

Rochester Memorial School

2023-2024
Student Handbook



Our Mission:

To inspire all students to think, to learn and to care.

Our School Rules:

Take CARE of Yourself
Take CARE of Others
Take CARE of Our School Environment

16 Pine Street, Rochester, MA 02770 508-763-2049

August 2023

Dear Rochester Memorial School Families,

We like to welcome everyone to a new school year! As a school, we are very excited to be able to share each day with your child. Our goal is to create and maintain a positive, inclusive and safe learning environment that values each student.

The Rochester Memorial School Handbook has been designed to share information regarding school policies, and general school information. We hope that you will find the information contained in this handbook to be a useful reference throughout the school year.

We look forward to this new school year and continuing to work with each family. Working together is important and is essential in supporting all students.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Heidi Letendre
Interim Principal

Charles West
Assistant Principal

Rochester Memorial School Administrative Staff

Heidi Letendre - Interim Principal
Charles West - Assistant Principal
Ellen Murphy - School Nurse
Alison Guard - Principal Secretary
Kim Amato - Special Education Secretary

Central Office Administration

Michael S. Nelson - Superintendent of Schools
Sharlene Fedorowicz – Asst. Supt. of Teaching & Learning
Howard Barber – Asst. Supt. of Finance and Operations
Kris Lincoln - Interim Director of Student Services
Eugene Jones - District Facilities Director
Jill Henesey – Food Service Director
Doreen Lopes – Early Childhood Coordinator
Susana Cunningham – Human Resources Coordinator
Central Office Phone (508) 758 - 2772

Rochester Memorial School Committee Members

Sharon Hartley, Chairperson
Katherine Duggan, Vice-Chairperson
Jason Chisholm
Anne Fernandes
Robin M. Rounseville

Rochester Memorial School Staff
2023-2024

School Administrative Assistant:

Ms. Guard

Special Education Administrative Assistant:

Mrs. Amato

Project Grow, Preschool:

Ms. Pacheco

Ms. Garcia - Speech-Language Pathologist - Project GROW

Kindergarten:

Mrs. Baronas

Ms. Derderian

Mrs. St. Yves

Mrs. Weigel

Grade 1:

Mrs. Beson

Mrs. Lenahan

Mrs. Nelson

Mrs. Staier

Ms. Dederian

Grade 2:

Mrs. Alves

Mrs. Bradley

Mrs. Hedblom

Mrs. Realini

Mrs. Russo

Grade 3:

Mrs. Banno

Ms. Higgins

Ms. Hunter

Mrs. Koepfel

Grade 4:

Mrs. Cabral

Mrs. Cyr

Ms. Griffin

Ms. Wollenhaupt

Grade 5:

Ms. Campbell
Mrs. Rogers
Ms. Houlihan
Ms. Harper
Mr. Forns

Grade 6:

Mr. Cote
Mrs. Forns
Ms. Teves
Mrs. Audette
Ms. Coelho

Specialists Areas:

Mrs. Audette - Music
Mrs. Guertin - Health
Mrs. Hemenway - Art
Mrs. Laprise - Band
Mrs. Sollauer - Media Center
Mr. Woodward - Physical Education

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Specialist)

Mr. Huckabee

Academic Interventionist:

Mrs. Mazzuca

Reading Specialists:

Mrs. Johnson
Mrs. McIlmail

School Social Workers:

Mrs. Cruz
Mrs. Pacheco

English Language Learner Teacher:

Mrs. Keogh

School Psychologist:

Mrs. St. Thomas

Speech Pathologists:

Mrs. Lambert-Matos
Mrs. Bejtlich

Physical Therapist:

Mrs. Hasbrouk

Occupational Therapist:

Ms. Souza

Paraprofessionals:

Mrs. Henrie

Mrs. Bateman

Mrs. Parker

Mrs. Moniz

Mrs. Sousa

Mrs. Ovia

Mrs. Arruda

Mrs. Harding

Mrs. Hunter

Mrs. Cisco

Mrs. Miranda

Mrs. Sharp

Mrs. Mills

School Nurse:

Mrs. Murphy

Maintenance Supervisor:

Mr. Leonardo

Technology Support:

Mr. Ashley

Mrs. Bednarczyk

Mr. Houde

Mr. Simmons

Ms. Wheeler

Cafeteria Staff:

Mrs. Gonet - Head Cook

Mrs. L'Heureux - Asst. Cook

Mrs. Randall

Mrs. Pimentel

Lunch/Recess Monitors:

Mrs. Freitas

Mrs. Furtado

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours: 8:40 AM - 3:00 PM

Transportation Information

Bus Transportation

Bus routes for the Old Rochester Regional School District and Massachusetts School Superintendency Union #55 for the Towns of Marion, Mattapoisett, and Rochester are established yearly. Eight buses transport our students. Routes are slightly modified each fall to accommodate new membership. Any questions regarding bus routes and/or stops that affect your child should be addressed to the District's transportation provider, **Amaral Bus Company Inc.** Ms. Cheryl Sweeney, Dispatch Manager at amaralbustritown@gmail.com or Phone: (508) 324-0551. Press 1 (for Amaral Bus Co). Then press 2 (for Tri-Town District).

At this time, changes in student transportation plans are strongly discouraged. Please Contact the main office with any questions or requests. For Rochester Routes, please use the following link.

<https://www.oldrochester.org/families-students/transportation>

Buses

The following safety precautions will be followed on school buses:

- Windows on buses will be kept open to circulate fresh air;
- Seating arrangements will account for students with disabilities who require close contact with adults.
- Routine cleaning of buses will be implemented.

There will be 8 Rochester bus routes this year and buses will continue to use the front loop of the building. Students will be encouraged to safely disembark from the bus.

Arrival

Upon entering the building, students will proceed directly to their classrooms.

Students will disembark in the following manner:

- Kindergarten and First Grade Teachers/Staff will gather their students from each bus.
- Kindergarten will enter the building through the K/Project Grow entrance and First Grade will enter through the middle entrance.
- Grade levels 2-6 will disembark their buses one grade level at a time as directed by their bus driver. Grade levels will disembark beginning with Grade 2; and then the other grades will respectively follow.
- Grades 2 will enter through the middle doors and will proceed down the hallway between the media center and the courtyard.
- Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6 will enter through the main entrance and will proceed directly to their individual classrooms.

Departure

Students will be dismissed following the afternoon announcements. Students will depart through the same doors they entered the building in the morning.

1. Students will be dismissed by grade level beginning with Grade 6 and progressing to Kindergarten.
2. Kindergarten and First Grade Teachers/Staff will escort their students to each bus.
3. Grades 2-6 teachers/staff will escort their students to the exits of the building.
4. Once all buses are fully loaded, they will be allowed to depart.

Parent/Guardian Drop-Off & Pick-Up

In an effort to facilitate the safest and smoothest transition for our students who are not riding the bus at the beginning and end of the day, we ask that you please adhere to the following safety precautions.

- Parents/Guardians may park their vehicle and walk their child to their respective grade level drop off location. (K-2 drop off/pick up @ main entrance with black bollards, 3-6 drop off/pick up @ door near the structure)
- Please use the crosswalks at all times when walking your student(s) to and from your vehicle
- Staff will be stationed at the two rear entrances to support students' transition into the building.
- Please do not pull around and pass other parent/guardian vehicles during this process. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

Arrival (Drop Off)

- Parents/Guardians will drop-off their students in the back loop starting at 8:35 AM.
- Students in Grades K-2 will be dropped off and enter the building through the main rear entrance.
- Students in Grades K&1 will safely line up at a designated area outside or inside weather permitting. Once all students have arrived a staff member will walk them to their classrooms.
- Students in Grades 2 will go directly to their classrooms.
- Students in Grade 3-6 will be dropped off and enter the building through the rear entrance of the C Wing near the playground structure. These students will go directly to their classrooms.
- In order to ensure that other cars may pull in behind, parents/guardians will be encouraged to pull their vehicles all the way up to the end of the building.

Departure (Pick Up)

- Parents/Guardians will pick their students up in the back loop beginning at 2:55 PM.
- Parents/Guardians may park their vehicle and meet their child at their designated grade level location.

- Students in Grades K-2 will be picked up at the main rear entrance.
- Students in Grade 3-6 will be picked up at the rear entrance of the C Wing.
- As cars depart, please continue to pull your vehicle forward.
- Please refrain from pulling around and passing other vehicles during this process.
- Please stay in your car while your children are loading and please avoid allowing them to board on the passenger side of your vehicle.

Student Emergency Information or Status

Parent Notification to RMS

To ensure student safety, changes in family situations, addresses, or cell and telephone numbers **must be** reported to the school office **immediately**. It is important that all our records are up to date. Please fill out the Student Information Update Form, included in your Power School profile online documents immediately. This form serves as an annual ‘affidavit’, attesting to a student’s residency in our town. Families moving from the town should notify the school office at least three days before their departure so transfer materials can be prepared. A *release of information* form must be received from the “new” school before any records will be forwarded.

Attendance

School attendance is compulsory. Attendance law states that:

- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts G.L. c. 76 sect. 1 requires that every child, with certain exceptions, between ages established by the state board of education, must attend a public day school or some other approved school, during the time when public schools are in session.
- Under G.L. c. 76, sect. 1, necessary absences by a student may not exceed 7 full-day or 14 half-day sessions in any 6-month period.
- Under G.L. c. 76, sect. 1, a pupil who is not present during at least half a session must be marked and counted as absent on the school register.

All Massachusetts schools are accountable for student achievement. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) mandates particular indicators of success for all schools with one being “chronic absenteeism. “All students are considered “chronically absent” if they miss 10% of the school year. Full days of attendance are essential to the learning process. If a child is to be out of school, parents/guardians should call the nurse’s office at **508-763-2647** before 9:00am on the morning of the absence. Please provide the following information in the message that you leave on the answering machine: **student’s name, teacher, and reason for absence**. If a call is not received and a student is absent, the School Nurse uses the *Blackboard Connect*

messaging system to contact parents/guardians at home or work. **After any absence, students should present a parent’s note indicating the reason for the absence to the School Nurse.**

Absences are “excused” for only the following reasons:

- Bereavement
- Hospitalization
- School-sponsored trip
- Documented court or legal commitment
- Obligatory religious holidays
- Illness substantiated by a note (Five days or more of continuous absence for medical reasons must be corroborated by a physician’s note).
- weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Excessive absenteeism can occur because families take vacations during school time. This is strongly discouraged. Teachers will not provide assignments prior to vacations taken during school time. Upon students return, missed assignments will be made up as soon as possible. Missed assignments are factored into students’ grades.

When Absences Exceed Three or More Days

On the third day of consecutive absence or tardiness, the school nurse or a designee of the principal will call the student’s home. Each Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student’s parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student’s parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

On the eighth day of an unexcused absence, the school attendance officer will be notified and a complaint for Failure to Cause School Attendance pursuant to *G.L. c. 76, sect. 2* may be filed in Wareham District Court.

If the students’ absences or tardiness occur on a regular basis and impede their academic progress, the school, as a mandated reporter, must consider filing a Child Requiring Assistance (CRS) report. Depending on circumstances, the school district may choose to file a 51A with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

Tardiness

Tardiness negatively impacts the educational progress of all students. Therefore, the above policy will also be followed for excessive tardiness.

Dismissals

All dismissal policies are developed with students' learning and safety in mind. Policies are developed with input from the Rochester School Committee and town safety officials.

Dismissals During the School Day

No child will be dismissed from school during the day unless an authorized adult comes to the office to dismiss the student. This applies to daily, or occasional, pickup arrangements. Students being dismissed before the end of the school day must bring a note to the homeroom teacher that morning. Students will be called from class *when the parent/guardian arrives*.

Any Change in Dismissal Routine

To ensure each child's safety, a note from a child's parent/guardian must be provided before a child is allowed to leave school with any adult other than a parent or if the student is normally transported by bus. There must be a note for each change to a child's routine. Bus changes are allowed for childcare purposes only, not for play or party dates. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must arrange with the office prior to a bus switch.

Riding Bicycles to School

Students may ride their bicycles to school provided that they wear a helmet (as required under state law) and obey all traffic regulations. **A blanket permission note is required before students begin riding to and from school.** Bikes must not be ridden on sidewalks just outside school where children and adults are walking. Students not following safety rules may have their riding privileges revoked. A bike rack is available in front of the cafeteria. Students are encouraged to lock their bicycles.

School Breakfast & Lunch - Food Service

Full student breakfast and lunches are available at no cost. A la carte menu choices are available at a variety of prices. *Free and Reduced Lunch Assistance* forms are sent to all families electronically and are also posted to the RMS webpage. Paper applications may be sent home at the start of the school year if a family requires a paper version and are also available at the school office. Applications are accepted throughout the year.

Lunch Protocol

Students will come to the cafeteria line. The child's meal choice (hot or cold) is placed on the counter, and the student takes their meal package and proceeds to the cashier. Lunch monitors clean and sanitize desks after children leave prior to the next group entering.

Lunch Menus

[Lunch menus](#) will be posted on [Old Rochester Regional School District MSU #55 - School Nutrition and Fitness and Nutrition Website](#)

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has decided to extend free school meals for all students through the 2022-2023 school year! This means that breakfast and lunch will continue to be served at no cost to all students. However, students choosing only milk is not part of the free program and will be charged. A la cart items are not part of the free meal and students will be charged for any a la cart item they chose. Families that need assistance should complete a Free and Reduced Lunch Application immediately. Each application can be downloaded and emailed to the Food and Nutrition Director or by clicking the link and applying online. Online applications will be processed much faster than paper applications. The application for Free and Reduced Lunch can be found on the District website - [LINK TO: District Food & Nutrition Website](#). Even though lunches are free, we still need to maintain our accounts in good standing with a debit balance. If students want an extra milk or snack, there will be a charge for those items and the student's account will be used. There are settings to automatically replenish your account once the balance reaches a minimum amount. Here is a link to Titan: <https://family.titank12.com/>

Bringing Lunch from Home

If you choose to have your child bring lunch from home each day, to keep it cold, we recommend (1) bringing food in an insulated lunch bag with a frozen gel pack or frozen juice box; (2) freezing the sandwiches overnight (will thaw by lunchtime but keep cold until then); (3) packing the foods in a cooler with ice or another cold source.

Please note the District Life Threatening Allergy Policy Below:

[Life Threatening Allergy Information](#)

School Safety and School Visits

All visitors and volunteers are required to have a valid driver's license or Massachusetts issued identification card to be scanned-in upon entering the building *for any reason*; office staff will provide badges to wear once the ID is scanned into our system and each visitor is approved to enter. This includes stops at the Nurse's station. All visitors who do not have a valid driver's license or Massachusetts issued ID card will not be allowed to enter the school during operating hours.

Parents or guests wishing to visit a particular class are asked to plan with the teacher or the principal at least one day in advance. Teachers will always welcome an extra pair of hands; we encourage you to become an active part of our volunteer staff. Massachusetts State Law requires that all regular classroom volunteers, lunchroom visitors and field trip chaperones have a Criminal Record (CORI) check. These forms must be completed in the school office before your first volunteer visit. Visitors are

asked to park in the lot at the rear entrance of the

school. Do not park in the driveway or on the road in front of the school. Cars parked on either side of Pine Street during school hours will be ticketed.

Student Dress

School is a place where student learning is a priority. A student's attire may influence the student's attitude as well as how much the student learns. Student dress, therefore, is expected to be in good taste, appropriate for the weather and for academic work. It is not our purpose to dictate specific dress, but rather to ensure that our students are dressed in such a way as to contribute to their success and help generate a positive learning environment throughout our school. Students are not to be attired in clothing that compromises safety or modesty or is disruptive to the educational process.

In order to assist parents in planning for their student's school apparel, the following guidelines are presented. Students are prohibited from wearing any clothing, including masks, that contain offensive or obscene symbols, slogans or words that degrade any gender, cultural, religious, or ethnic values, and clothing that contains language or symbols oriented toward violence, drugs, or alcohol. The administration reserves the right to determine appropriateness of clothing consistent with these guidelines. A student whose clothing is determined inappropriate for school will be required to arrange for other, more appropriate, clothing to be provided.

All coats, boots, sweaters, sweatshirts, backpacks, lunchboxes and hats should be clearly marked with students' names. For those of you who have seen our Lost and Found area, you know that this can be a problem. Take the time to label! This will allow items to be returned easily if lost, or avoid confusion when two items are similar. Several cases of lost clothing were donated to charity during the last school year.

Recess

All students will have outdoor recess. Recess is held indoors only in very inclement weather. Please be sure that your child is properly dressed. Decorative footwear and flip-flops can create a safety issue when students play at recess. Therefore, flip-flops or any other type of opened-toe shoes are not to be worn to school. We strongly recommend sneakers for all students.

Student Valuables

It is strongly recommended that students do not bring large sums of money, cell phones, hand-held video games, toys or stuffed animals to school.

Inclement Weather: Cancellations and Delays

Please be attentive to our telephone messaging system for news of school cancellations or delays. During stormy weather the District may call school for an entire day, or for a one to two hour delayed opening. If bad weather develops during the school day, afternoon classes or special programs and after-school activities may be canceled. It is important that families have plans in place for dealing with these possibilities. We utilize the “BlackBoard” communication program that is capable of contacting all RMS families within a five to ten-minute window. As soon as the Superintendent has determined a delay, closing, or early dismissal, we will send out a “BlackBoard” call. As a result of all district schools utilizing the BlackBoard system, storm delays and closings may not be broadcast on local television stations. We ask that you not call the school office or the police station.

The dispatcher reports they receive many calls which interfere with their ability to handle actual emergencies. If the decision is made to close school early or cancel after-school activities, due to inclement weather, an attempt will be made to contact parents, using all emergency contact numbers within the “BlackBoard” system. In the event of a non-weather emergency, we will contact all families using the same system.

Telephone Calls

Responsibility is an important attribute for all students. No school telephone in any office may be used by students. If students have forgotten books, classwork, or musical instruments, classroom teacher discretion will determine whether a call can be made via the classroom telephone. Teachers’ classroom phones are capable of local calling only. In cases of illness or emergency, calls will be made by the school nurse, an administrator, guidance counselor or personnel in the main office. Students will not be called to the phone for any reason. Messages will be taken in cases of illness and emergency.

Cell phones/Smart Watches

A student may carry or keep a cell phone in their backpack if authorized by the school office. The phone must be shut off and kept in the child’s locker/backpack and may be used only for emergency or unusual circumstances as agreed by parents/guardians and administration. The phone and/or electronic watch may not be used to receive or send messages anytime during school hours or on school buses. Student phones/watches used to make, or receive, unauthorized calls during school hours, or on a bus, will be confiscated by the school administration or the bus driver.

Students with Smartwatches or the like, may wear them in school, but they are not to be used for anything other than telling time during the school day or during school sponsored activities without parents/guardians being present. In the event that a student uses the watch for other purposes, it will be confiscated and held in the front office until the end of the day.

Homework and Independent Reading

The School Committee has established homework guidelines that all teachers follow. Your child's teacher will establish homework routines appropriate to the student's grade level. The School Committee policy can be acquired through the main office at the school. We ask all family members to become "Reading Partners" with our students. Research shows the more children read, the better readers they become. We encourage all students to read independently each night for 20–30 minutes before bed. In some classrooms, Student Reading Logs are sent home for students and/or parents to initial.

Photographs of School Activities for Local Papers

Opt-Out Procedure for Parents Who Do NOT Want Their Child's Picture to Appear
As part of our public relations efforts, local newspapers are invited to photograph many school programs and events. Students are often included in these photos. As a parent, you have the right to request that no picture of your child is used in this way. You must make this request in writing by completing a FERPA Privacy Form and returning it to the Principal before September 3rd. If no letter is on file, we assume parental permission is granted for photographs to appear in local newspapers or on our school website

Parent Guardian Involvement & Concerns

1. Being actively involved in your child's school is helpful to both your child and the school community. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meets for an hour once a month in the PTO Office at RMS.
2. School Council - In June of 1993, the Massachusetts State Legislature passed and Governor Weld signed into law The Education Reform Act of 1993. Section 59C of Chapter 71 of the Education Reform Act of 1993 calls for the establishment of a School Council at each elementary, secondary, and vocational school in the Commonwealth. The school council provision of the act is intended to enhance parent and community participation in the school. The PTO, by law, is responsible for conducting the election of all parent representatives to the School Council. The nomination and election process is conducted each September and parent volunteers are needed to be a part of our School Council. Representation from primary and intermediate grade students' families, as well as special education families (if available), staff members and the community sit on this advisory team. Meetings are typically one afternoon per month.
3. The Rochester School Committee sets its meeting schedule at the start of the school year. These meetings are typically on the first Thursday evening of the month. Meetings are held at the Rochester Memorial School and are televised.

Constructive criticism of our school is welcomed on the assumption that it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to equip the school to perform its tasks more effectively. Complaints are resolved most expeditiously if they are first taken to the staff member or administrator immediately in charge of the area in which a problem arises, then through successive administrative levels to the Principal, Superintendent, and subsequently to the School Committee, if necessary.

Anonymous letters serve no positive purpose when trying to resolve problems and will not be given the same weight as an identified correspondence. The School Committee has adopted a policy to be followed when a parent/guardian has a concern that has not been satisfactorily addressed. A copy of that policy is available at the school office.

Mrs. Letendre, Interim Principal, is available to all RMS families each month before PTO or School Committee meetings and at other times during the school day by appointment. Please call the school office or contact the principal directly via email: heidiletendre@oldrochester.org.

All teachers are accessible via the school's e-mail carrier as well. Go to our school website, <https://rms.oldrochester.org/> to access a list of staff/teacher email addresses.

First Aid/Emergencies

If a sudden illness or an accident occurs at school, the school nurse will administer first aid and immediately notify parents. Parents are responsible for transporting the student home in the event of illness or injury. If a serious illness or accident (life-threatening accident) occurs at school, the Rochester EMS will be called for transport to the hospital.

Health Information

Health Records

Student health records are kept in a locked file in the nurse's office. It is the parents' responsibility to keep the nurse informed of new medical information. Students are required to have physical examinations in grades 3 and 6.

Vision/hearing screenings and height/weight measurements are done yearly. Parents are notified only if the results are not within normal limits. Postural screening is done only for students in grade 5. Screening for head lice is done as needed.

Dispensing Medications

Children are not permitted to carry medications on the bus or in the school building. A signed order from a physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant is

required to administer any prescription medications in school, as required by Massachusetts General Law. Parental permission is also required. A Medication Protocol form that covers non-prescription medications is included in this packet. Special arrangements for medication administration during field trips must be made with the school nurse. Medications will be given by a parent or by a school representative who has permission from the parent. Children will be allowed to self-administer inhalers on field trips only, with permission of the school nurse and when parental permission is on file at the nurse's office.

Additional Services Available

Rochester Memorial School offers all students General Education support and accommodations including:

- Title I Services
- Social Work/Counseling Services
- Availability of the School Psychologist
- Reading Specialist Support
- STEM Specialist
- Academic Interventionist
- Others as outlined in the Rochester Memorial School Curriculum Accommodation Plan.
- Rochester Memorial School provides many Special Education services to students (who are eligible) including:
 - Inclusive support in regular classrooms
 - Pull-out instruction when warranted
 - Speech and Language therapies
 - Occupational and physical therapies
 - School Social worker small group/individual support

Health and Guidance Curricula

District Health and Guidance Curricula have been implemented across all grade levels at RMS. There are nine general topics covered with the specific content tailored to the developmental needs of our differing age groups. The topics are as follows:

Growth & Development

Students will learn the basic characteristics of physical growth and development, including body functions and systems throughout the life cycle, and will acquire skills to promote and maintain positive growth and development (At the fifth-grade level, students will have an introduction to the human reproductive system. A parent letter will be sent out prior to the presentation).

Nutrition Students will gain the knowledge and skills to select a diet that supports health and reduces the risk of illness and future chronic diseases.

Social & Emotional Health Students will acquire knowledge about emotions and physical health, the management of emotions, personality and character development, and social awareness; and will learn skills to promote self-acceptance, make decisions, and cope with stress, including suicide prevention.

Family Life Students will gain knowledge about the significance of the family on individuals and society, and will learn skills to support the family, balance work and family life, be an effective parent, and nurture the development of children.

Interpersonal Relationships Students will learn that relationships with others are an integral part of the human life experience and the factors that contribute to healthy interpersonal relationships, and will acquire skills to enhance and make many of these relationships more fulfilling through commitment and communication.

Disease Prevention & Controls Students will learn the signs, symptoms, and treatment of chronic and communicable diseases, and will gain skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance.

Safety & Injury Prevention Students will gain the knowledge and skills to administer first aid and carry out emergency procedures, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, will avoid, recognize, and report verbal, physical, and emotional abuse situations, and will assess the factors that contribute to intentional and unintentional injury, including motor vehicle accidents, fire safety, and weapons safety.

Violence Prevention Students will learn how their actions affect others, will understand the power that positive character traits can have in violence prevention, will gain skills to report incidents of violence and hurtful behavior to adults in the school and community, will avoid engaging in violence, and identify constructive alternatives to violence, including how to discourage others from engaging in violence. If parents/guardians wish their children to be exempt from any portion of the Health Curriculum, a written request should be addressed to the school principal.

General Student Information

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Testing

Once during the school year, students in grade 5 participate in the Science Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Test. Also, once a year all students in grades 3-6 will participate in the English Language Arts & Mathematics Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests. Testing during the 2022-2023 school year will take place at the following times:

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 STE (computer-based tests) | |
| ELA Testing Window: | March 25–April 26 |
| Math Testing Window: | April 23–May 24 |
| Science Testing Window: | April 23–May 24 |

It is highly recommended that all students must be present during MCAS testing.

Student Records

The privacy of student records is guaranteed. Only parents/guardians and appropriate school personnel are allowed access to the information in a student's record. Specific written consent provided by the parent or legal guardian is necessary for any other examination. A student transcript, which includes name, address, and grades, is kept for at least sixty years. However, the student's temporary record, containing standardized test scores, evaluations by teachers, and Special Education records are given to the student upon graduation or destroyed within five years after the student leaves the school system. In accordance with the student record regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Education, parents have the right to inspect a student's record. Records are made available within two (2) working days of a request being made. Copies of any part of the record may be requested and a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating these materials. It has been our practice to make any student records easily accessible to parents.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has adopted procedures for non-custodial parents who wish to receive separate copies of student records or school notices. Information is available in the school office.

Report Cards and Parent Conferences

It shall be the duty of each teacher at the end of each term or at the end of any period of time designated by the Superintendent, to estimate and to record the progress of students. The report card is an effective means of communicating an individual student's progress in relation to the curriculum and the student's own mastery of skills and social development. In the elementary grades, the written record is a standards-based report that indicates a student's progress.

Rochester Memorial School operates on a three-term grading cycle.

| Term | Period Covered | Number of Days | Marks Close | Report Cards Issued |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>1st</u> | Aug. 30 - Nov. 29 | 60 days | November 29, 2023 | Friday, Dec. 8, 2023 |
| <u>2nd</u> | Nov. 30 - Mar. 6 | 58 days | March 6, 2024 | Friday, March 15, 2024 |
| <u>3rd</u> | Mar. 7 - June 10 | 60 days | June 6, 2024 | Monday, June 10, 2024 Day 180 |

Regular communication between school and home is important if we are to be successful. Conferences between parents and teachers are scheduled once during the school year, but if questions about your child's progress should arise in any curricular area, initiate a conversation with teachers at any time.

Promotion/Retention of Students

It is expected that students' progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions are made only when it is in the best educational interest of the student.

Student Enrichment:

RMS offers various ways for students to enrich their academic learning. Below are some examples:

- Student Ambassadors with 5th & 6th grade representatives and officers
- Project 351 Program
- Annual Talent Show
- Science Fair
- Student vs. Staff Basketball Game
- 4th Grade Chorus: Students participate in a music-based production that is presented in January.
- 5th and 6th Grade Chorus: Groups meet once a week during school, several performances each year including the *FORM* concert which showcases all choruses in the district.
- 4th Grade Band: Students select an instrument for in-school instrumental instruction. In January, students come together as a beginner band.
- 5th and 6th Grade Band: Weekly instrumental instruction continues and the students meet as a band once a week.
- Jazz Band: Auditions are held in the fall and the band meets before school once a week.
- After School Activities: There are three enrichment/athletic sessions each year: one in the fall; two sessions in the spring. Each session lasts 8 weeks and offers a variety of elective programs. Brochures are sent home with students.

Field Trips

During the year, field trips may be scheduled at each grade level. A student's behavior while on these trips will reflect upon the student's school. Misconduct will not be tolerated. A permission slip must be signed by one of the student's parents or guardians before a student can participate in the field trip. The form must be returned to the teacher-in-charge prior to the trip. All school rules apply to field trips. Any child may be denied the privilege of going on a field trip based on poor academic performance or inappropriate behavior.

Internet Use Policy

An Internet user agreement is given to students at the beginning of their elementary experience. Students and parents sign and return the agreement and it is kept on file.

General Statement and School Rules:

Rochester Memorial School emphasizes a positive, community-based sense of responsibility and respect throughout the school day. Students learn what is expected of them through the consistent modeling of the adults around them. Students, teachers, administrators and parents all work together to maintain a safe, orderly school environment where everyone can learn and grow.

Students are expected to follow the school-wide rules that follow. These rules apply at all times, in all areas of the school.

- **Take CARE of Yourself**
- **Take CARE of Others**
- **Take CARE of Our School Environment**
- **Everyone C...A...R...E...S!**

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| COOPERATION: | We work, learn and solve problems together, with our friends and teachers. |
| ASSERTION: | We assert ourselves appropriately and respectfully. |
| RESPONSIBILITY: | We make good choices about our behavior and our learning. We respect one another and ourselves throughout the day. |
| EMPATHY: | We think of our friends and their feelings; we care about how others will react to us. |
| SELF CONTROL | We stop to think about what it is we'll say or do - in class, on the bus, on the playground - everywhere. |

Party Invitations:

In keeping with RMS's C.A.R.E.S. philosophy, and as a result of not wanting any child to feel hurt or excluded, we remind parents of the insensitive practice of students bringing party invitations to school. Uninvited students as well as the inviter may be in unnecessarily uncomfortable situations. Please take the time to mail party invitations, or see that they are delivered outside of the school community and school day.

The Rochester Blue Book is a great reference for parents to find addresses. We ask that you not call the office for this information.

School Staff Role in Establishing High Behavioral Expectations:

Teachers and support staff model and reinforce positive behavior and compliance with school-wide rules and values. In addition, teachers implement classroom rules and policies. Generally, these rules are developed with student involvement appropriate to age and social development.

These classroom policies are submitted to the Principal for review. After administrative review, teachers will send home written classroom rules and consequences for family discussion. Students and parents/guardians and teachers will sign the Student Conduct Agreement that will be kept on file in the classroom.

Teachers follow all disciplinary steps outlined in their program on a consistent basis. This may include notes or phone calls home, after school time, individual contracts as deemed appropriate, or other strategies. Teachers and parents who have ongoing concerns about a student's behavior have several sources of support - the School Adjustment counselor, Administration, and the Staff Assistance Team.

Responsive Classroom

Rochester Memorial School utilizes the Responsive Classroom approach in supporting our students in the learning process and throughout the school day. All RMS teachers and administrators have participated in Responsive Classroom training.

Responsive Classroom is a way of teaching and leading that creates a safe, challenging, and joyful classroom and school wide climate for all students. Teachers who use the Responsive Classroom approach understand that all of students' needs—academic, social, emotional, and physical—are important.

Elementary teachers create an environment that responds to all of those needs so that your child can do their best learning. The Responsive Classroom approach develops teachers' competencies in four key areas:

1. Engaging Academics—Teachers create learning tasks that are active, interactive, appropriately challenging, purposeful, and connected to students'

interests.

2. Positive Community—Teachers nurture a sense of belonging, significance, and emotional safety so that students feel comfortable taking risks and working with a variety of peers.
3. Effective Management—Teachers create a calm, orderly environment that promotes autonomy and allows students to focus on learning.
4. Developmentally Responsive Teaching—Teachers use knowledge of child development, along with observations of students, to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment.

Student Fee, Fines and Charges (Approved by the Rochester School Committee)

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. No student will be denied access into any program because of inability to pay these supplementary charges. A school may exact a fee or charge only upon School Committee approval. The schools, however, may:

- ***Charge students enrolled in a certain course for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.***
- ***Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies and equipment.***

Students who are experiencing financial hardship are exempt from paying fees. However, these students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the withholding of report cards until payment is made or denial of participation in extra class activities while the student is enrolled in this District. Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

Replacement Fee Recommendation

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| Chromebook Complete Unit Replacement | \$300.00 |
| Chromebook Screen | \$50.00 |
| 45W Adapter with Power Cord (USB-C Connection) | \$50.00 |

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| Keyboard | \$50.00 |
| iPad Complete Unit | \$325.00 |
| Apple usb-c to lightning cable | \$25.00 |
| Apple usb power adapter (block) | \$25.00 |
| Case | \$50.00 |

Discipline and Behavior Expectations

Bullying

In the spring of 2010 the legislature and governor enacted an anti-bullying law that impacts all schools in Massachusetts. Bullying is defined as a type of violence that occurs when someone uses their power unfairly and repeatedly to hurt someone else. The law recognizes bullying as any repeated word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or things. All staff members will receive training during this year that will better equip them to deal with students' needs in this area. We recognize each student for their unique qualities, attributes, and characteristics. We embrace the differences among all students and will continue to foster an environment of acceptance with an appreciation for those differences.

Discrimination:

The Rochester School District adheres to the following Anti-Racism Resolution:

WHEREAS, as schools have the responsibility to equip students with their civil right of obtaining a free and appropriate public education, it is the responsibility of each school to ensure we create a welcoming community for ALL students.

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility that every district provides to all district staff, including:

School Committee members annual professional development on diversity, anti-racism, equity and inclusion; WHEREAS, every district will commit to recruiting and retaining a diverse and culturally responsive teaching workforce.

WHEREAS, every district will examine their policies for institutional and systemic racialized practices and implement change with sustainable policies that are evidence based.

WHEREAS, every district will incorporate into their curriculum the history of racial oppression and works by diverse authors and works from diverse perspectives.

WHEREAS, we as school district leaders can no longer remain silent to the issues of racism and hate that continue to impact our public and private institutions.

RESOLVED: that the Rochester School District and all the school districts in the Commonwealth must guarantee that racist practices are eradicated, and diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded and practiced for our students, families, faculty and staff. We must ensure our own school culture and that every district in the Commonwealth is actively anti-racist.

Treating people differently, or interfering with or preventing a person from enjoying the advantages, privileges or courses of study in a public school because of an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability (i.e., protected status). A person may not be subjected to discipline or more severe punishment for wrongdoing, nor denied the same rights as other students, because of their membership in a protected class.

The Rochester School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.

Harassment:

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic or physical conduct on school property or at a school related event, function or activity relating to an individual's action or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability (i.e., protected status), that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the district's programs or activities, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or

offensive educational environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive educational environment.

Retaliation:

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

Hate Crime:

A hate crime is a crime motivated by hatred, bias, or prejudice, or where the victim is targeted or selected for the crime at least in part because of their actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or sex. A hate crime may involve a physical attack, threat of bodily harm, physical

intimidation, or damage to another's property.

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policies

Everyone has the right to feel safe in and out of school. Any form of bullying or cyberbullying is forbidden in any location.

Bullying refers to repeated, intentional acts of physical or mental cruelty or intimidation between two people who are unequal in real or perceived social power.

- Targets of school bullies may be perceived as “different” in either subtle or noticeable ways.
- Bullying is *not* simply “conflict”. The most common type of bullying is verbal or psychological but technological advances in our society mean that the next most common type of bullying is, or soon will be, written in the form of cyber bullying.
- Every reported act of bullying will be investigated, action will be taken where necessary, and parents will be notified. The school can investigate any bullying or cyberbullying that occurs on or off school grounds if it is having an apparent impact on the student's education.
- School disciplinary actions will be taken if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school, disrupts the education of the victim or disrupts the orderly operation of the school.
- Disciplinary actions range from a warning to after school detention, an in or out of school suspension, and may include notifying police.
- Targets must seek help from an adult. Reports of bullying can be made to parents, guardians, principals, teachers, counselors, or any trusted adult. The adult will immediately inform the principal and an investigation will begin. It is important to note that a member of the school staff may be named as the “aggressor” or “perpetrator” in a bullying report. For example, the following staff members (but not limited to) could be named: educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, and advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional.
- Retaliation is prohibited against a person who witnesses and reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or has reliable information about bullying.

School Contacts:

Heidi Letendre, Interim Principal (508)763-2049 ext.2010

heidiletendre@oldrochester.org

Charles West, Assistant Principal ext. 2224

charleswest@oldrochester.org

Sharon Cruz, School Social Worker ext. 2015

sharoncruz@oldrochester.org

Jamie Pacheco, School Social Worker ext.1116

jamiepacheco@oldrochester.org

Video Cameras

The School Committee, after carefully considering the privacy rights of students and drivers and the District's duty to ensure discipline and protect the health, welfare, and safety of staff and students on school transportation vehicles, has authorized the use of video cameras on its transportation vehicles when deemed necessary by school administration.

School Bus Conduct Rules:

1. Treat your bus driver and other passengers with respect and courtesy.
2. Get on and off the bus by moving slowly and safely.
3. Passengers must be seated at all times with their feet on the floor, and facing forward.
4. Conversations should be carried on in a normal tone of voice. Shouting is inappropriate and unsafe.
5. Arms and heads must be kept inside the bus.
6. Windows may be open only by the bus driver or with their permission
7. Aisles must be kept clear at all times.
8. Profane and bullying language is forbidden.
9. Horseplay is unsafe and forbidden.
10. Throwing objects is unsafe and forbidden.

Bus Expectations

The driver of the offending student will report violations of bus rules to the student, the school principal and the student's parents in writing promptly. Violations may result in the loss of bus privileges or application of discipline sanction up to and including suspension.

1st Offense – Warning

2nd Offense – Detention or Assigned Seat at Front of Bus – *This will be strictly enforced in conjunction with changes to our bullying policy*

3rd Offense - bus suspension

Repeated Offenses* - Consideration of permanent exclusion

*Including exclusion from the bus for the balance of the school year.

Complete copies of the Transportation Policy are available upon request and for all new incoming students.

The Rochester School District has established rules and policies regarding bus discipline. Bus drivers report violations of rules to administration. Parents receive a written notice of the incident and its consequences. School buses are equipped with videotape equipment. Taped incidents may be used in the process of dealing with infractions of school bus rules.

Copies of the Rochester School District Bus Policy are available at the RMS office

Behavior Expectations

Expectations for behavior are necessary in order to guarantee that those who do not respect these rights do not interrupt the educational rights and privileges of well-behaved students. Rules are required to ensure students' cooperation and responsible behavior. Self-control and consideration of others are the key components.

Students must behave appropriately and accept the leadership of teachers, school officials and others who have been assigned such responsibilities. Students must also adhere to school regulations on the way to and from school, on school grounds, on school buses, during extracurricular activities, or any time while under the school's supervision. Students may be disciplined for other behavior, which directly or indirectly impairs the educational process or good order of the school.

Due Process/Suspension and Expulsion:

Ordinarily, Teachers, administrators, and other authorized staff will discipline students for inappropriate behavior. Consequences may include verbal warning, "time out", and notification to parents, referral to the principal, and/or detention. More serious cases, such as disrespectful language, stealing, destruction of property, fighting, drug possession and/or abuse, and possession of dangerous objects, will be referred to the administration, who may impose discipline, including suspension and/or expulsion, as provided by law.

Before a student is removed from the school for disciplinary reasons, the student will be provided with notice and a hearing; however, a student may be immediately removed from school if the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process. In such circumstances, the notice and hearing will follow the initial removal from school. Notice and hearing will consist of the following: the designated disciplinarian will give the student and/or parent/guardian oral notice of the charges against the student, and an opportunity to present the student's version of the facts. If the designated disciplinarian thereafter decides to suspend or expel the student, the student will be informed of the length of the suspension or expulsion. The parent will be notified of the hearing and will be permitted to attend.

Sexual Harassment:

We are committed to providing an educational environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form at any level of the school system. Any student or employee found to have condoned or engaged in sexual harassment may, depending upon the extent of the student's participation, be subject to disciplinary sanctions, up to and including suspension, in or out of school, or permanent exclusion from school in the case of a student, and up to and including termination of employment, in the case of an employee.

If a student or employee believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment, whether by a student, a school employee, or any other person who comes on school

property with permission, or that they have witnessed the sexual harassment of another, the student or employee should report the incident promptly to the Principal, the Assistant Principal, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, or any other administrator with whom the student or employee feels comfortable. A complaint of sexual harassment by a student, or by a parent on the student's behalf, may also be made to any counselor or teacher. A counselor or teacher who receives such a complaint will notify the appropriate administrator to initiate an investigation.

It is the policy of the school committee to have all complaints of sexual harassment promptly and fully investigated and to take any steps necessary to remedy the situation. Normally, the Principal/Assistant Principal will conduct the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment or a designee selected by the Principal and will include separate private interviews with the complainant, each person accused of harassment and each of the witnesses, if any. The administrator conducting the investigation will ordinarily document the interview, but those interviewed may also be asked to provide a written statement. All students and employees are expected to cooperate fully with any investigation of sexual harassment. Information provided during an investigation of sexual harassment will be shared with the complainant and the person or persons accused of harassment. Information provided during an investigation of sexual harassment may be shared with the accused, but the accused will be cautioned against reprisals or recriminations or any attempted intimidation or coercion of the complainant or witnesses. At the conclusion of the investigation, the administrator will prepare a report, which will be shared with both the complainant and the person or persons accused of harassment. If the complainant or the accused is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, either may discuss the issue directly with the superintendent.

Special Offenses

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H

| <p>G.L. Chapter 71, §37H</p> | <p>G.L. Chapter 71, §37H ½</p> | <p>G.L. Chapter 71, §37H ¾</p> |
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| <p>Offenses:</p> <p>On school premises or at school-sponsored events or activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possession of a dangerous weapon ● Possession of a controlled substance ● Assault on a member of the educational staff <p>Consequence:</p> | <p>Offenses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A felony charge or felony delinquency complaint against a student. 2. Conviction, adjudication, or admission of guilt with respect to such felony. <p>Consequence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Felony charge or felony | <p>Offenses:</p> <p>Any offense that is not addressed in 37H or 37H ½.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>May not suspend a student from school long-term (i.e. more than 10 days) until other remedies and consequences have been</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exclusion for amount of time up to expulsion; <p>Principal may suspend and not expel as they deems appropriate</p> | <p>delinquency complaint: suspension for a period of time deemed appropriate by principal <i>if</i> the Principal determines the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school.</p> <p>2. Felony or felony delinquency conviction or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony: removal for a period of time up to expulsion (i.e. permanent exclusion) <i>if</i> the principal determines that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school.</p> | <p>considered; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consequences other than suspension may draw from evidence- based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and behavioral interventions and supports. ● No student may be suspended for more than 90 school days in a school year. |
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| <p>Due Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional due process; • Prior notice to student of charge and written notice of right to hearing; • Right to representation at hearing; and to present evidence and witnesses at hearing. | <p>Due Process (for either suspension or expulsion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional due process; • Written notice of the charges and of the reasons before the suspension takes effect; • Principal may determine the appropriate amount of time for suspension; • Written notice of the right to appeal to the superintendent; • Suspension remains in effect pending appeal to the Superintendent. | <p>Due Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except for in-school suspension and emergency removals, prior oral and written notice of the charge to the student, and to the student's parent, and the opportunity for a meeting/hearing with the principal before suspension takes effect. Consult 603 CMR 53:08 for details on notices. • Consult 603 CMR 53:07 for emergency removal process and 603 CMR 53:10 for in-school suspension process • Explicit requirement to |
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| | | <p>translate notice of the charges and the reasons in primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Principal must make and document reasonable efforts to include the parent in meeting/hearing with the student.● Principal must audiotape the hearing if requested by the parent and all those attending the hearing must be informed of the taping.● Following hearing, principal must provide a written decision; and if a long-term suspension imposed, must inform student and parent in writing of the right to appeal to the superintendent and the process to be followed; translate notice of appeal rights in primary language of the home, or other means of communication where appropriate.● Before any out-of-school suspension of a student in preschool or |
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| | | grades K – 3, principal must notify superintendent in writing of the alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. |
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| Appeal from Principal's Decision: | Appeal from Principal's Decision to Suspend or to Expel: | Appeal from Principal's Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline for requesting appeal: written request |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Right to appeal expulsion decision to superintendent ● Timeline for requesting appeal: ten days from date of expulsion ● Right to counsel at hearing ● Superintendent can make factual determinations as well as determine consequences. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline for requesting appeal: no later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension/expulsion ● Superintendent must hold hearing within 3 calendar days of receipt of request and issue a decision within 5 calendar days. ● Superintendent may overturn or alter the decision. <p>A student may appeal a suspension decision and the subsequent expulsion decision (following the conviction, adjudication or admission of guilt) regarding the same offense.</p> | <p>not later than 5 calendar days following effective date of suspension; parent can request extension for up to 7 calendar days, which must be granted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The superintendent must hold hearing within 3 calendar days of the parent's request for a hearing. The student or parent may request up to 7 additional calendar days. If so, the superintendent must allow the extension. The superintendent may have the hearing without the parent if the superintendent has made a good faith effort to include the parent. ● The student has the right to present oral and written testimony, to cross examine witnesses, and to counsel at their expense at the hearing. ● The superintendent must audiotape the hearing and notify hearing participants that the hearing will be taped. ● The superintendent determines the facts and consequences, if any, |
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| | | <p>but cannot impose a consequence greater than the principal decided. A written decision is due within 5 calendar days of the hearing.</p> |
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| <p>Provision of Education Services:</p> <p>Provide every student an opportunity to make <i>academic progress</i> during the period of suspension (whether in-school or out-of-school) or expulsion, to make up assignments, and earn credits missed.</p> <p>A district that suspends or expels a student for <i>more than 10 consecutive days</i> must provide the student and the parent with a <i>list</i> of alternative educational services.</p> <p>See G.L. c. 76, §21 and 603 CMR 53.13 for details, including required notice.</p> | <p>Provision of Education Services: Same</p> | <p>Provision of Education Services: Same</p> |
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| <p>Discipline Collection and Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect and report to the Department data concerning the types and lengths of removals, suspensions, and expulsions, and access to education services. ● Periodically review discipline data by selected student populations; determine extent of disciplinary removals and the impact on such populations; adjust practice as appropriate. ● Department will provide assistance to school(s) if Commissioner identifies school(s) in district that have the highest percentage of | <p>Discipline Collection and Reporting: Same</p> | <p>Discipline Collection and Reporting: Same</p> |
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| <p>suspensions or expulsions in Massachusetts for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a plan to address disparities if Commissioner determines that school or district discipline data reflect significant disparities by race and ethnicity or disabilities. See 603 CMR 53.14 for details. | | |
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Procedure for the Discipline of Students with Disabilities

If a suspension of more than ten days is proposed, or if a shorter series of suspensions would result in more than ten cumulative days out of class, for any student who has an IEP or 504 Plan, the school must convene a TEAM meeting before the expiration of the ten-day period.

At that meeting, the TEAM must first develop or review a behavioral intervention plan, consistent with the functional behavioral assessment of the student, then review the relationship between the student’s disability and the behavior that is the subject of the discipline action. If the TEAM determines that the student’s misconduct is a manifestation of the student’s special needs, or results from an inappropriate special education program/program placement, or from an IEP that was not fully implemented, the long - term suspension or expulsion may not be imposed.

If the TEAM concludes that the misconduct is not related to the student’s special needs, and it does not result from an inappropriate special education program/program placement, or an IEP that was not fully implemented, then the long-term suspension or expulsion may be imposed, following the procedures listed in the law. Among other things the TEAM must offer placement in an interim alternative setting that will...

- (1) enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum,
- (2) enable the student to receive services listed in the last agreed upon IEP, and
- (3) include any services and modifications designed to address the student’s behavior.

The parents/guardians have the right to request an expedited hearing before the

Bureau of Special Appeals (BSEA) to challenge the manifestation determination or the alternative program. If the parents request a hearing, the “stay put” provision of the IDEA entitles the student to remain in the last agreed upon educational placement while the procedures are pending before the BSEA. The right does not apply if the student is charged with possession of a dangerous weapon or drugs. In those circumstances, the school personnel may remove the student to an interim alternative setting without parental consent for up to 45 calendar days. Similarly, if the school convinces the BSEA hearing officer that the student’s continued presence in the current placement poses a danger to that student or to others, the student may be ordered into an interim alternative setting for up to 45 calendar days without parental consent.

Procedural Requirements Applied to Students not yet determined to be Eligible for Special Education:

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

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

2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

3. If the student is found eligible, then the student receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Conflict of Interest Law and Gifts for Teachers:

The Commonwealth’s conflict of interest law, G.L. c. 268A, and the financial disclosure law, G.L.c.268B, restrict gifts and gratuities that school staff may receive. All teachers and school volunteers must be made aware of the content of these laws, specifically sections 3 and 23 of 268A, and section 6 of 268B. Section 3(b) prohibits a public employee from requesting or receiving anything of ‘substantial value’* which is given for or because of an official act or act within the public employee’s official responsibility. Similarly, under section 3(a), no one may give or offer such gifts to public employees.

In addition, G.L.c. 268B, section 6, specifically prohibits public employees or members of their immediate families from soliciting or accepting gifts with an aggregate value of \$100.00 or more in a calendar year. Next, under G.L.c. 268A, section 23(b)(2), public

(school) employees are prohibited from using or attempting to use their position to obtain for themselves or others unwarranted privileges of substantial value that are not properly available to similarly situated individuals. Finally, even if a gift or gratuity is not of substantial value or does not fall within the prohibitions discussed above, G.L.c. 268A, section 23(b)(3) will, in many situations, require public (school) employees to disclose to their appointing authority, the gift and their relationship with the giver.

All school volunteers are required to be aware of the state's general laws and language surrounding gifts.

****Anything worth \$50.00 or more is considered to be "of substantial value" for the purposes of the conflict of interest law.***

The full content of the State Ethics Commission law is available from the school office or online at <http://www.mass.gov>.

OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY UNION #55

135 Marion Road, Mattapoisett, MA 02739

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www.oldrochester.org

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Old Rochester Regional School District and the Massachusetts School Superintendency Union No. 55, Marion, Mattapoisett, and Rochester, Massachusetts are committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all members of the school community. Students and employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender identity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy, homelessness, or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.

The schools are also committed to maintaining a school and work environment that is free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, pregnancy, homelessness, and disability. Harassment includes physical or verbal conduct that is derogatory; this may include jokes, gestures, unsolicited remarks, or other behavior that creates an intimidating or offensive working or learning environment.

A student or employee who has a concern about discrimination or harassment should inform the Principal or the Superintendent of Schools, who will take appropriate steps to attempt to resolve the situation, such as discussion with involved persons, identifying and questioning of witnesses, and other appropriate steps. In most cases, a resolution will be achieved. However, if it is determined that a hearing is warranted, a hearing will be held before the Superintendent of Schools or a person that they may designate.

The goals of the above grievance procedures are to resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner and to ensure compliance with nondiscriminatory practices. Additionally, reprisals or retaliation against any individual who reports on, or files a discrimination or harassment complaint is strictly prohibited.

If you wish to discuss your rights, would like further information, or want to obtain help in filing a

complaint, you may contact the Superintendent of Schools. The telephone number is (508) 758-2772 x1956. Any person having inquiries concerning the School District's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, or Chapter 622 is directed to contact the superintendent of schools, who has been designated by the School District to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, and Chapter 622, or write to:

Office for Civil Rights
John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse
Room 222
Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109

**OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY UNION #55
Marion – Mattapoissett – Rochester, Massachusetts**

August 1, 2023

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.