

# Norton Middle School

## PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 2021 - 2022

A New England League of Middle Schools "Spotlight School"



*"Learning Today and Leading Tomorrow  
Every Student Matters and Every Moment Counts"*

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# 1. ABOUT NORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

## WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Dear NMS students, parents and guardians,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year. We hope your summer was restful and enjoyable. The entire staff at the middle school looks forward to assisting students in having a successful year. Our challenge continues to respond and rebound from the interruptions in teaching and learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We enthusiastically and confidently embrace this challenge and encourage students to put forth their best effort.

We are asking that you review the student/parent handbook in its entirety. In an effort to communicate clearly our goals, policies and practices we updated numerous sections of the handbook. In addition, we re-formatted the entire handbook to help readers quickly and easily find relevant and important information.

In our continued effort to improve, we feel it is important for all stakeholders to have a clear understanding of the practices and policies that have helped us earn the designation of a New England League of Middle School's "Spotlight School". Many of our policies and procedures are mandated by the state of Massachusetts and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Most of our practices are what we have learned over time work best in our school for our staff and students. Norton Middle School has a track record of success due to the strong partnership between the school, the parents and its students. Norton Middle School is prepared to challenge and support each child academically, behaviorally and socially. Let us carry on the Norton Middle School tradition of working together so that all of us can experience the rewards of our hard work, persistence and a growth mindset.

We appreciate your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Vincent M. Hayward  
Principal

Ronnie Goldstein  
Assistant Principal

## **OUR MISSION:**

Guided by our Core Values, the Norton Public Schools, in active partnership with parents and the community, will provide each student with a quality education, one which fosters personal development and intellectual growth and prepares each to contribute and succeed as a productive and responsible global citizen in the 21st century

## **NMS CORE VALUES: MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD**

As an active member of the New England League of Middle Schools (NELMS) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Middle Level Educators (COMMLE), the Norton Middle School's mission is directly aligned with the eight principles for middle school education as outlined in "Turning Points", a national study on the education of early adolescents:

### **Trust**

School should be a place where close, trusting relationships with adults and peers create a climate for personal growth and intellectual development. This is accomplished by:

- Creating smaller learning environments or clusters
- Forming teachers and students into teams
- Assigning an adult advisor to each student

### **Critical Thinking**

Every student in the middle grades should learn to think critically through mastery of an appropriate body of knowledge, lead a healthy life, behave ethically, and assume the responsibilities of citizenship in a pluralistic society.

This is accomplished by:

- Teaching young adolescents to think critically
- Teaching young adolescents to develop healthful lifestyles
- Teaching young adolescents to be active citizens
- Integrating subject matter across disciplines
- Teaching students to learn successfully

### **The Opportunity to Succeed**

All young adolescents should have the opportunity to succeed in every aspect of the middle grade program, regardless of previous achievement or the pace at which they learn. This is accomplished by:

- Employing heterogeneous grouping
- Using flexible and block scheduling to maximize learning
- Expanding opportunities for learning

### **Decision Making**

Decisions concerning the experiences of middle grade students should be made by the adults who know them best.

This is accomplished by:

- Establishing building governance structures where decision-making is shared
- Designating leaders for the teaching process

### **Expert Teachers**

Teachers in middle grade schools should be selected and specially educated to teach young adolescents. This is accomplished by:

- Developing expert teachers of young adolescents

### **Healthy Living**

Young adolescents must be healthy in order to learn. This is accomplished by:

- Ensuring student access to health services
- Establishing the school as a health-promoting environment

### **Family Ties**

Families and middle grade schools must be allied through trust and respect if young adolescents are to succeed in school. This is accomplished by:

- Offering parents meaningful roles in school governance
- Keeping parents informed and involved
- Offering families opportunities to support the learning process at home and at school

### **Community Ties**

School and community organizations should share responsibility for each middle grade student's success. This is accomplished by:

- Placing students in youth services
- Ensuring student access to health and social services
- Community organizations supporting the middle grade education program
- Community organizations augmenting resources for teachers and students
- Expanding career guidance for students
- Middle school years are recognized as a transition stage between the elementary and high school levels. While at the middle school, a student should develop talents and abilities to the maximum in all areas of school life. This would include academics, special areas, physical development and social interactions. We feel the middle school should provide a challenging environment in which students may acquire skills necessary for the transition to the next developmental stage.

## **NMS CORE VALUES: RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

### **THE STUDENT**

You are the most important person in our school. We are all here to help you grow intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically. We have studied for many years to have the privilege of teaching you. We will do our best for you and hope that you will do your best also. Included in this handbook are policies that reflect our values in the day-to-day operations of our school. Our goal is that your understanding of these responsibilities and the significant role they play in making our school an effective place to learn, will grow deeper and broader over time.

We expect that each student:

- Be motivated to work consistently at their optimum ability.
- Acquire the knowledge to pass the basic skills curriculum.
- Acquire skills necessary to access information.
- Develop and broaden abstract reasoning skills to enable the use of higher level thinking skills.
- Develop effective oral and written communication skills.

### **THE TEACHERS**

Teachers are hired by the school system to provide students with the opportunity to receive a good education. We should all realize that our teachers are assuming the responsibilities of our parents while we are at school. They should receive the respect and consideration that we show our parents.

### **SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES**

**We expect every student and staff member to act with:**

**Respect:** Recognizing the worth and rights of self and others, the value of property and the environment. Respect includes valuing authority and being courteous to others.

**Honesty/Integrity:** Integrity – being true to one’s ethical beliefs and taking action based on those beliefs.

**Courage:** Having the internal strength to follow through on what one believes to be right and fair. Courage includes taking action on personal commitments.

**Personal Responsibility:** Individuals being responsible for one’s own actions and future, having ownership and being accountable for the outcomes of decisions, and learning from mistakes.

**Self-Discipline:** Being able to control or improve one’s pattern of behavior in moral, mental, and physical wellness.

**Kindness:** Thinking and caring about the welfare of others while engaging in the considerate personal interaction that enriches the lives of others.

**Justice:** Upholding what one believes to be fair. Being fair minded in the treatment of others.

**Social Responsibility:** Being willing to participate in or develop community through volunteerism, voting, community service, and showing respect for the country.

## **NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In the event of a school cancellation or delay, you will receive a ParentSquare phone message to that effect. School cancellation will also be posted on the District and School webpage. In addition, school cancellation for any reason will be made on local cable television, WBZ radio (Boston 1030), WBZ TV (channel 4), WCVB TV (channel 5) and WRKO radio (640 AM). Announcements of an early dismissal due to weather and/or other unforeseen circumstances will also be broadcast on these outlets.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE, DISMISSAL AND REQUIRED INFORMATION**

### **ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE**

In order for you to do your very best work, you must attend school regularly, eat the right foods, get a good night’s sleep and dress appropriately in cold or wet weather. When you are absent from school, your parent or guardian **must** call our school at 508-285-0140 **before 8:00 AM**. An answering machine is used until approximately **8:00 AM**. You will receive an automated phone call at home if we do not receive a call from a parent/guardian. **You must bring a note when you return to school after an absence. This note is given to the homeroom teacher and kept on file at the office. This note must contain the dates of absence, the reason for the absence and must be signed by your parent or guardian. This note is given to the homeroom teacher and kept on file.** Only absences meeting the criteria listed below in the section-excused *absences* will be considered excused. Absences due to vacation are not excused. If you are absent from school, you will not be allowed to participate in any activities of the school that day unless the absence has been approved by the principal or assistant principal.

When calling to request homework for your child, or in regards to student illness, to prearrange an absence, to pick a student up early, or for any other information from the main office, please call our general office number, 508- 285- 0140. Homework requests must be received prior to teachers’ prep periods, please call no later than 10:00am to request homework.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Absences considered excused:

- An absence accompanied by a note excused by a physician, dentist or school nurse
- Court appearance (Documentation required)
- Bereavement
- Religious holidays
- Principal’s discretion

Students who are absent for any reason, except truancy, will be required to make up work missed in each class. It is each student’s responsibility to obtain all make-up work from his/her teachers. Students will be given the same number of days as absences, plus one, to make up any missing work. In the case of a suspension of three days or

more, schoolwork will be made available for parent/guardian to pick up and will be due when a student returns to school.

### **MEDICAL CLEARANCE**

Students returning to school after four consecutive days of absence must be cleared by the school nurse or present a doctor's certificate. Parents may 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 doctor's certificate.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

A student who exceeds seven (7) days of unexcused absences in one semester (2 quarters) or exceeds fourteen (14) days of unexcused absences at any time during the school year may be considered truant. Parents will be notified. Students who have excessive absenteeism may be referred to the Attendance Officer for legal action. If the causes for absences were primarily the student's health or family emergencies, the school principal may grant waivers if all course work has been completed. Any student who exceeds fourteen (14) days of unexcused absences at any time during the school year will not be eligible for Summer School.

### **WRITTEN HOMEWORK FOR ABSENCES**

After a student has been absent due to illness for **two days**, parents may request written homework assignments through the main office **prior to 11:00 AM**. Twenty-four hours' notice for written homework is required. The secretary will notify the homeroom teacher and all necessary materials will be available **BETWEEN 3:30 AND 4 PM**, the next afternoon. Materials may be picked up in the main office. A sibling or neighbor may pick up assignments for the absent student, but they are not permitted to bring books home. No school work will be provided in advance for students who are absent due to vacation.

### **TARDINESS**

When a student is late (after 8:40 AM) for school, he/she is to report to the office for a late pass. An excuse will be required from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for tardiness. A student who exceeds seven (7) unexcused "tardies" to school in one semester (2 quarters) or exceeds fourteen (14) unexcused "tardies" at any time during the school year will be assigned an office detention for all subsequent tardies. For habitual tardy violations both student and parent may be referred to the School Attendance Officer for legal action.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

1. **By Parent or Guardian**: Students must present a written note to the office at the beginning of the day stating the reason, the time of dismissal and the name of the individual who will be picking up the student. **Dismissal before 11:30 am** will count as an absence for that day. Students must report to the office prior to leaving school early. Dismissals should occur only for emergencies. In making appointments, parents are encouraged to bear in mind the importance of classroom instruction and to schedule appointments outside of school hours. Students may not be dismissed to any individual not listed on their Student Information Sheet. Students will not be called out of class until the parent/guardian arrives at school. **Proper ID will be required for dismissals. All Dismissals are subject to Raptor identification check.**
2. **For Illness**: If a student becomes ill, he/she should get a pass from the classroom teacher and report immediately to the School Nurse. The nurse will contact the parent/guardian if dismissal for illness is appropriate. **Under no circumstances should a student contact a parent for pickup if they are ill.**
3. Student use of a cell phone to contact parents for the purpose of dismissal is not permitted. Parents should discourage this practice. Repeated offenses may lead to consequences outlined in the discipline code.

## **ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER**

- Investigate cause of absences and excessive tardiness and submit report
- Investigate habitual absentees
- Handle court action for excessive absence cases
- Research reasons why children of school age are not in school

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PARENTAL PERMISSION AND TRANSPORTATION**

Written, faxed or e-mailed permission is required from a parent or guardian for **ALL** students to remain after school for any teacher or activity for any reason. The same is required for activities before school. The school fax number: 508-286-9457. To enter school before 8:10 am, students must have a pass issued by a teacher or club advisor. Rides for students remaining after school for activities which take place after school should arrive by 4:00 PM. The school department does not provide transportation for before-school activities. There is a 4:00 pm late bus Monday through Thursday that is shared with the high school.

## **2. NMS DAILY ROUTINES: GENERAL INFORMATION, PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

**LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL DAY** (COVID 19 UPDATE = SCHOOL HOURS 8:30 AM - 2:57 PM)

\*\*\* ALL PARENT DROP OFFS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE LOT BY THE TENNIS COURTS AND THE GYM.

\*\*\* STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED OFF PRIOR TO 8:20 AM

**IN ORDER TO LIMIT INTERACTION OUTSIDE OF STUDENTS TEAMS, SIX DIFFERENT DOORWAYS WILL BE USED TO ENTER AND EXIT THE BUILDING DURING ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE. THESE DOORS WILL BE MONITORED BY STAFF AT ALL TIMES DURING ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL. STUDENTS ARRIVING LATE AFTER 8:35 WILL ENTER THROUGH THE MAIN ENTRANCE DOORS. AGAIN THIS IS DONE TO LIMIT INTERACTION NO MATTER HOW BRIEF BETWEEN THE STUDENT'S ON DIFFERENT TEAMS. UPON ARRIVAL STUDENTS SHOULD GO RIGHT TO THEIR HOMEROOMS AND NOT ACCESS THEIR LOCKERS. ONCE IN HOMEROOM STUDENTS CAN READ, DRAW, REVIEW CLASSWORK OR INDEPENDENTLY STUDY.**

The student day at the Norton Middle School begins at 8:30 AM. The first ten (10) minutes of the day (8:30 AM-8:40 AM) is the homeroom period. The regular academic day begins at 8:42AM. School ends at 2:57 PM. All students should plan to leave the building at that time unless remaining for an extra-curricular activity or under the supervision of a teacher. Students will be admitted into the school building beginning at 8:10 AM. Upon entering the school and until they are dismissed to the academic side of the building, students in grade 8 should sit in the cafeteria. Students in grades 6 and 7 should sit in the auditorium. Only those students assigned/registered for a before school activity or given a pass by a teacher will be admitted to the building prior to 8:10 am.

## **GRADE LEVEL TEAMING**

Norton Middle School subscribes to the concept that "It's all about the learning!" Our Central focus is to ensure success for every student by engaging in and implementing principles and practices of educational research in Turning Points. The academic structure at Norton Middle School is organized around the team philosophy. Each grade level is divided into two balanced teams made up of students with varied ability levels. Teams' student rosters are primarily based on academic and instructional considerations. There is no formal process for requesting particular teams. Teachers and administrators work purposefully to provide students opportunities to practice and achieve 21st century learning expectations in a safe and nurturing environment.

## **DRESS REQUIREMENTS**

Norton Middle School's Mission is to provide students with "challenging curricula in a safe and positive environment". Similarly, the Portrait of a Norton Graduate dedicates Norton Public Schools to preparing for college or a career. We affirm students' right to express themselves through their clothing choices and the primary responsibility for appropriate dress lies with the student and their parents or guardians.



In the interest of maintaining a school climate that is conducive to teaching and learning, administration may ban dress that is inappropriate due to health, safety, and/or is disruptive of the educational process. Student attire enforcement will not create disparities in class time or increase marginalization of any group.

Standards of Dress for students should comply with the following guidelines:

- Students may not wear attire that intentionally shows private parts, presents a health or safety hazard, and/or would contribute to a hostile or intimidating school environment.
- Students may not wear attire that promotes violence, sexual activity, substance abuse, profanity/obscenity, or discrimination of any kind.
- Students may wear hats, but the student's face must be visible to staff. Hats must not cover the ears and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Students are not to wear hoods up.
- Students must abide by a teacher's direction to restrict the wearing of hats or other items that might interfere with learning or safety in their classroom. Exceptions will be made for a documented or known instructional, safety, religious and/or medical reason.

Administration is authorized to:

- Have students change their clothing in school (either their own clothing or school-provided attire).
- Send offending students home to change their clothing if such clothing is determined by the principal or their designee to be inappropriate for school purposes.
- Suspend those students who defy reasonable requests to dress appropriately for a school setting.

### **ARRIVING AT AND LEAVING NMS**

#### **BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/ROLLERBLADES**

REQUIRING THE USE OF HELMETS FOR BICYCLE RIDERS AND THEIR PASSENGERS THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, Chapter 85: Section 11B. Bicycles; operation and equipment; regulations; federal product safety standards, effect; races; violations; penalties Section 11B 1/2. Any person 16 years of age or younger operating in line skates, a skateboard, a scooter or other manually propelled wheeled vehicle or riding as a passenger on any such manually propelled vehicle on a public way, bicycle path or on any other public right-of-way shall wear a helmet. Such helmet shall fit the person's head and be secured by straps at all times while operating in line skates, scooters, skateboard or other manually-propelled wheeled vehicle and shall meet the standards for helmets established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI Z 90.4) or subsequent standards or the Snell Memorial Foundation's 1984 standard for use in bicycling or subsequent standards. A violation of this section shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in a civil action Students who ride bicycles to school must park them in the bicycle racks. Bicycles are to be removed from the racks only upon leaving school at the end of the day. It is recommended that all bicycles be locked with padlocks when they are parked in the racks, as the school is not responsible for any lost or damaged bicycles.

#### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

The safe transportation to and from school for all students is a very important matter. The bus rules and regulations are designed to ensure that all students' rights to a safe and orderly bus environment are not violated. Take these rules seriously. Anyone whose behavior interferes with the safe operation of the bus will lose the privilege of riding the bus to or from school.

At the present time, the school department has a fee structure in place for bus transportation. The fee structure does not exempt a student from bus rules and regulations.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**

#### **PROCEDURES FOR DRIVERS AND PARENTS**

In case of any misconduct on the bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the school administrator. The school will then contact the parent and make them aware of the bus infraction that has taken place.

## **BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The school administrators will discipline any student who violates the bus rules. Discipline may include: the assigning of seats for a specific period of time, the permanent assigning of seats, transfer of a student from one bus to another (if possible), suspension from the bus for a period of time, and/or the permanent suspension of bus privileges.

1. 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.
2. After a second offense, and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges will be denied to the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent. No refund for User Fees will be issued for the remainder of the year.

### Required conduct aboard the Bus

1. Riders must remain in their seats or in place
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. Littering the bus
  - f. Improper use of cell phones\*, and other recording devices
  - g. Possession of any dangerous weapon
  - h. Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.
  - i. 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.

### 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.

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.

**DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP BY CAR:** Parents are encouraged to be cautious and patient when picking up and dropping off students. Please drive slowly while on campus and be aware that during dismissal there are a significant number of students walking around the campus making their way to parked cars and the tennis courts or fields for athletic practice. Everyone who comes on campus can and should play a role in keeping students and fellow residents safe. Do not be in a rush, be courteous to other drivers, move slowly and assume there could be a child there. The most important safety feature is the person behind the wheel.

## **BUS PASSES/CHANGES**

All students are assigned to a bus and a bus stop in September. Students will be picked up and dropped off only at this stop. Passes to alternate locations, or to ride an alternative bus cannot and will not be granted due to limited space. Questions regarding busses can be and transportation can be made to School business manager Mr. Matthew Wells [mwells@norton.k12.ma.us](mailto:mwells@norton.k12.ma.us)

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

In order to assure that no unauthorized persons enter the building with wrongful intent, all visitors to the school must first report to the office to receive a visitor's pass before visiting elsewhere in the building. Students may not be interrupted for a conference with any visitor other than their parents or guardian. 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.

## **CAFETERIA, HALLWAYS, LIBRARY AND LOCKERS**

### **CAFETERIA REGULATIONS**

It is important to observe the following rules:

1. Students should enter the cafeteria in an orderly fashion and proceed to their assigned table or the lunch line if they are purchasing lunch.
2. Once seated, students are to remain at their assigned or selected table. Moving around the cafeteria to socialize with classmates is not allowed. Students are to remain seated at their table until dismissed from the cafeteria by an assistant principal.
3. Running, pushing, cutting the lunch line or any physical roughhousing or horseplay is strictly prohibited in the cafeteria.
4. Throwing food, no matter how small the particle, throwing juice/drink, forks, etc., and pitching items into the trash receptacles is strictly prohibited. These offenses will receive immediate consequences.
5. All food and beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria. Only water bottles are allowed in the classroom.
6. After finishing lunch, tables are to be cleared of all trash and debris. If spills have occurred, the person responsible for the spill must thoroughly clean it up. Additionally, a student at each table is assigned table clean for the day - to sweep the floor around the table and make sure that the table is tidy for the next students who will use it. The lunch table is a community, is viewed by lunch supervisors and administrators as a community, and should be viewed by students as a community at all times.
7. Students are NOT allowed to leave the cafeteria for any reason without signing out or getting a monitor/assistant principal's permission.
8. Students who fail to observe good cafeteria behavior will be referred to the office. Continual offenses or serious misbehavior can result in loss of cafeteria privileges and possible further disciplinary action.

### **HALLWAYS AND PASSING**

To be assured of a safe and respectful learning community, the following rules have been instituted:

- Passing in corridors needs to occur in an orderly and respectful manner; specifically, no running, pushing, shoving, or extremely loud noises are allowed. Students should stay to the right of the hallway to avoid congestion and ensure safe passage between classes.
- Please be mindful that NMS is a caring and cooperative community; therefore, you are expected to respond appropriately and respectfully to all adults in the building at all times.

### **LIBRARY**

Whether staffed by a librarian or volunteers, the library is available to all students. Students will be allowed to use the library during academic support provided they have adult supervision. Books may be borrowed for two weeks. Some

books may be renewed and taken out again if no one else is waiting for them. The due date is always plainly stamped in the back of the book. You must observe this due date and return books promptly so that others may be able to use them. No other books may be borrowed until all overdue books are returned. Any library book that is lost should be immediately reported to the library media technician. Students are responsible for library materials and will receive a bill for any lost or damaged items.

### **LOCKERS**

All students will be assigned a locker during their first few days of school for storage of books and other equipment. No student should change a locker assignment without permission from an Assistant Principal or the Teacher Team Leader. Since lockers are a permanent part of the building, students are expected to keep them in good, usable condition. You should not give your locker combination to anyone else.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PLANS**

### **FIRE DRILLS**

To assure a quick and safe evacuation from the school building, we will have periodic fire and evacuation drills throughout the school year. Each classroom teacher will have the direction for exiting the building posted in the front of the class. A fire alarm will announce evacuation. There are some very important rules to remember during fire drills.

- Walk quietly and quickly in an orderly fashion. Complete SILENCE is required during any evacuation from the building.
- Once outside, remain with your class and your teacher.
- Always stay on the sidewalk.
- Wait for instructions from your teacher or an administrator to return to your classroom.
- Further and more specific instructions may be given at any time.
- Please be sure to focus your attention on your teacher and administrators during fire drills.

### **EVACUATION OF BUILDING**

Whenever the school building must be evacuated for any reason, all staff will escort and supervise students in designated areas around the building. If, for any reason, the grounds must be evacuated, all students and staff will walk to St. Mary's Parish Center.

### **APPROPRIATE AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Electronic devices are not to be used during the school day and should be turned off. The use of communication features on cellular devices during instructional time, or in a disruptive manner in the school atmosphere, is prohibited. At no time may students place phone calls without permission by a school administrator. Teachers may allow the use of cell phones and electronic devices for strictly educational purposes. Students who utilize cell phones or other electronic devices in classes without permission or in a manner that is disruptive will face school consequences. Students are hereby reminded that the Norton Middle School and its staff are not responsible if items that a student brings to school are lost, stolen or damaged.

Video cell phone use is not permitted at any time without prior approval of an administrator or teacher. Students that fail to comply and take unauthorized video are subject to the full range of consequences outlined in the code of conduct. Students are specifically warned not to take video that captures additional violations of school rules.

Electronic devices, such as cell phones, can be a disruption to the educational process. Students that use electronic devices in an inappropriate or disruptive manner will face school consequences. Teachers may ask students put away or turn in any visible electronic device they believe is disrupting the educational process at any time. Any student who refuses to turn in their cell phone /i-pod or other electronic device will be sent to the office. Student cell phones and

other electronic devices should not be brought to their Specials/Elective period. Students should expect that any device brought to Specials may be confiscated for the day regardless of the impact to the teaching and learning environment and that repeated offenses will lead to additional consequences. Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

Disciplinary consequences include but are not limited to:

- Failure to surrender electronic device to teacher or staff members upon request – Office Detention
- Failure to surrender electronic device to Principal/ Assistant Principal upon request – In-School Suspension

### **3. THE WHOLE CHILD: ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

#### **SCHOOL AND HOME COMMUNICATIONS AND GRADING**

##### **STUDENT INFORMATION**

Parents are required to complete a student registration form. Parents should be assured that any information you provide is for school use only; state law specifically restricts what information may be released. In order to keep our records up to date, parents are requested to inform the office of any changes to address, home or work telephone numbers or emergency telephone numbers so that you can be reached promptly if necessary.

**The school's web address is:**

<http://www.norton.k12.ma.us/norton-middle-school>

Teachers pass out class information and course syllabus at the beginning of the year

##### **School Brains**

Norton Middle School utilizes School Brains as a tool for online communication between the school/ teacher and parent/guardian. The online service provides the parent/guardian with the following options:

- Check a child's latest grades
- See what homework is not turned in and read notes from a child's teachers
- Verify attendance

##### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to come to school to talk with your child's teachers. (COVID 19 update Meetings will be held virtually – Dates subject to change)

**Conferences are scheduled in November and March.** Appointments for these scheduled conference dates are made by appointment. You can view information regarding conference dates in the monthly newsletter and will receive information regarding these conferences via email, handouts and postings on our website. You may also choose to meet with an individual teacher or a team of teachers as the need warrants. Appointments can be arranged by contacting the teacher via e-mail. Appointments can be made at mutually convenient times.

##### **PARENT BOARD**

The Norton Middle School Parent Board typically meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM (subject to change) in the school library. All parents are welcome to attend and participate. Meetings and meeting times are posted on Edline. Please call the principal at 508-285-0140 if you need additional information.

## **SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL**

The School Site Council includes representatives of parents, faculty and community. It was established by the Education Reform Act of 1993. Meetings are held on a regular basis and are open to the public. Please check the monthly school newsletter for the dates.

## **GRADING**

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Approximately half way through each term, every student will receive a progress report denoting various levels of satisfactory and/or unsatisfactory progress in each academic subject. Special subject teachers (art, music, health, physical education and technology education) will contact home for students not progressing satisfactorily. Additional weekly progress reports are optional and may be arranged through the Guidance Office after the first term. These reports are provided for a four-week period to address a specific problem. Parents are required to meet with teachers after that time if they wish weekly progress reports to continue.

Students who do not return progress reports or report card envelopes within two school days may be assigned a session.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued three times each year. You may keep your copy of the report card and should return the delivery envelope with a parent/guardian signature within two days.

Letter grades are provided using the following criteria:

A+	97-100	C	73-76
A	93-96	C-	70-72
A-	90-92	D+	67-69
B+	87-89	D	63-66
B	83-86	D-	60-62
B-	80-82	F	Below 60
C+	77-79		

### **Honor Roll Requirements**

High Honors- All A's in every subject

Honors- All A's & B's in every subject

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

In an effort to improve students' success, Norton Middle School is offering more opportunities for our students to earn passing grades and promotion to the next grade level. This NMS Summer School Day Program is a way to offer this opportunity to our students. Students will be able to gain mastery of course specific content that they struggled to obtain during the regular school year. Students who enroll in the NMS Day School Program will utilize 21st century skills in courses that have been drafted to fit the needs of NMS students. This will allow students not to simply recover lost credit, but to eliminate gaps in their learning, and attain the mastery necessary to be successful.

### **Middle School Specific requirements**

Students failing two or more academic subjects for the year are required to attend and pass summer school in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

- Students failing two classes are required to complete one summer school course
- Students failing three classes are required to complete two summer school courses
- For students failing in excess of three classes for the year retention is strongly considered.

## **COURSE OFFERINGS**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
<b>Math</b>	<b>Math 6 (60 min period)</b>	<b>Math 7 (48 min period) Math 7 AGL. (Algebra I/ Part 1)</b>	<b>Math 8 (48 min period)</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>ELA 6 (60 min period)</b>	<b>ELA 7 (48 min period)</b>	<b>ELA 8 (48 min period)</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>Grade 6 (60 min period)</b>	<b>Grade 7 (48 min period)</b>	<b>Grade 8 (48 min period)</b>
<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Grade 6 (60 min period)</b>	<b>Grade 7 (48 min period)</b>	<b>Grade 8 (48 min period)</b>
<b>World Languages</b>	<b>Not offered in Grade 6</b>	<b>All students take 90 days of reading and 90 days of French (48 min period)</b>	<b>Spanish or French Full Year (48 min period)</b>
<b>Specials: All students take 2 special course per term</b>			
<b>Course Offerings: Art, Music, Physical Education and Wellness, STEAM Lab, Tech Ed</b>			
<b>ICE Block: Intervention, Correction and Enrichment Period</b>			
<b>NMS Daily Schedule</b>			
<b>6 Day Rotating block</b>			
<b>* AGL = above grade level</b>			

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

### **Human Sexuality**

The Norton School System provides Human Sexuality Education to students in Grade 5 through Grade 12. This curriculum was developed by a Community Health Advisory Committee and approved by the Norton School Committee.

In compliance with Chapter 71 of the laws of Massachusetts as passed on July 31, 1996, the Norton School System will notify parents on a yearly basis that Human Sexuality Education is a part of their child's education and encourage the student's participation. However, parents may exempt their son/daughter from this curriculum by providing written notification to the principal of their child's school. No child so exempted will be penalized by reason of such exemption. Further, these instructional materials will be available to parents, guardians and educators for inspection and review.

### **Physical Education**

By state law, it is required that all students take Physical Education unless excused in writing by a doctor. If a student is to be excused for the day, a note must be written by a parent, guardian or doctor and given to the Physical Education instructor. A note from home can excuse a student for two classes. Additional classes require a doctor's note or one from the school nurse. The proper dress required for Physical Education is shorts, shirt, socks and sneakers. The proper dress for the Physical Education classes is athletic wear. Showers are available, but not required.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

**Philosophy:** Homework is a valuable aid in helping students make the most of their school experience. Homework strengthens academic skills, reinforces concepts students learn in class, helps students learn responsibility and self-discipline, develops positive study habits and organization, and helps parents become aware of students' work and academic responsibilities.

**Definition:** 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. Some homework may require parental help.

**Schedules:** Homework is assigned according to students' maturity, ability levels, and IEPs. Actual time required to complete assignments will vary with each student's study habits, academic skills, and selected course load. Homework accommodations will be implemented as outlined in the IEP or 504 Plan.

Middle school students, in addition to homework for each subject/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 and both effectively and in a timely manner. Homework will not be assigned on holidays. Vacations are a good time for students to work on term papers and catch up on reading, math review packets or writing projects. Regular assignments that require more than one night to complete should not be given on the last day of classes prior to a vacation if they are due immediately upon return.

**Responsibilities of Staff:**

- Assign relevant, challenging and meaningful homework that reinforces classroom learning
- Give clear instructions and make sure students understand the purpose
- Give feedback and grade as needed
- Communicate with other teachers on the team
- Involve parents and contact them if a pattern of late or incomplete homework develops

**Responsibilities of Parents:**

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

**Responsibilities of Students:**

- Write down assignments
- Be sure all assignments are clear; don't be afraid to ask questions if necessary
- Set aside a regular time for studying
- Find a quiet, well-lit study area
- Work on homework independently whenever possible, so that it reflects student ability.
- Produce quality work.
- If absent, students need to get missing assignments and complete in an agreed upon time frame.
- Make sure assignments are done according to the given instructions and completed on time.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Student Support Services Mission Statement**



The Norton Public School's Student Support Services Department, in partnership with students, parents/guardians, administration, staff, and community will assist all students by addressing their academic, career, and personal/social needs. As student advocates, we recognize the unique abilities, diversity, and personal worth of each child. Our Pre-K through 12 counseling program focuses on each student's potential for growth as they transition through the educational process to become effective students, responsible citizens, productive workers, and life-long learners. Guidance services are available to all students and their parents. These services may include assistance with academic problems, interpretation of test scores, study skills suggestions, conflict resolution, or help with other home, school or personal concerns. Students may arrange a guidance appointment through their homeroom teacher or by stopping in at the Guidance Office. Parents may call 508-285-0144 from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM daily to reach the Guidance Office.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

If you become ill in school, you should obtain a pass from your teacher and report to the nurse. If the nurse is not in her office, you are to report to the main office. Students must not leave the building because of illness without authorization from the nurse.

**Medication:** Medications will be administered during school only with signed parental consent and a written medication order from a physician. "Medications should be delivered to the health office in the original container or prescription bottle" (per Lisa Anderson RN, Head Nurse). Whenever possible, medication should be given at times other than school hours. Consent forms for **Tylenol /Advil are distributed at the beginning of school** and are available from the nurse.

Massachusetts state law requires that the vision, hearing, height, weight and posture of public school children be screened annually. Parents have the right to waive participation in annual screening programs. Please notify the nurse in writing if you do not want your child to be screened.

### **ACCIDENTS**

All accidents should be reported immediately to an adult. An accident report will be prepared and kept on file in the school. This is necessary for your safety and for insurance benefits.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

The school department provides an opportunity for all pupils to purchase an insurance policy for a nominal cost. Information will be sent home with all students in September. All parents are urged to participate in order to provide medical coverage for their children. Especially valuable is the dental coverage provided by the policy.

### **POLICY ON AEROSOL SPRAYS**

Some members of the NMS community suffer severe allergies to aerosol sprays or perfumes that can act as a trigger to an (often) serious asthma attack, or bring on a severe migraine in a sensitive individual. The allergy can be sufficiently serious to put a student into anaphylactic shock if an aerosol spray has been used anywhere in the student's vicinity. This can be a life threatening situation, resulting in the student being transported to hospital in an ambulance.

- Aerosols are banned from school premises, excursions, sporting events and all events where students are in confined spaces.
- Teachers have been asked to confiscate any aerosol products found at school and bring them to the Assistant Principal.
- Roll-on and stick deodorants are permitted at school

Let's Help to Create an Asthma Friendly school. Thank you for considering the health and safety of others.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING / CYBER-BULLYING POLICY**

The Norton Public Schools absolutely prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation as defined below. Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action; however, disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration and/or school committee from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.

The Norton Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying within the school community. Bullying of any type has no place in the school setting. The district will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target either by direct bullying or by inciting to bully;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected

Definitions at the end of this policy are provided to give clarity in regard to terminology used throughout this policy.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity; at a function or program whether on or off school grounds;
- at a school bus stop;
- on a school bus or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the Norton school district; or,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Norton public schools.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Norton School district if the bullying:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the target by direct bullying or inciting others to bully;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### **Prevention and Intervention Plan**

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

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

### **Reporting**

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

### **Investigative Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged aggressor of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form (Policy File: JICFB-GBB1) which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged aggressor, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred, he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees. If it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, consult with the school's Resource Officer to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within ten (10) school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

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

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

#### **Retaliation**

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

#### **Target Assistance**

The Norton Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and aggressors, affected by bullying, as necessary.

#### **Training and Assessment**

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

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

#### **Publication and Notice**

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms, by way of the Student Handbook.

Annual written notice of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the School Employee Handbook.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the Norton Public Schools website.

#### **Definitions:**

**Aggressor** – a student, staff member or other adult who engages in bullying or retaliation

**Hostile environment** – a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

**Retaliation** – any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a student or staff member directed against any student, staff or other individual for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation or for taking action consistent with this policy.

**School grounds** – property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by the Norton Public Schools for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

**School staff** – including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional

**Target** – a student who was bullied or retaliated against

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to abridge the rights of students who are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or by Article XVI, as amended, of the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

Nothing in this policy shall supersede or replace existing rights or remedies under any other general or special law, nor shall this section create a private right of action.

#### LEGAL REFS.

Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Board of Education 603 CMR 26.00

An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, Chapter 92

M.G.L. c.71, section 37 O and M.G.L. c. 71B

#### CROSS REFS.:

Safe Schools Policy GBB

#### ADAPTED FROM:

MASC 2010

Adopted: October 18, 2010

Revised: March 7, 2011

Revised: September 26, 2011

Revised: September 30, 2013

## **AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS, SPORTS AND SOCIAL EVENTS**

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Many extracurricular activities may be available for student enjoyment based upon funding. User fees will apply to participants. This includes the following clubs: Art, TV/Media, Community Service, or Drama. You may also participate in Robotics, Peer Leaders, Student Council, and Intramurals. Activities may change from year to year or be made available as the year progresses. Appropriate disciplinary status must be maintained to participate. Each situation will be reviewed on an individual basis by the building's administration.

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

The Student Council draws its members from all grades. This representative body is the connecting link among the students, faculty and administration. The purposes of the council are: to provide good school relationships between individual students, students and faculty and school and community; to develop and maintain good school spirit; to assist in directing and managing school activities; to promote scholarship; to develop high ideals of personal conduct;

to help each student find a place in the school; and to express opinions and make recommendations to the school administrators and faculty to improve the school. The best of student-teacher relationships are maintained and developed through the student council.

Qualifications for membership include maintaining a scholastic average of C or better in all subjects and maintaining an exemplary conduct record.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

### **CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM**

Co-curricular activities form an integral part of the school's educational program. These activities include athletics, student government, student publications, music, drama, subject-related clubs, assemblies, as well as social, political, hobby, and service organizations. The co-curricular program provides each student with an opportunity to pursue established interests and to develop new interests. Through participation, students form productive and satisfying relationships with others based on respect, trust and caring. Experiences that foster leadership, cooperation and a sense of community educate young people for citizenship in a democratic society. Perhaps, most importantly, students involved in the co-curricular program can have fun.

Students running for class officer must meet eligibility standards at the time of the election, and maintain eligibility for the duration of the elected term. Students who fail to maintain eligibility will forfeit their class officer status for the remainder of the term of office.

Student co-curricular participants are subject to school rules and regulations governing student behavior as cited in the Student Handbook. All participants are reminded that they must be good citizens in order to represent their school and community in co-curricular activities. Violations of school rules resulting in suspension from school will automatically preclude student involvement in co-curricular activities for the length of the suspension. Students must attend school on the day of participation in co-curricular activities. In the event of weekend or holiday co-curricular activities, students must be present on the school day preceding the event. Students who are absent on the day before a vacation should expect to miss one day of co-curricular activities during the vacation period.

Students who represent the school in co-curricular activities should be aware that significant violations of the code of conduct may result in their partial or total exclusion from their activities – a determination made by the Principal/Assistant Principal and the Advisor/Coach/Athletic Director

## **ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

### **RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES**

#### **1. Physical Examination**

All students must pass a physical examination within one year before participating in any sport.

**2. Parental Permission:** Students and parents must complete and sign a permission slip and consent form prior to participating in the first athletic contest of their sport. These forms must be completed for each sport in which the student participates. Norton Public Schools utilize the FamilyID system to register for all athletic programs.

#### **3. Academic Eligibility**

Middle school students failing multiple courses the term prior to the tryout will be deemed academically ineligible. To be eligible for Fall Activities, a student must meet the eligibility requirement based on the prior year's final average for each course. Students that attend summer school may become eligible for participation. Students academically ineligible at the start of the season may try out for a sport once they have met academic requirements at the end of the term. Students participating at this time must follow the MIAA guidelines of practice time before they may participate in an athletic event. In fairness to those students already selected, sports where cuts have been made are excluded.

A student receiving special education or Chapter 504 services may be declared academically eligible by the principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met.

#### **4. Student-Athlete Conduct**

All student-athletes at Norton Middle School should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects pride, respect and a high level of citizenship. Unacceptable conduct such as theft, vandalism, disrespect, unsportsmanlike conduct, immorality, violation of the law, and discrimination, will not be tolerated. These acts tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the team, school and community. The Athletic Director and Principal/Assistant Principal in consultation with the Coach will determine any penalty (ranging from partial to total exclusion from the athletic program) when violations of the code of conduct occur.

#### **5. MIAA Chemical Health Rule**

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not use, consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana, steroids; or any controlled substance, regardless of the quantity. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

The minimum PENALTIES are:

First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Second and Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs.

If after the second or subsequent violations, the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If the student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

#### **6. MIAA Bona Fide Team Member Rule**

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

Penalties: Any student who violates this rule for the first time shall be declared ineligible for the next two consecutive interscholastic events or two weeks of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. This penalty is effective from the date of his or her last participation in a school sport.

#### **7. Team Selection**

Norton Middle School Athletics makes every effort to include as many students as possible. However, there are some sports where team membership is limited. Students cut from a sport are encouraged to join another sport during the same season. Once team selections have been finalized, a student may not quit a team and join another team during the same season. A student-athlete may participate in only one MIAA interscholastic sport per season.

#### **8. Insurance**

The Norton Athletic Department makes every effort to provide a safe environment at all practices and games. However, because of the nature of athletics, injuries may occur. Students must submit evidence of enrollment in a comprehensive health plan or enroll in the school health insurance program.

#### **9. School Attendance**

To participate in any co-curricular activity, practice, or game, a student must be in school for the whole day. If extenuating circumstances exist, a parent may appeal in writing to the Principal prior to the activity, practice, or game, in order for the student to participate. The principal has the discretion to grant or deny the request to participate and will decide in a timely fashion.

#### **10. Suspensions**

Any student suspended from school may not practice, play or be with the team on the day(s) in which he/she is serving the suspension. Students suspended from school may not play in the next scheduled competition.

#### **11. Equipment Responsibilities**

Students are responsible for returning all school issued equipment and uniforms immediately after the season ends. Students are financially responsible for any missing equipment. Students who do not return equipment and/or uniforms at the end of one season are not eligible to participate in a subsequent season until the materials are returned or paid for.

#### **12. Season Limits**

Norton Middle School adheres to the season limits as set by the MIAA. The first day of practice for the fall season may begin no earlier than August 26. The first day of practice for the winter season may begin on the Monday after Thanksgiving. The first day of practice for the spring season may begin on the third Monday in March. Each season will end upon completion of the schedule or tournament play.

\*\*\*No team may practice or compete under the supervision of an athletic staff member between seasons as defined above. The Norton School Committee does not sponsor any student activity or preparation prior to these dates and school department personnel will not be authorized to participate in such activities.

#### **13. Attendance at Practice**

All athletes are expected to attend every practice and game. An excused absence from any practice will not result in penalization. Any absence without prior approval from the coach will be deemed an unexcused absence. The penalty for an unexcused absence is as follows:

First and Second Offense - The student may be suspended from the next contest. He//She must attend the game with the team.

Third Offense - The student may be dismissed from the team.

#### **14. Weekend Practice**

Teams may have practice only once (Saturday or Sunday) during a weekend.

#### **15. Vacation Policy**

Vacations during the season are discouraged. Students who plan vacations during a sport season must understand that their playing time will suffer due to their absence from practices and games.

A student absent from a practice or a game due to a vacation with his/her family must:

Notify the head coach prior to the season, with a note from his/her parent(s).

Be willing to assume the consequences regarding their status as a starter, second string, etc.

A student absent from a practice or a game due to a vacation apart from his/her family must:

Notify the head coach prior to the vacation, with a note from his/her parent(s).

Practice one day for each practice and contest missed prior to returning to competition.

Be willing to assume the consequences regarding their status as a starter, second string, etc.

#### **16. Transportation**

Transportation is provided to all athletic contests. Students are expected to ride with their teams. If an unusual circumstance occurs and a parent must transport his/her child, they must notify the athletic director in advance with a written note.

#### **CAPTAINS' CODE**

Being a Captain is the highest honor an athlete can receive. Teammates choose Captains to provide leadership for the team and Captains accept great responsibility with the role. The position may not always be fun but it will always be gratifying.



A Captain must be a leader and role model on and off the field/court. A Captain represents the team, coach, school, and community. A captain must take pride in the program by setting an example as a team motivator and being the hardest worker. Captains must help build and maintain team morale and school spirit.

An individual may lose the position of Captain by not living up to the standards of the Captains' Code; or for any violation of an athletic policy; or for any conduct that warrants a suspension from school and/or sport. This action will be determined by the Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach

## **4. NORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE**

It is the intention of the administration and teaching staff of Norton Middle School to assist all students in their growth and developing a sense of maturity. We recognize individual differences in the process and have created certain measures to help provide the most beneficial educational atmosphere for all concerned.

Our major premise is that a school must be a suitable environment for learning and that students have a responsibility to contribute to this sound educational environment. The provision of this code shall relate to student conduct on school premises at all times, buses, and off school premises at school-sponsored events.

**"Progressive discipline processes, shall be designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline, that the previous discipline history of the student being disciplined and other relevant factors will be taken into account, and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed**

### **DEFINITION OF CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

**"Session"** is the detainment of a student by a teacher after school for a period of 45 minutes.

Sessions may be assigned before school or at the end of the school day. Sessions are assigned at the teacher's discretion typically for failure to comply with standards and rules as set forth and explained by a teacher.

**"Office Detention"** is the detainment of a student after school by the administration, i.e. the Principal or Assistant Principal for a minimum period of 45 minutes. In the case of both session and detention, advanced notice is given. Parents will typically be notified of a detention by telephone. If a parent cannot be reached by telephone, an email will be sent. Detentions may be assigned before school or at the end of the school day.

**"Suspension"** is the denial of a student's ability to participate in any school function for a certain period. This procedure takes the form of either:

- **Internal Suspension:** A student is removed from participating in class but is required to perform his/her daily classwork in the office.
- **External Suspension:** A student is removed from participating in class and is at home for the period of suspension. A student who is subject to an out of school suspension is prohibited from being on school property or at a school-sponsored event for the duration of the suspension. The duration of the suspension continues until 8:30 am of the day the student may return to school to attend classes. All missed schoolwork must be made up and such work will be graded and included in the student's grade. Prior to readmission to class, a conference may occur between the school administration and the parent or guardian of the student to develop plans for the student's successful reentry to the class.

Procedures for Short-Term Suspension (exclusion of a student from school for a specified period of not more than ten school days) are as follows.

1. Notification: Parents or guardians will be notified of the suspension by telephone or by letter. Letters will be sent when no phone contact is made.
2. Due Process: Unless a student presents a danger or substantial disruption to the educational process, the student will receive the following prior to a short-term suspension:
  - i. Oral or written notice of the nature of the rule, violation of which will result in appropriate disciplinary action.
  - ii. Oral or written notice of the nature of the specific violation and the intended disciplinary action.
  - iii. An opportunity for the student “in question” to “tell his/her side of the story” to the appropriate school official.
  - iv. If the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence of the violation upon which the school authority is relying

#### **DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES:**

Consequences for the most common student behaviors that interfere with education are listed below. Actions taken will be based on individual circumstances. Note: Disciplinary action may extend beyond the following guidelines. If an infraction violates the law, the appropriate enforcement agency may be contacted.

Norton Middle School is interested in maintaining the quality and integrity of its programs throughout the school year. Infractions of school rules that may result in suspension occurring after May 15th of any school year will be subject to additional consequences. These include but are not limited to, removal from optional non curriculum related activities such as dances or other end-of-year celebrations.

#### **INFRACTIONS**

##### **A. Sessions**

Failure to comply with standards and rules as set forth and explained by a teacher. Student behavior as determined by the teacher or adult staff member to be interfering with the teaching and learning of the group or individuals.

##### **B. Possible offenses which may be assigned office detentions and/or in-school suspensions, but are not limited to:**

- Insubordination
- Argumentative Attitude
- Disrespect
- Disruptive Behavior
- Dress code violations
- Engaging in a behavior previously warned about
- Visibility and/or use of any electronic devices in a disruptive manner
- Refusal to cooperate with school rules and regulations
- Refusal to do assigned work after previously assigned teacher detention
- Failure to serve teacher assigned session
- Failure to report to the office
- Instigating a Conflict
- Name-calling
- Harassment of fellow students
- Cheating
- Graffiti
- Horseplay and safety violations
- Leaving school

- Throwing food in the cafeteria
- Truancy
- Unauthorized areas (students in unauthorized areas are subject to search)
- Being present when others are smoking
- Possession of tobacco products and lighters
- Vulgar and obscene language
- Repeated minor infractions
- Absence from school without written excuse from parent/guardian
- Unexcused tardiness to class/school
- Unauthorized absence from class
- Disruption of school classroom environment/ including the cafeteria
- Failure to follow teacher directions
- Other, as deemed necessary for the health and welfare of the student body by the Principal or Assistant Principal

**C. Possible offenses which may be assigned a suspension, but are not limited to:**

- Repeated violation of school rules
- Fighting or assault (Minimum 3-day suspension out of school)
- Failure to appear for a session
- Failure to appear for a detention
- Truancy
- Smoking and or the possession of tobacco products and lighters
- Verbal harassment, verbal threats, verbal assault
- Vulgarity
- Excessive/ school or class disruption
- Sounding false fire alarms (referral for court action and recommendation for expulsion)
- Disruption of detention hall to the point of being sent out
- Leaving school grounds
- Threatening fellow students
- Insubordination is the refusal to report to the Principal or Assistant Principal as directed by any school employee. Refusal to follow the explicit, reasonable directions of any staff member
- Gross disrespect toward any school employee, which would include profanity (spoken or written) directed specifically at a staff member or ridiculing or demeaning actions, directed toward a staff member (1 -3-day suspension)
- Stealing
- Inappropriate displays of affection such as kissing or touching
- Vandalism/ destruction of school property including graffiti
- Use of drugs or alcoholic beverages: possession or transmission thereof, except as prescribed by a physician.
- Possession of dangerous and injurious weapons
- Unauthorized recordings of any kind without teacher approval are not allowed. Illegal recordings will be referred to the Norton Police Department.
- Other actions may be grounds for suspension as deemed necessary for the health and welfare of the student body by the Principal or Assistant Principal

**UNLAWFUL ACTS:**

These offenses include acts of a serious nature, which may violate federal or state laws, including, but not limited to: assault, assault & battery, assaulting a member of the staff, arson, bomb threats, false alarms, fighting, making threats, possession, use, or distribution of controlled substances, vandalism; possession of dangerous weapons or

objects, harassment based on protected classifications (see pages 32 & 33), smoking or other use of tobacco, theft, violation of another student's or staff member's civil rights, or violation of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Penalty: Depending on the severity determined by the administration, these offenses generally result in out-of-school suspension for up to 10 days, long-term suspension, or expulsion. (See also, M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H1/2 under "Additional Laws, Policies and Practices").

### **REPORTING SUSPECTED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY TO THE POLICE**

Some conduct that may lead to school discipline may also constitute criminal activity. Suspected criminal activity of a serious nature will be reported to the police department, as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is established between the Norton Public Schools and the Norton Police Department.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

**Possession, use or sale of any mind-altering substance (drug or alcohol) is not only against the law, but also represents a very serious disciplinary offense. The sale, use, or possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol on school grounds during school, on school buses, at bus stops, and during school-sponsored events is strictly prohibited. Students found in violation of this policy will be dealt with as follows:**

#### **A. Use, possession**

1. Up to 10-day out-of-school suspension
2. Notification of parents, administration and the superintendent
3. Notification of the Norton Police Department
4. Recommendation for counseling
5. Loss of privilege to attend or participate in any school events or co-curricular activity for thirty (30) calendar days including athletics, music and drama events, the prom and graduation, loss of leadership positions (i.e., class officer, student council officer, representative to state and local agencies, and captains of athletic teams) for the remainder of the school year
6. Violations can result in a recommendation for an expulsion hearing.

#### **B. Sale, distribution or possession with intent to distribute**

1. 10 day out-of-school suspension
2. Notification of parents, administration and the superintendent
3. Recommendation of expulsion by the principal
4. Immediate police intervention including court follow up
5. Loss of privilege to attend or participate in any school events or co-curricular activity for thirty (30) calendar days including athletics, music and drama events, the prom and graduation, loss of leadership positions (i.e., class officer, student council officer, representative to state and local agencies, and captains of athletic teams) for the remainder of the school year
6. Recommendation for an expulsion hearing

#### **C. Rumor or suspicion**

With reasonable cause, any student under suspicion of use, possession or sale may be asked to empty his or 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-day out-of-school suspension.

#### **D. THE PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MODIFY ANY OF THE ABOVE PROCEDURES WHEN THE SITUATION SO WARRANTS**

### **CHEATING POLICY**

Cheating violates the spirit of Norton Middle School's Mission, Academic Expectations, and Statement of Purpose. In order to obtain the appropriate benefit of the educational environment, each student must put forth a best effort.

Cheating seriously hinders the ability of a teacher to diagnose or remediate the work of a student. Therefore, cheating will not be tolerated and will be addressed in the following manner.

Teachers will define what constitutes cheating in areas where the definition is not clear (e.g. plagiarism, homework, group work, etc.). Cheating in a testing situation includes: looking at another student's paper, copying information from another student or from notes on one's person or in one's possession, talking during a test, having a copy of a test or quiz prior to the test being administered, knowingly providing or receiving information among students.

Penalty: A student caught cheating will receive a zero for the assignment in question. When cheating is suspected, the teacher will discuss the matter with each student involved before making a determination. The teacher should report any instance of cheating to the student's parents and the assistant principal for school discipline. Students and parents will have the opportunity to discuss all documented offenses with the teacher, Assistant Principal, or Principal.

### **SMOKING (including smokeless tobacco)**

Smoking is a well-documented health risk, not only to those who smoke, but also to those in the immediate area. The Education Reform Act of 1993 expressly prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or school buses. Students who are guilty of smoking (including the use of smokeless tobacco), or who bring cigarettes or smokeless tobacco to school or school related activities are subject to disciplinary action.

Under Chapter 270, Section 22, Chapter 71, Section 20 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Education Reform Act, students and adults are prohibited to smoke or use any tobacco products in school or on school grounds. For the purpose of this section smoking is defined as the lighting of any cigar, cigarette, pipe, electronic transmission device, vaping device or other tobacco products or having possession of same. Consequences may include: Smoking and tobacco use in the building or on school grounds including the hours before and after school:

- First offense: 3 days out of school suspension.
- Second and subsequent offenses: 5 days out of school suspension

For possession of any smoking and drug related paraphernalia (including but not limited to the afore-mentioned items) will result in an out of school suspension of 1 – 3 days.

### **WEAPONS/ASSAULT**

Students in possession of any item that could be considered as a harmful or dangerous weapon in school, on school grounds, on school buses, or at a school sponsored or school related event and/or who assault any staff member will be subject to a ten-day out-of-school suspension and possible school expulsion and/or a law enforcement intervention.

### **PLAGIARISM**

With technological advances, and the use of the internet, plagiarism has surfaced as a major concern in many school settings. The use of the internet, in particular, has created an easy way for students to find and use work that is not their own. The use of computers is not the only source for copying someone else's work. We know that "borrowing" another person's answers or research has always been of concern to educators. It seems that in recent years, this borrowing of work has become more of a problem.

Norton Middle School looks upon plagiarism seriously. Students who are conscientious and do what is required should receive credit for their efforts. Students who take or use the work of someone else should not be given credit for what is not theirs. When a student uses homework, research or borrows answers during a quiz or test that are not theirs, the result will be a grade of zero and sessions may be assigned. Parents will be notified.

## **5. District Policies, Legal Rights & Responsibilities**

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

In accordance with the new Massachusetts regulation (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 57 and 105 CMR 200.000) passed in February 2009, 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. All screening results will be directly and confidentially provided to parents, regardless of screening results. Included with each result will be information explaining the BMI results and resources that support healthy eating and active living. Parents are encouraged to share the results with their child's health care provider.

### **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 ensuring 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 37O. 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 a 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 a 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.

### **DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students who have an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.) or a 504 Plan under Chapter 766 have additional rights regarding their discipline and any suspension procedures. In general, these procedures are as follows:

1. The Educational Team determines if a student can/cannot meet the regular discipline code and writes this into the I.E.P. or 504 Plan.
2. The Special Education Administrator provides the administrator responsible for discipline with the names of such students who have an I.E.P., and information as to whether those students can or cannot be expected to meet the regular school discipline code. The Guidance Department will provide the administrator responsible for discipline with the names of those students who have 504 Plans and information as to whether those students can or cannot be expected to meet the regular school discipline code.
3. If a student commits an offense where a suspension is warranted, the administrator responsible for discipline notifies the Special Education Administrator, who may review the I.E.P. or the 504 Plan and confer with the administrator responsible for discipline regarding the disciplinary action.
4. Both administrators will complete necessary record keeping procedures.
5. If the suspension will result in exclusion for less than ten cumulative days in a given year and if the I.E.P. or 504 Plan indicates that the student can meet the regular school discipline code, the Special Education Administrator advises the administrator who is responsible for discipline that the suspension is appropriate.
6. If the suspension will result in exclusion for more than ten cumulative days in a given year and if the I.E.P. or 504 Plan indicates that the student can meet the regular school discipline code, the student is suspended. However, a team meeting is convened to review the I.E.P. or the 504 Plan and to determine alternative Special Education service delivery during the period of exclusion. Services should be provided after the tenth day.
7. If the I.E.P. or 504 Plan indicates a modified discipline code for the student the student will be disciplined in accordance with the provisions of the I.E.P. or 504 Plan.
8. Students may not be suspended for disciplinary offenses that occur as a direct result of their special need or handicapping condition.

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

Students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the Norton Public Schools Student 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 (See Appendix for Disciplinary Steps Flow Chart). 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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?

## **HAZING**

Under Massachusetts General Laws, any form of hazing is prohibited in all public schools. Chapter 269: Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### Chapter 269: Section 18. Failure to report hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

### **SEARCH POLICY**

Students in the Norton Public Schools may be issued lockers or desks, which are to be used by them, to store their belongings. Following is the school system policy in relation to those lockers and desks.

- Master keys and locker combination lists are retained by school personnel.
- Personal items of the students may be stored in the lockers or desks except any items deemed inappropriate or unacceptable in a school environment. Those items include weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages or stolen property.
- The school retains the right to inspect lockers and desks periodically for compliance with these guidelines.
- The school retains the right to search a specific locker, desk and personal property if the administrator involved has reasonable suspicion that illegal contraband may be present.
- Students found in unauthorized areas are subject to search.

### **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

The building and grounds are protected by video surveillance.

### **STUDENT RECORDS REGULATION**

Under Massachusetts law, public schools are required to inform parents about student record regulations and other school and/or system-wide procedures. Much of this valuable information is contained in this student handbook, which your child receives at the beginning of each school year. It is important for you to be familiar with the contents of this handbook.

- Norton Public Schools participate in the mandated statewide testing program. Norton students are required to take the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Results of these tests are made available to the parents and become part of the student's temporary record.
- Student record regulations allow schools to release the following information without prior consent: "a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans." You have the right to request that this information and/or school

activity related photographs not be released. To do this, notify the school principal in writing that you do not wish to have this information released.

- Student record regulations require a school system to forward a transferring student's records to the student's new school. These records must include the complete school record.
- When a student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system, the student's temporary record shall be destroyed within five years of leaving the school system. This date is indicated on the Student Transfer Form. You have a right to receive these temporary records before they are destroyed.

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' 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 about a student in a manner such that he or 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, dates of attendance, 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 most of the information maintained by the school system about the student including standardized test results; class rank; school sponsored extracurricular activities; evaluation and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons; and 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 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 2 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, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student and 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 Record**

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 must 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. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be reviewed at the guidance office.

#### **Release of Students Records to Non-Custodial Parents**

Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.71 §34, public school personnel shall provide student record information to eligible parents who do not have legal custody of their children in accordance with the following criteria:

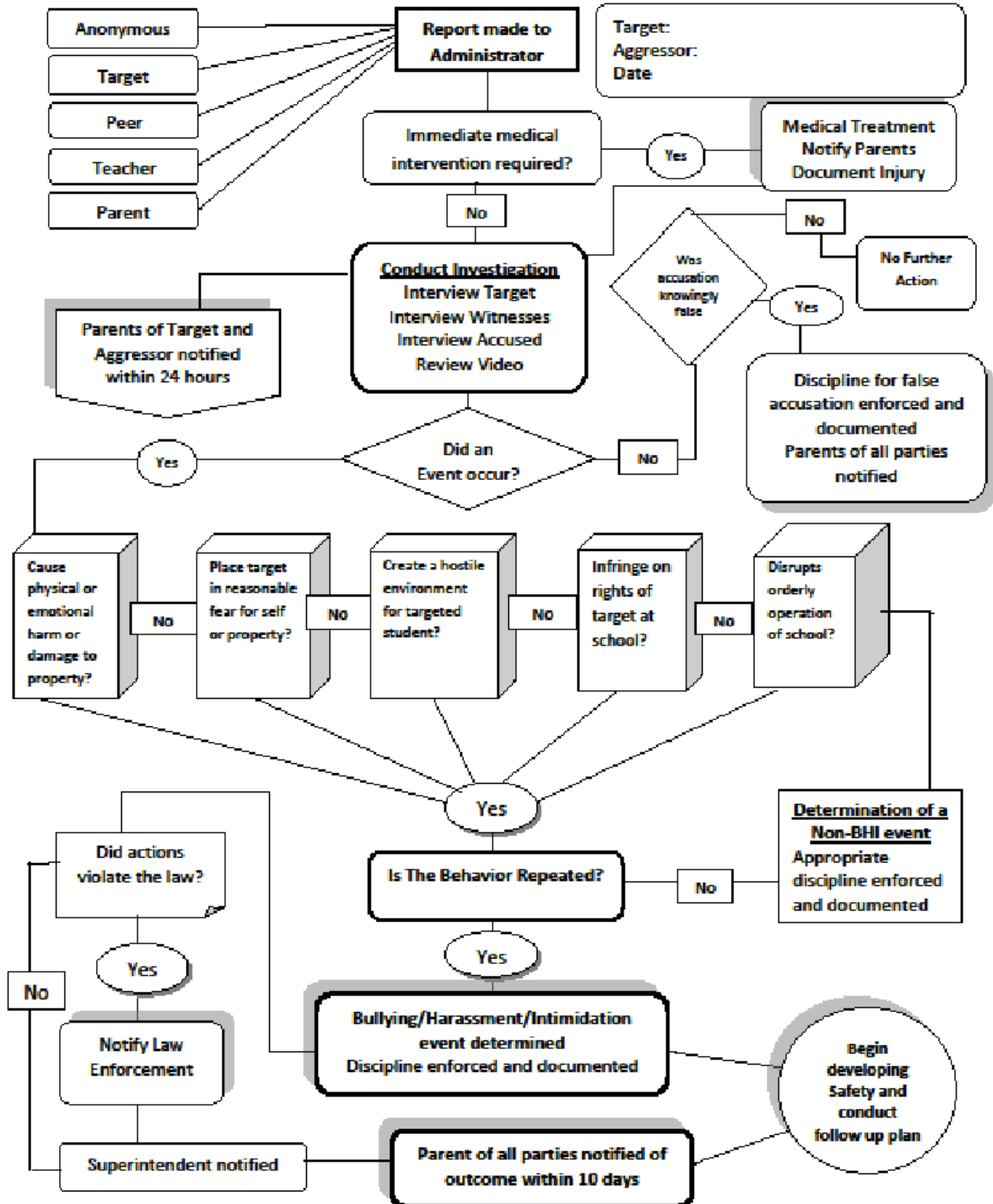
An eligible parent must submit a written request annually to the school principal. The initial request shall include:

- A certified copy of a probate court custody order or judgment, indicating that such parent has not sought and been denied shared legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or the custodial parent and is entitled to unsupervised visitation with the child; or
- A certified copy of a court order from the probate and family court, specifically ordering the release of the information to the parent, which indicates that such order is being made after review of the custody order and the criminal history of the petitioner, and that the provision of the information will not pose a safety risk for the custodial parent or child and that it is in the best interests of the child that such information be provided; and an affidavit from the requesting parent certifying that the judgement or order remains in effect and no temporary or permanent protective order restricting access to the custodial parent or to any child in the parent's custody is in effect.
- School personnel shall notify the custodial parent upon receipt of the request by registered and first class mail. The notification shall indicate that the information requested shall be provided after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides documentation to the school principal of a court order prohibiting contact with the child or distribution of the information or a temporary or permanent protective order for the custodial parent or child, unless such order has been modified to allow access to the requested information.
- In each subsequent year, the eligible parent shall indicate in his or her request that he/she is still eligible for the requested information and is still entitled to unsupervised visitation with his/her child. The same procedures for notification to the custodial parent, indicated in 2 above, shall be followed annually.
- If the principal of a school is presented at any time with a probate and family court order prohibiting distribution of such information, the school shall not distribute any further information and shall notify the requesting parent.
- Requests made by a parent while a permanent protective order is in place restricting access to the custodial parent of any child in the custodial parent's custody is a violation of such protective order.
- A parent who does not have physical custody of a child shall be entitled to the receipt of such information unless such parent has been denied legal custody, visitation or unsupervised visitation or who has been restricted by a restraining order in accordance with the provisions set forth in above.
- The principal of each school shall designate a staff member who is responsible for proper implementation for this section.

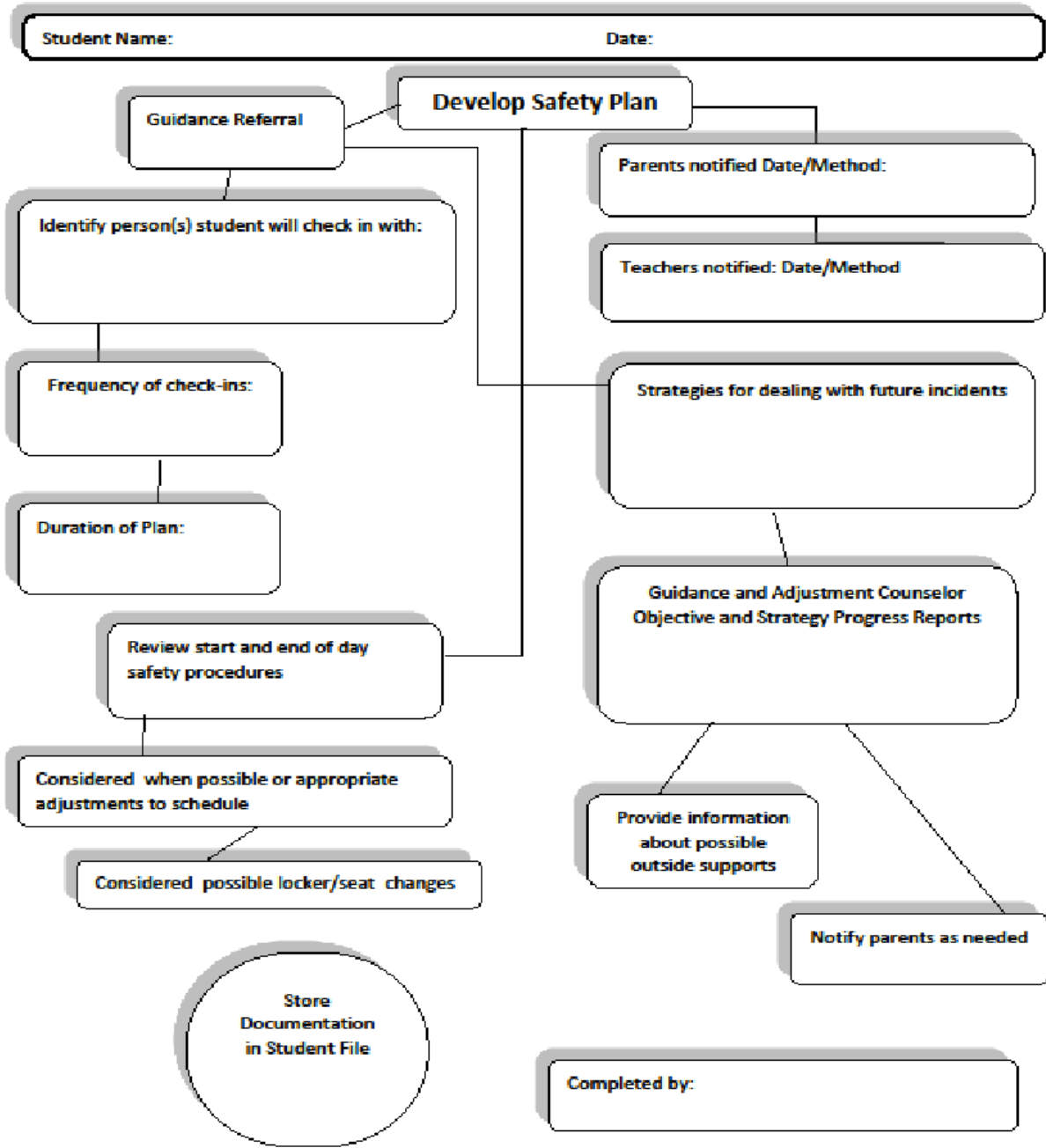
The Massachusetts Board of Education approved the following regulations on October 25, 2005. Non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent, or
- the non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or
- 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.

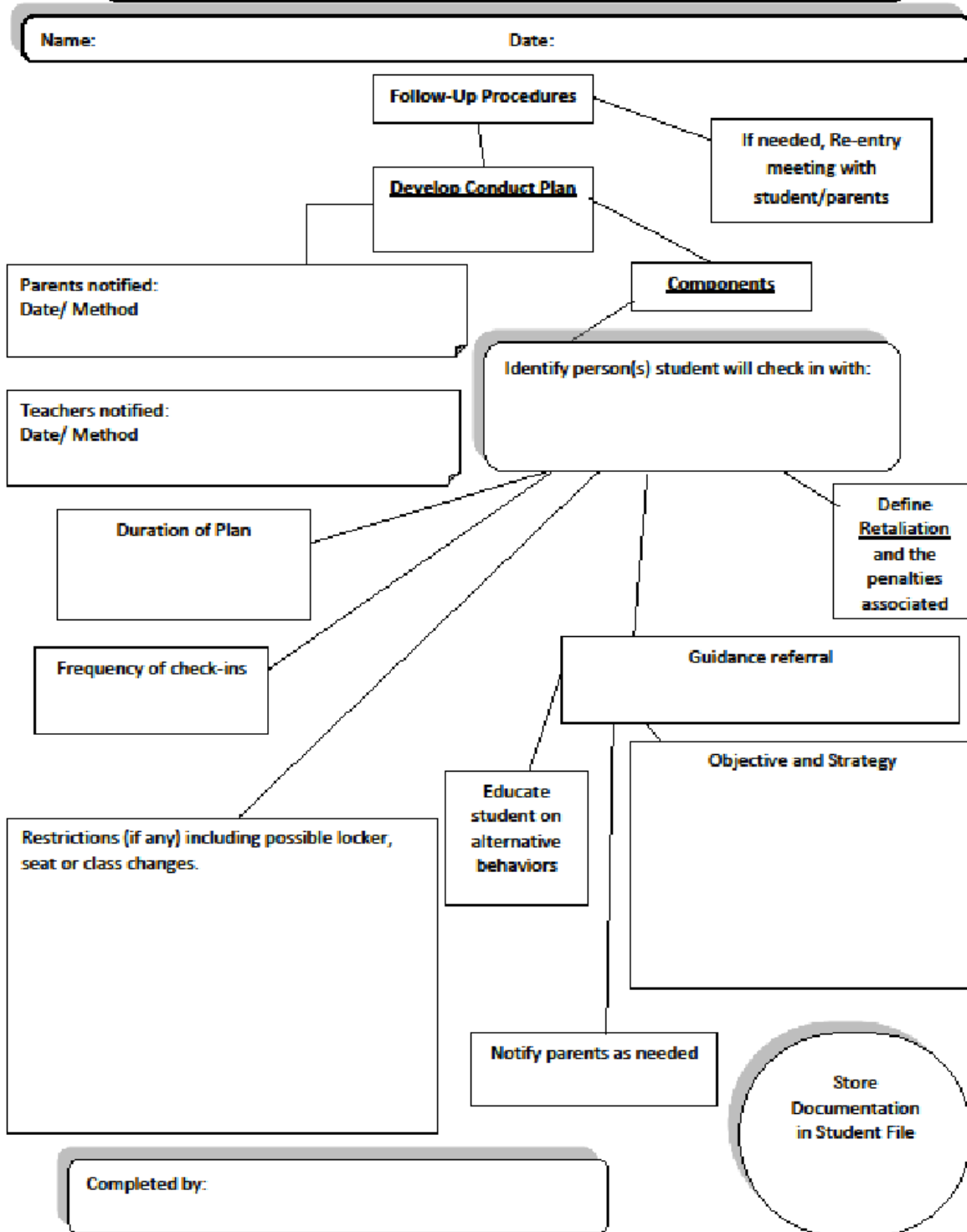
# Norton Public Schools Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Flowchart



**Norton Public Schools Bullying/Harassment/intimidation  
Target/Victim Follow-Up Procedures Flowchart**



## Norton Public Schools Bullying/Harassment/intimidation Aggressor Follow-Up Procedures Flowchart





## **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, counselor, or administrator. Every staff member is mandated to report harassment.
- 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.

More details can be found below; please read for more information.

#### **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. 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. 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.

##### **A. APPLICATION**

This Policy 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.

**B. 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.

**C. 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.

**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. 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
5. 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.

**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 - including recruiting, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay, benefits and selection for training, travel, or school-related social events.

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, 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, and,
- 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.

#### Harassment 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 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.

#### 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 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.

#### **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.

**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. **See Glossary of Terms**

**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.

**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**

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a student may 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.

##### 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" (IDEIA-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.

#### **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 sexual 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 your supervisor or to the Superintendent of Schools 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 Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 994-6000, <http://www.mass.gov/mcad> or United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, John F. Kennedy Federal Bldg, Room 475, Government Center, Boston, MA 02203 (617) 565-3200 or 800-669-4000, <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 if 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)

[SC 12/11/2000]

Revised 4/10/2006

Revised 3/2008

File: IJNDE

## **Norton Public Schools**

### **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.

#### Grades 6-8

May be provided a district email account

With permission and guidance from a faculty member, students may publish their own work on the Internet, including their first name, last initial and picture, their grade level/team, and the name of their school provided that their parent or guardian has given permission by signing the Internet Publishing Permission and Release Form for Students.

#### Grades 9-12

May be provided a district email account

Students may publish their own work on the Internet including their full name and picture provided that their parent or guardian has given permission by signing the Internet Publishing Permission and Release Form for Students. Students are responsible for knowing what their parent permission is and to abide by that permission.

\*Any student who has reached the age of majority (18) does not need parental permission.

Adopted: February 23, 2015

## Norton Public Schools Internet Publishing Permission and Release Form for Students

The Norton Public Schools utilize the latest technologies to support student learning needs. As part of the many technology applications integrated across the curriculum, we may publish a variety of teacher and student projects on the Internet. Examples of student work that might be published on the World Wide Web include but are not limited to: a story, a blog post, a photograph of a project or artwork, a podcast, a science or research project, a collaborative project completed with other students who live locally or internationally, as well as photographs of students at work. We think this is an enriching, engaging opportunity for students as others around the world with Internet access will be able to view their work. Should your child's work or photograph be chosen for publication, your signature below acknowledges permission for such work to be published.

Elementary students will have only their first name, last initial and the name of the school included with any work or photographs published on the Internet.

Middle school will have only their first name, last initial, their grade level / team, and the name of the school included with any work or photographs published on the Internet.

High school students may publish their own work on the Internet including their full name and picture and the name of their school/class.

We need your permission to publish your child's work. If at any time you would like to revoke your permission, please send a written letter to the school as notification that your child's work and photograph can no longer be published on the Internet.



## **NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD) POLICY** File: IIBJ-A (Replaces: IIBJ)

### **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, Chromebook and e-readers.

### **Internet**

When using personal devices on school grounds for educational purposes, only the WiFi 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 K12 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.

## FACE MASKS

The Norton School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face mask that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- in incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes;
- while outside.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face masks. However, the district will supply disposable face masks for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 -  
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks -  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! –  
<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020

ADOPTED: August 27, 2020