at once with the child to the Superintendent's office.
3. After a second offense, and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges will be denied the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent.

### **Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop**

1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.
2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.
3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.
4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.

### **Required conduct aboard the Bus**

1. Riders must remain in their seats or in place when the bus is in motion.
2. Whistling and shouting are not permitted.
3. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden.
4. Smoking, alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited
5. No inappropriate body contact while on the bus
6. The following disturbances are prohibited.
  - a. Pushing or wrestling
  - b. Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
  - c. Talking to the driver
  - d. Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
  - e. Climbing over seats
  - f. Opening or closing windows without driver's permission
  - g. Leaning out windows
  - h. Littering the bus
  - i. Use of cell phones\*, cameras and other recording devices
  - j. Possession of any dangerous weapon
7. Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

\*Cell phone use may be permitted by bus driver in case of emergency or tardiness, or by coaching staff to change arrival times for parents. In the case of the driver being incapacitated students would utilize their phones to contact emergency services for support.

Parents and students will be informed of these regulations through the Student Handbook at the beginning of each school year, and parents will be required to acknowledge through their signature that the regulations have been received and read.

### **BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

The school bus drivers will fill out a Norton Public Schools Bus Discipline Report for any student in violation of the bus rules or safety procedures. The principal will contact parents/guardians if a Bus Discipline Report is filed. Depending on the severity or frequency of the bus infraction(s), consequences will range from a verbal warning, to an assigned seat, loss of recess, or suspension/expulsion.

### **DESK AND PERSONAL SEARCHES**

The school reserves the right to search a specific desk or personal property if the administrator involved has reasonable suspicion that illegal contraband may be present.

### **LOST TEXTBOOKS**

It is the policy of the school district that lost or damaged textbooks or library books must be paid for by the borrower.

Notices of lost textbooks or library books will be sent to parents/guardians. It is the student's obligation to meet all fiscal responsibilities.

### **NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS HOMEWORK POLICY**

Homework strengthens academic skills, reinforces concepts students learn in class, helps students learn responsibility and self-discipline, develops positive study habits and organization, helps parents become aware of students' work and academic responsibilities.

Homework is an independent activity to be accomplished beyond the regular school-day-and - - without teacher assistance to reinforce concepts and practice skills learned in the classroom, to prepare for future classes, to apply skills to new situations, and to integrate several skills on a single task. Some homework may require parental participation. Homework helps to keep parents up to date about what is going on in school.

Students, in addition to homework for each subject/course varying with course level of difficulty, may also be required to complete projects and research as homework assignments that have long-term deadlines. Such assignments are in addition to daily homework and need advance planning to be completed both effectively and in a timely manner. Homework will not be assigned on holidays. Regular assignments that require more than one night to complete should not be given for vacation periods. Such assignments should not be given on the last day of classes prior to a vacation if they are due immediately upon return.

Students are responsible for noting and understanding the homework assignment, completing it, and returning it to school on the required day. Students should be aware that teachers may use homework assignments to help determine their grades.

Parents should set a specific time and place for the student to complete homework and should check to ensure that the student completes homework assignments. Parents should help with directions and checking the work but should not perform their child's homework. If at any time parents have a concern about the school's homework policy, their child's difficulties with homework, or the need for enriched assignments, they should contact their child's teacher. Parents of children in grades 4-12 should check online for assignments.

Teachers are responsible for assigning meaningful homework to students and for providing the explanation and direction required to ensure that students can accomplish the work with reasonable success. Teachers are also responsible for checking and providing a timely response to student's homework and notifying parents if students are having problems with homework assignments. When possible, teachers will attempt to coordinate homework demands among the various subjects so that students are not overloaded. Teachers will provide a balance between long-range and short-term assignments and monitor progress in long-term assignments so as to avoid last minute student efforts.

After an absence of two or more days, and upon the request by the parent, make-up work will be prepared by teachers after a notice of one full school day in all schools.

When unexcused absences occur due to vacations, teachers may use discretion in preparing assignments. The student will be allowed one day for each day missed to make up homework assignments.

### **TOBACCO USE**

The Education Reform Act of 1993 expressly prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings, the school facilities, school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

Possession, use, or sale of any mind altering substance (drugs or alcohol) is not only against the law, but also represents a very serious disciplinary offense. Students are strictly prohibited from the sale, use, or possession of drugs or alcohol on

school grounds, during school, on the school buses or at school bus stops, and during school sponsored events.

Students found in violation of the substance abuse policy will be dealt with as follows:

- A. Use, possession
  - 1. Five (5) days out of school suspension
  - 2. Notification to the parents, administration and superintendent
  - 3. Notification to the Norton Police Department
  - 4. Recommendation for counseling
  
- B. Sale, distribution or possession with intent to distribute
  - 1. Ten (10) days out of school suspension
  - 2. Notification to parents, administration, and superintendent
  - 3. Recommendation of expulsion to the superintendent and the School Committee
  - 4. Immediate police intervention including court follow-up
  
- C. Rumor or suspicion

With reasonable cause, any student under suspicion of use, possession, or sale may be asked to empty his/her pockets, handbag, locker, etc. This will be done under the direction of the principal (or assistant principal). Failure to comply will result in a five (5) days out of school suspension.

- D. The principal reserves the right to modify any of the above procedures when he or she feels the situation warrants modification.

### **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

Students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the Elementary Family Handbook. The regulations in 603, CMR 28.00 pursuant to MGLc.69 Section 1B and Chapter 71B, Section 3 require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education by an evaluation TEAM. The following are these additional requirements:

- 1. The IEP or 504 Plan for each student with special education needs will indicate if the student's disability requires a modification of the discipline code.
- 2. The principal must notify the Administrator of Special Education in writing within one school working day of the suspendable offense of any student with special needs whose IEP or 504 Plan does not reflect the need for modifications of the regular education discipline code. A record must be kept of such notices.

No single area in State or Federal Regulations has changed with as much frequency as the area of discipline. It is therefore advisable to stay abreast of the most recent advisories. Discipline is the responsibility of the school principal and all authority for discipline rests with him/her. Any questions around procedures regarding the discipline of students with special education needs or students who have been referred for an evaluation or even students who may be suspected as having a disability should be addressed to the Administrator of Special Education. Special education staff, principals and guidance counselors should be familiar with the regulations regarding:

1. Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Norton Public Schools is responsible for providing FAPE to all of its students. A student with special needs may not be suspended for more than ten school days within an IEP or 504 Plan period without the provision of FAPE. The Administrator of Special Education must be notified immediately of students with special needs who are suspended for ten or more days or have reached the tenth day of suspension within an IEP or 504 Plan period. If a student is on day 8 of suspension, a TEAM meeting should be held to review the IEP or 504 Plan and make adjustments if necessary. A Functional Behavioral Assessment should be completed prior to the TEAM meeting to allow the TEAM to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan.

2. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP): An FBA must be completed ten business days after the removal that will result in the 11th day of suspension; the BIP must be completed as soon as is possible

following the FBA. Good practice allows for the completion of the FBA prior to the tenth day of suspension. TEAMS should consider completing an FBA on or about the 8th day of suspension. After completion of the FBA, a TEAM meeting is held to develop a behavioral intervention plan. The goal of the Functional Behavioral Assessment is to understand why a student misbehaves. What does the TEAM feel is the function of the behavior? What behaviors could be chosen to try and redirect the student? The Behavioral Intervention Plan should include instructions on how to substitute problem behavior with replacement behavior. Please use the district form when completing FBAs and BIPs.

**Manifestation Determination:** Upon the tenth day of suspension, a TEAM meeting must be called to determine if the student's behavior is caused by or related to the student's disability. Whenever possible, the Administrator of Special Education should attend Manifestation Determination meetings. In making this determination, the TEAM must consider the following questions:

- Is the student's program appropriate?
- Is the program being implemented?
- Is the misconduct a manifestation of the disability?
- Does the student have the ability to control the behavior?

If the misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the TEAM can consider changing the IEP, the 504 Plan and/or the behavioral intervention plan. All other discipline stops. If the misconduct is not a manifestation of the child's disability, the regular discipline process is followed. However, FAPE must be provided to students with special educational needs. Therefore, after the principal completes the discipline process, the TEAM must meet to determine the appropriate services and determine where those services will be provided. All determinations are provided to parents/guardians in writing along with a copy of the Parent's Rights Brochure informing the parents of their due process rights and under special education regulations. As needed, training in the manifestation determination process will be provided to TEAMS by the Administrator of Special Education. There is a written "script" available to follow when doing manifestation determination meetings. Contact the Administrator of Special Education for assistance. If a lawyer is present representing the child and family, the school hold the manifestation determination meeting until a school attorney can also be present. While the school department must hold the determination in a timely fashion, we are at the same time entitled to have legal representation if a student and his/her family have representation. Contact the Administrator of Special Education immediately should these or other circumstances develop.

#### **CHAPTER 71 SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2, 37H3/4**

**Section 37H.** The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. The policies shall also prohibit bullying as defined in section 37O and shall include the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by said section 37O. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures assuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct



of students. The student handbook shall include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by section 370. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

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

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

**Section 37H1/2.** Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**Section 37H3/4.**

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster,

or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

#### **NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS "SAFE SCHOOLS" POLICY**

#### **PROMOTING CIVIL RIGHTS AND PROHIBITING HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION, HATE CRIMES, and RETALIATION**

#### **POLICY SYNOPSIS – "to, by, and for students"**

Harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her disability, nationality, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

#### **If you or anyone you know is being harassed:**

- Speak to any teacher or counselor. While every staff member is mandated to report harassment, you could call the official harassment counselors in your school. If you are unsure of whom to speak with, they are always available.

- If in doubt as to whether or not you are being harassed, always speak to a teacher anyway.
- If you feel that you have been retaliated against for reporting harassment, speak to a teacher or counselor.

**If you are accused of harassing another student or teacher, several consequences could follow:**

- Formal or informal steps can be taken (as defined in the handbook)
- Serious disciplinary actions can be taken: suspension, expulsion, etc.
- The **police** can become involved.

Harassment is not tolerated at Norton Public Schools. If reported, all necessary actions will be taken to investigate the matter and prevent the situation from escalating.

**I. GOALS**

The Norton Public School District (hereinafter referred to as “District”) is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment free from harassment, bullying, discrimination, and hate crimes, where all school community members treat each other with respect and appreciate differences. This Policy is an integral part of the District’s comprehensive efforts to promote learning, eliminate all forms of violent, harmful, and disruptive behavior and enable students to achieve their personal and academic potential and become successful citizens in our increasingly diverse society.

The District will not tolerate and will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, and hate crimes, and take prompt, effective action to end that behavior and prevent its reoccurrence. Action will include, where appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency. The District will support this Policy in all aspects of its activities, including its curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parental involvement.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

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 our School District. The District also prohibits bullying or harassment of school community members for reasons related and unrelated to their race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability. The District will also not tolerate retaliation against persons who take action consistent with this Policy.

Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action.

**APPLICATION**

This Policy will be published annually and applies to all sites and activities the District supervises, controls, or where it has jurisdiction under the law. It applies to all students, school committee members, school employees, independent contractors, school volunteers, parents and legal guardians of students, and visitors to District schools where the conduct occurs on school premises or in school-related activities, including in school-related transportation. Nothing in this Policy, however, is designed or intended to limit the District’s authority to discipline or take remedial action under General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this Policy covers the conduct.

**DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Violation of this Policy is a serious offense. Violators will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action to end the conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and protect the complainant and other similarly-situated individuals from harassment, discrimination, hate crimes, retaliation, and bullying in the future.

**POLICY DISSEMINATION**

At the beginning of each school year, the district will distribute this policy to all school employees, School Committee

members, volunteers and independent contractors, and publicize a summary of the policy in student handbooks and within the school community.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. Each School Community Member is responsible for:**

1. Complying with this Policy, where applicable;
2. Ensuring that (s)he does not harass, discriminate against, or commit a crime against another person on school grounds or in a school-related activity because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
3. Ensuring that (s) he does not bully another person on school grounds or in a school-related activity;
4. Stating, at the time of the incident, that what was just said or done, exhibits either harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crime, or retaliation behavior
5. Ensuring that (s)he does not retaliate against any other person for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, or for cooperating in an investigation of harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crime or retaliation; and
6. Cooperating in the investigation of reports or complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime, when appropriate.

#### **B. Each School Employee, Independent Contractor, and School Volunteer is ALSO responsible for:**

1. Responding appropriately, and intervening if able to take action safely, when witnessing harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime on school grounds or in a school-related activity;
2. Cooperating with the District's efforts to prevent, respond effectively to, and eliminate harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes, retaliation; and
3. Promptly reporting all information s(he) knows concerning possible harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime to a designated school official when (s)he witnesses or becomes aware of that conduct occurring on school grounds or in a school-related activity.

### **IV. TYPES OF HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE CRIMES**

#### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Norton School Department is committed to providing a work environment where men, women, and students can work together comfortably and productively, free from sexual harassment. Such behavior is illegal under both state and federal law - and will not be tolerated here.

This policy applies to all phases of employment and student life - including recruiting, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay, benefits and selection for training, travel, school-related social events, evaluations, grading, awards, or any other benefits.

No person shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's or student's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee or student's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment, career development, evaluation, grading, awards, or any other benefits. Sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical nature when:

- a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or
- b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment; or
- c) other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work or learning environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

## Prohibited Behavior

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones. This includes:

- Written contact, such as sexually aggressive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, instant message, and email
- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions
- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
- Visual contact, such as leering, whistling, or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters or magazines
- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve touching or not
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences
- Discussion of one's sexual activities

Sexual harassment also includes using sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, salary or learning environment of another employee, or student.

It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect an employee's job prospects. For example, it is forbidden either to simply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, or suggest that a poor performance report will be given because an employee has declined a personal proposition.

Also, offering benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, grades, awards, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications in exchange for sexual favors is forbidden.

## **Other Examples of Specific Types of Harassment (depending upon the circumstances):**

### **Disability Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her disability or perceived disability, including damaging or interfering with use of necessary equipment, imitating manner of movement, using slurs like "retard," or invading personal space to intimidate.

### **National Origin Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her national origin, ancestry, or ethnic background, such as negative comments about surnames, customs, language, accents, immigration status, or manner of speaking.

### **Racial Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her race or color, including characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs or insults, racial graffiti or symbols, hostile acts based on race, nicknames based on racial stereotypes, negative comments about appearance, imitating mannerisms, taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

### **Religious Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her religion, including derogatory comments about religious beliefs, traditions, practices (includes non-belief), or religious clothing.

### **Sexual Orientation Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at a person based on his/her actual or perceived sexual orientation, such as anti-gay slurs or insults, imitating mannerisms, taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

## HARRASSMENT BY NON-EMPLOYEES

In addition, the Norton School Department will take all reasonable steps to prevent or eliminate sexual harassment by non-employees who are likely to have workplace contact with our employees.

### Monitoring

The Norton School Department will take all reasonable steps to see that this policy prohibiting sexual harassment, harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes, and retaliation, is followed by all employees, supervisors and others who have contact with our employees. This prevention plan will include training sessions for supervisors and ongoing monitoring of the work site. Annual data collection and review of prohibited Safe School incidents will occur at the school level. School administrators will meet intermittently with various student groups. Student surveys may also be utilized in data collection.

### Discipline

Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including warnings, reprimand, suspension or discharge, according to the finding of the complaint investigation. If an investigation reveals that sexual harassment, harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes, or retaliation has occurred, the harasser may also be held liable for his or her actions under state or federal anti-discrimination laws or in a separate legal action.

### Retaliation

Any employee bringing a sexual harassment complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint. Complaints of such retaliation will be promptly investigated and punished.

### Hate Crime

A crime motivated by hatred or bias, or where the victim is targeted or selected for the crime at least in part because the person is a different race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation from the perpetrator or because the targeted person has a disability. A hate crime may involve a physical attack, threat of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or damage to another's property.

**Indicators** that a crime may constitute a hate crime include:

- Use of racial, ethnic, religious or anti-gay slurs;
- Use of symbols of hate, such as a swastika or burning cross;
- Similar behavior toward others who are members of the same protected class;
- The perpetrator's protected class is different from the victim's;
- The incident occurs while the victim was promoting a racial, religious, ethnic/national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation group, such as attending an advocacy group meeting, or participating in a students' gay-straight alliance, or a disability rights demonstration.

**Any other conduct harmful to school climate and subject to discipline is governed by the Student & Staff Codes of Conduct and other District policies.**

This Policy only covers conduct directed at a victim because of his/her race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability, or to bullying behavior where the District has intervened with the alleged student offender under the School and Staff Handbook for bullying and harassment.

### Bullying

Experts have determined that bullying is a form of aggression involving a power imbalance between the bully and victim, where the bully has actual or perceived physical, social, and/or psychological power over his or her target(s). Bullying generally involves a pattern of conduct that is directed at a victim, rather than a single isolated incident.

## **V. DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

### **A. IMPOSING DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

If a designated official, in consultation with the person in charge of that building/event or the Superintendent, concludes that the subject of the complaint has violated this Policy, the District will in a timely manner impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action reasonably calculated to end the complained of conduct, deter future conduct, and protect the complainant(s) and other similarly situated individuals. In imposing disciplinary and corrective measures the District will take into account harm to the victim and other members of the school community suffered and any damage to school climate or property. The decision whether discipline is imposed and the nature of any disciplinary action must comply with the District and school's disciplinary policies.

### **B. ACTION CONCERNING STUDENTS**

Progressive discipline and corrective action concerning a student may, as outlined in the school's handbook, include, but is not limited to, a written warning; classroom transfer; short-term or long-term suspension; exclusion from participation in school sponsored functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities; limiting or denying access to a part or area of a school; exclusion, expulsion, or discharge from school; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; an apology to the victim; awareness training (to help students understand the impact of their behavior); participation in empathy development, cultural diversity, anti-harassment, anti-bullying or inter-group relations programs; mandatory counseling, or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Handbook and/or school disciplinary code. When violations of this policy become a "pattern" of behavior, as opposed to a few isolated incidents, parents will be contacted.

#### **Discipline for Students with Disabilities**

The District complies with the federal and state law requirements that apply to the discipline of students with disabilities, including the federal "Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act" (IDEA-2004).

### **C. ACTION CONCERNING SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school employee may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal from certain duties, employment termination, supervision, training, and counseling.

### **D. ACTION CONCERNING INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS**

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning an independent contractor may include, but is not limited to, a request to the employer of the independent contractor to warn, suspend or terminate its employee; limiting or denying the individual contractor access to school premises or school-related activities; terminating the contract with the District or school, and training.

### **E. ACTION CONCERNING SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school volunteer may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspending or terminating the volunteer relationship, limiting or denying access to school premises or school-related activities, supervision, and training.

### **F. ACTION CONCERNING OTHER SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

Corrective action concerning any other school community member, including parents and legal guardians of students, and visitors to District schools may include, but is not limited to, a warning; counseling; and limiting or denying the parent, guardian, or visitors access to school premises or school-related activities.

### **G. PREVENTION AND REMEDIATION**

The District will employ a variety of prevention and remediation strategies to maintain, to the extent practicable, a safe school environment conducive to learning, and ensure that all school community members assume responsibility for their



behavior and its consequences. All members also have the responsibility to refrain from “looking the other way” when violations of this Safe Schools Policy occur. At the point of the infraction, articulation of inappropriate behavior is warranted.

#### **H. DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION CONFORMING TO LAW AND APPLICABLE CONTRACTS**

Any disciplinary or corrective action taken for violation of this Policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Massachusetts and federal law, and District policies.

#### **VI. REPORTING PROCEDURES: HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION, HATE CRIME AND RETALIATION**

The prohibition against retaliation does not protect a complainant from legitimate discipline. Any employee who intentionally makes a false charge of harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including warnings, reprimand, suspension or discharge.

##### Complaint Procedure and Investigation for Staff and Students

As soon as possible, all complaints of harassment and retaliation for reporting or participating in an investigation of harassment will be directed to the building’s designated Safe Schools Reporting Officer(s); school psychologist and adjustment counselor/guidance counselor either in writing, verbally, or by filling out the attached complaint form, or by requesting an individual interview. All complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible. Officials receiving complaints will promptly investigate and resolve complaints involving violations of this policy and recommend to the Superintendent or to the School Committee appropriate sanctions to be imposed against violators. Investigations will normally be completed within 30 days and a written report will be provided to the complainant and the accused.

##### State and Federal Remedies

Complaints can also be filed, within 300 days of the incident, with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) (300 days), One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108, (617) 994-6000, [www.mass.gov/mcad](http://www.mass.gov/mcad) or the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (300 days), John F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room 475, Government Center, Boston, MA 02203, (617) 565-3200 or (800) 669-4000, [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

##### Training

The Norton School Department will establish yearly training sessions for supervisors, educating them in how to keep the workplace as free from harassment as possible and in how to handle harassment complaints.

All employees will be apprised annually of appropriate methods for reporting and responding to harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, hate crimes, and their responsibility under this policy.

Students will receive annual training regarding how to identify, report, and file complaints under this policy. Student Handbooks will summarize this policy in a manner that students can clearly understand its intent and contents.

A copy of this policy will be distributed to all employees and posted in areas where all employees will have the opportunity to freely review it. The Norton School Department welcomes your suggestions for improvements to this policy.

##### LEGAL REFERENCES:

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Mass. General Laws Chapter 151B, Section 3A

Article 1 of the Declaration of Rights of the Massachusetts Constitution, as amended by

Article 106 of the Amendments to the Constitution (the Equal Rights Amendments)

For further information about this policy or help with harassment problems, consult the Harassment Coordinator in your respective building.

**NOTE: It is suggested that the Harassment Coordinator keep a record of all incidents in which they are involved.**

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an Act Relative to Bullying in Schools. This law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements are included in the school or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"). The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. In developing the Plan, schools and districts consulted with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

### Definitions

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

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

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

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

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

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

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

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### Prohibition Against Bullying

Acts of bullying, which include Cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and 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 through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, nothing in this Plan requires the Norton Public Schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

#### Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously.

**Norton High School** ~ Ethan Dolleman, Principal, (508) 285-0160, edolleman@norton.k12.ma.us

**Norton Middle School** ~ Vincent Hayward, Principal, (508) 285-0140, vincenthayward@norton.k12.ma.us

**H. A. Yelle School** ~ Martin Geoghegan, Principal, (508) 285-0190, mgeoghegan @norton.k12.ma.us

**J.C. Solmonese School** ~ Riitta Bolton, Principal, (508) 285-0120, rbolton@norton.k12.ma.us

**L.G. Nourse School** ~ Catherine Luke, Principal, (508) 285-0111, catherineluke@norton.k12.ma.us

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of an aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

#### Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Additional information about the school or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan can be found at [www.norton.k12.ma.us](http://www.norton.k12.ma.us) under the "Parents & Students" tab.

#### **TITLE VI, TITLE IX/622, SECTION 504 NOTICES**

All programs, activities, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability. Complaints and requests for information should be forwarded to:

**Title IV Equity Coordinator**

Jennifer O'Neill  
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning  
64 West Main St.  
Norton, MA 02766  
(508) 285-0100

**Title II and Title IX Coordinator**

Jeanne Sullivan  
Director of Pupil Personnel Services  
64 West Main St.  
Norton, MA 02766  
(508) 285-0100

**Title I and Section 504 Equity Coordinator**

Jennifer O'Neill  
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning  
64 West Main Street  
Norton, MA 02766  
(508) 285-0100

**Sexual Harassment Reporters**

District:  
Elizabeth Simone  
64 West Main Street  
Norton, MA 02766  
(508) 285-0100

**SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS**

The State Board of Education has adopted Regulations Pertaining to Student Records. The development of these regulations, which have the force of law, was mandated by state laws enacted in 1972 and 1974. The regulations apply to all public elementary and secondary schools. (They also apply to all private schools which have state approval to provide special education services under Chapter 766, the Special Education Act.) They are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records.

The regulations apply to all information kept by a school committee on a student in a manner such that he/she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into two sections: the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons, as well as other similar information. The temporary record is destroyed within five years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of the major parent and student rights regarding their student records, as provided by the Regulations Pertaining to Student Records:

**INSPECTION OF RECORD**

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student no later than two days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials. Finally, the parent and student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORD**

With a few exceptions where mandated by law, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

**AMENDMENT OF RECORD**

The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student

record. In addition, the parent and student have the right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

### **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS**

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the Regulations Pertaining to Student Records that relate to student and parent rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be reviewed at the school Guidance Office.

### **STUDENT RECORD ACCESS BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

The Massachusetts Board of Education approved the following regulations on October 25, 2005. Non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent
- The non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation
- The non-custodial parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the order or any subsequent court order specifically allows access to student record information.

This notice will be provided to parents via the student handbook.

## **NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY POLICIES**

### **Instructional Technology**

Developments in technology are making a great impact on every aspect of society. Computers and mobile devices have become an integral part of our everyday lives. The School Committee recognizes the importance of implementing technology resources in each school facility. Because of the many types of applications and the potential costs, the Committee establishes the following policy to plan for and guide growth for instructional and administrative uses.

#### **Goals**

1. Technology literacy for all students.
2. Technology literacy for all staff appropriate to their assignment.
3. A district-wide coordinated technology program that provides skill development in the use of instructional technology tools.

The Norton Public School District will provide a balanced program in instructional technology to ensure that students have an opportunity to:

- Gain an understanding of the applications of technology in society

- Demonstrate creative thinking and problem solving skills
- Apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information
- Use digital media to create, communicate and work collaboratively
- Understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology
- Practice legal and ethical behavior when using technology

Any student or staff member using technology will be instructed in the proper use and care of the hardware and software prior to its use.

The Director of Instructional Technology will oversee the coordination and implementation of instructional technology preK-12.

Source: ISTE Standards for Students [http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14\\_ISTE\\_Standards-S\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-S_PDF.pdf)

### **Student Email and Internet Publishing Guidelines**

Student use of email and posting material on the Internet must follow these guidelines. Adherence to the Acceptable Use Policy for Students is the basis for use of email and posting on the Internet and it must be complied with at all times.

Grades K-5

Students may not use any individual email accounts. Messages may be sent through teacher monitored accounts.

As part of a teacher-directed project, students may publish their own work on the Internet, including their first name, last initial, and picture and name of their school provided that their parent or guardian has given permission by signing the Internet Publishing Permission and Release Form for Students. These postings must be reviewed by the classroom teacher prior to actual publishing.

### **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**

#### **Purpose**

The Norton Public School District is committed to moving toward a 21st century learning environment. As part of this commitment, the district will allow access to our academic wireless network for students and staff using their own technology. Students and staff members will be able to access a filtered Internet connection to be used for educational purposes. We want all members of the school community to embrace appropriate use of technology so that they may have access to global resources when and where needed.

Users will be responsible for adhering to all other district/building acceptable use policies, codes of conduct, or administrative guidelines while using the district's wireless network. Students and staff members who do not accept the Norton Public Schools BYOD Agreement will not be permitted network access using personally owned devices. The use of devices by students is not permissible unless teacher or staff member approval has been granted.

#### **Definition of "Device"**

For the purpose of this B.Y.O.D. program, "device" means any privately owned wireless communication or portable electronic equipment. This includes, but is not limited to: smartphones, tablets, netbooks, laptops, iOS devices, chromebooks and e-readers.

## **Internet**

When using personal devices on school grounds for educational purposes, only the Wi-Fi provided by the school may be accessed. This is in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires that K-12 schools and libraries in the United States use Internet filters and implement other measures to protect children from harmful online content as a condition for the receipt of eRate funding.

## **Security and Damages**

- Responsibility to keep personal technology secure rests with the individual owner.
- The district is NOT responsible for stolen or damaged personal technological devices.
- The district is NOT responsible for the maintenance or repair of any personal technology.
- The district is NOT responsible for any costs incurred due to use of personal technology.
- The district's network filters will be applied to all connections to the Internet and attempts will not be made to bypass the filters.
- The district technology staff will advise only for troubleshooting purposes regarding issues on personal technological devices.
- Infecting the network with a virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information is in violation of this policy.
- Processing or accessing information on school property related to "hacking", altering, or bypassing network security policies is in violation of this policy.
- The district has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of interfering with the network, or is the source of an attack or virus infection.

## **Illegal Uses/Consequences - Students, Employees, Visitors**

Chapter 272, Section 99C of the Massachusetts General Law states in part that it is illegal for someone to attempt to or actually record any communication secretly or to procure another to do so. This is a felony, punishable by a state prison term of up to five years and or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00. Some states have laws that allow for "one-party" consent, whereby so long as one party involved in the recording is aware of it and consents to it, others do not have to be aware of it. This is not the case in Massachusetts. Anyone recorded must be aware of it and must consent to it. In addition to the criminal penalties a violator might face, there are also potential civil damages that could be pursued by a victim.