DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at **6:30 PM**
Charlton Middle School
2 Oxford Road
Charlton, MA 01507

Minutes

I. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at pm
In attendance:

Jeanne Costello, Vice-Chair	Cathleen Carmignani
Maureen Chickering	Jaime Dell'Ovo
Caitlynn Panczyk	Nicole Enberg

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Charlton Middle School Showcase - Principal Dr. Monette

V. Consent Agenda Items

a. Approval of the Warrant
b. Approval of Minutes Regular Meeting – January 8, 2025

A motion by, seconded by Nicole Enberg to approve all consent agenda items was approved unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes	M. Chickering - Yes
J. Dell'Ovo - Yes	C. Carmignani - Yes
C. Panczyk - Yes	N. Enberg - Yes

VI. Communications

Joe DeSanits stated the temporary oil tank at Heritage School will be removed tomorrow, the complications are now fixed. The fuel lines have been reconfigured to go to the old oil tank. The estimated total cost is $2900.00.

VII. Student Representative Report – Anthony Avoglia

- Boys basketball have won 6 out of their last 7 games with only 4 games remaining.
- The Student Council is hosting a dance this Friday.
- Anthony applied to be a member of the Communications Committee for the Student Delegation Assembly he went to a few months ago.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

Fiscal Year 2026 stability will provide the right on-ramp to look ahead to Fiscal Year 2027. Our focus must remain on sustained investment in new local plans that guide our district's long-term success. Strengthening our forthcoming updated District Plan, Curriculum Plan, Technology Plan, and Capital Plan will be essential to ensuring that we continue to provide high-quality education while maintaining financial stability and facilities that are both functional and safe.

IX. Public Comment

No public comment

X. New Business

A. Dudley-Charlton RSD Student Achievement Report – Assistant Superintendent True

Assistant Superintendent True went through her presentation on the 2024 Student Achievement Report.

K. Szela asked what the explore funding for summer curriculum was for, Assistant Superintendent True responded that it's for teacher work around curriculum.

K. Szela asked if teachers were talked to about the supplement for CKLA writing. Assistant Superintendent True stated when CKLA was first rated, their weakness was writing. Their answer to this was to develop a writing studio supplement. Some teachers are using it, others are not. We will be looking to integrate this into our curriculum.

B. Fiscal Year 2026 Introductory Presentation – Steven Lamarche

Superintendent Lamarche went through his presentation on the FY2026 Introduction to the Budget. Joseph DeSantis presented the assessment sheet. He explained the notable changes are the enrollment, Charlton has increased and Dudley has decreased. Also, the capital has decreased for both towns as far as debt payments are concerned. There may be changes as we hope to push down the operation budget.

C. School Year 2025-2026 Calendar

A motion by, seconded by Jaime Dell'Ovo to approve the 2025-2026 School Year Calendar was approved unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes	M. Chickering - Yes
J. Dell'Ovo - Yes	C. Carmignani - Yes
C. Panczyk - Yes	N. Enberg - Yes

D. School Committee Subcommittee Updates

a. Capital and Safety Subcommittee

J. Dell'Ovo stated the last meeting was on January 15 @8am via Zoom. Fire panel update was discussed, only CES is left to be completed. There were new permit requirements needed so the work should be finished in February. Next meeting is February 26 @8am via Zoom.

b. Teaching and Learning Subcommittee

C. Carmignani stated the Student Achievement Report was spoken about at the last meeting with Assistant Superintendent True. Also, the Competency Report was discussed with Principal Elwell regarding students graduating this year as well as students that would have graduated in the past with only a certificate and how we could get them a diploma. The next meeting will be on February 10th.

c. Budget and Finance Subcommittee

Meeting was held on January 14th. Joe DeSantis summarized the meeting stating they discussed the status of the FY24 audit that has been completed. They're waiting for the final financial statements to be provided. The use of the END funds were also discussed. Next meeting is scheduled for February 4th @12pm.

E. Update Policy Subcommittee

a. Policies for Action

Superintendent Lamarche stated the next meeting is February 6 @8am. He also stated policy #1-7 was distributed to School Committee on November 13, 2024 and distributed to the community in December 2024. The feedback from the community was reviewed and the appropriate adjustments were made.

1. AC - Non-Discrimination and Access to Equal Education Opportunity (update)

C. Carmignani had a few changes that she recommended:
Pg 2 #9, she suggested instead of reading, “either sex” it should read “any sex”
Pg 3 #4, she suggested instead of reading, “K-12” it should read “PreK-12+”
Pg 3 #5, she suggested instead of reading “he or she” it should read “they”
Pg 3 last bullet, she suggested to change “they” to “the”

A motion by, seconded by to approve policy AC with the above changes was approved unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes	M. Chickering - Yes
J. Dell’Ovo - Yes	C. Carmignani - Yes
C. Panczyk - Yes	N. Enberg - Yes

2. AC-R - Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation (new)
3. ACA - Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex (new)
4. ACA-R - Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex Under Title IX including Sex-Base Harassment (new)
5. ACGA - Civil Right Grievance Procedure (new)
6. ACGB - Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure (new)
7. ADDA - Background Checks (update)

A motion by Nicole Enberg, seconded by Jaime Dell’Ovo to approve policy AC-R, ACA, ACA-R, ACGA, ACGB and ADDA as written was approved unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes	M. Chickering - Yes
J. Dell’Ovo - Yes	C. Carmignani - Yes
C. Panczyk - Yes	N. Enberg - Yes

b. Policies for Distribution

1. GBA - Equal Employment Opportunity (new)
2. IJ - Instructional Materials (new)
3. ACAB - Harassment (review)
4. JICFB - Bullying Prevention (new)

XI. Adjourn

A motion by , seconded by Nicole Enberg to adjourn the meeting at pm was passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes	M. Chickering - Yes
J. Dell’Ovo - Yes	C. Carmignani - Yes
C. Panczyk - Yes	N. Enberg - Ye

The items listed, which may be discussed at the meeting, are those reasonably anticipated by the chair. Not all items listed may, in-fact be discussed, and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. The School Committee may vote on all items listed on this agenda.

2024-2025 School Committee Goals

Fiscal Responsibility

1. *The DCRSD School Committee will vote to improve a revised 10- year Capital Plan to reflect the needs identified in the 2024 architectural review of all seven schools.*
2. *The DCRSD School Committee will incorporate completed and forthcoming reports, reviews, and evaluations (e.g., Education Resource Strategies, Facilities Conditions Report) into long-range planning. This planning will guide the development of a Fiscal Year 2026 budget, structured to preserve the integrity of existing programs and prioritizing expenditures to provide a comprehensive educational experience for all students.*

Enhance Educational Excellence

1. *The DCRSD School Committee will support hiring, developing and utilizing staff that drive positive school culture and help create a unified district.*
2. *The DCRSD School Committee will support professional development opportunities that align with the District mission for exceptional teaching and learning for all students.*
3. *The DCRSD School Committee will ensure that all students have access to innovative platforms and technologies.*
4. *The DCRSD School Committee will continue their oversight of the implementation of policy IGA Curriculum Evaluation, Development and Adoption to review, revise or adapt high quality instructional materials for all students.*

Enhance Community Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

1. *The DCRSD School Committee will continue to evolve their roles as community liaisons to strengthen relationships with local boards and organizations.*

Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 6:30pm – SHRHS
Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Tuesday, February 04, 2025 12:00 PM - Video Conference
Policy Review Subcommittee: Thursday, February 6, 2025, 8:00 AM District Office
Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: Monday, February 10, 2025 2:00pm - Video Conference
Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 8:00 AM - Video Conference

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Future Agenda Items: FY26 Budget Planning (ongoing), Student Achievement Report (Jan.), FY26 Presentation (Jan.), All Boards (Feb.), Budget Hearing (Feb.), SEPAC (Apr.)

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IV. Charlton Middle School Showcase – Principal Dr. Monette
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VIII. Superintendent's Report
IX. Public Comment
X. New Business
- A. Dudley-Charlton RSD Student Achievement Report – Assistant Superintendent True
- B. Fiscal Year 2026 Introductory Presentation – Steven Lamarche
- C. School Year 2025-2026 Calendar
- D. School Committee Subcommittee Updates
  - a. Capital and Safety Subcommittee
  - b. Teaching and Learning Subcommittee
  - c. Budget and Finance Subcommittee
- E. Update Policy Subcommittee
  - a. Policies for Action
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1. *The DCRSD School Committee will continue to evolve their roles as community liaisons to strengthen relationships with local boards and organizations.*

Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 – SHRHS – All Boards Meeting
Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 10:00 AM- Video Conference
Policy Review Subcommittee: Thursday, February 6, 2025, 8:00 AM District Office
Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: February 10, 2025 2:00 PM - Video Conference
Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 8:00 AM - Video Conference

Future Agenda Items: FY26 Budget Planning (ongoing), All Boards (Feb.), Update Vanpool (Feb.), Budget Hearing (Feb.), SEPAC (Apr.), School Choice Vote (Apr.), Superintendent's Evaluation (Apr.)

Fiscal Year Budget Process: Stability, Advocacy & Strategic Planning

This year, our budget process has been centered on present realities and the critical components of labor relations, benefits, and insurance. Over the past few years, we have worked hard to stabilize long-term contracts to mitigate substantial increases in transportation and utilities.

As we navigate these financial considerations, we are also integrating multiple district reviews to ensure that our planning aligns with both immediate needs and long-term sustainability.

At its core, our approach prioritizes stability, an essential foundation as we prepare Dudley-Charlton Regional School District (DCRSD) and the communities of Charlton and Dudley for the significant capital investments that lie ahead. These upcoming projects require careful financial planning, and our commitment is to balance our budgets with fiscal responsibility, ensuring that we make strategic decisions that benefit our students, staff, and communities.

A Different Approach: True Focus Areas

This year's budget presentation is different, as we have outlined true focus areas that will guide fiscal decision-making. We recognize the importance of maintaining the priorities that principals and the School Committee advocate for annually, and we are committed to ensuring that our schools continue to receive the necessary support. However, alongside these priorities, we must work diligently to negotiate a reasonable contract for our educators, one that balances fairness with fiscal responsibility.

A key factor in the fiscal year 2026 discussions is health insurance, which remains a significant concern for all stakeholders. Currently, we are facing a 28.8% increase in health insurance costs, a major driver of the overall budget impact on our communities. I fully recognize that a 3.45% budget increase will be challenging for our towns to accept, making a strategic and transparent approach essential. However, our long-term success will depend on building trust with our educators by clearly communicating the necessity of health insurance adjustments while ensuring that our budget remains both realistic and sustainable for our students and communities.

Strategic Advocacy & Collaboration

One of our guiding principles this year is maintaining a level-services budget while positioning the district for future growth. This means sustaining the high-quality educational programs, resources, and staff that our students rely on without compromising financial responsibility. As in every budget cycle, we identify potential reductions, but the challenge remains: how do we annually present the same positions and programs without compromising the value they offer our students?

In addition, the district is experiencing a shift in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning, as continuation grants transition to local fiscal support. We listened to the School Committee at the last meeting and have strategically allocated Amazon funds to sustain our investment in high-quality instructional materials. While these resources are already in place, diminishing external funding makes it essential to secure ongoing support to ensure their continued impact next year.

We recognize that budgetary constraints are a reality, but our approach must be collaborative, working closely with our towns, advocating for the resources our schools need, and making deliberate adjustments where necessary. Whether through town partnerships, creative funding solutions, or strategic realignments, our fiscal year 2026 goal is to ensure that our district remains strong, sustainable, and well-equipped to serve our students for years to come.

Moving forward, our focus will be on prudent fiscal management, proactive planning, and transparent communication with our stakeholders. We appreciate the ongoing support of our community and remain committed to making decisions that reflect the best interests of our students, staff, and families.

Conclusion

Fiscal Year 2026 stability will provide the right on-ramp to look ahead to Fiscal Year 2027. Our focus must remain on sustained investment in new local plans that guide our district's long-term success. Strengthening our forthcoming updated District Plan, Curriculum Plan, Technology Plan, and Capital Plan will be essential to ensuring that we continue to provide high-quality education while maintaining financial stability and facilities that are both functional and safe.

Respectfully Submitted:

Steven M. Lamarche
Superintendent

Here a few important dates in 2025.

February
Monday, February 17, 2025 – No School – President's Day
Mon. Feb. 17 – Friday February 21, 2025 – No School Winter Vacation

March
Thursday, March 20, 2025 – Early Release Day – All students – Parent/Teacher Conferences

2024 Student Achievement Report
School Committee
Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent

January 29, 2025

Student Achievement Report for School Committee

Analyzing MCAS and AP Data for 2024

Welcome to our comprehensive review of student achievement data for the 2024 academic year. This presentation will cover MCAS results across various grades and subjects, as well as Advanced Placement performance. The goal is to provide insights into our students' progress, identify areas of success, and highlight opportunities for improvement to guide our educational strategies moving forward.

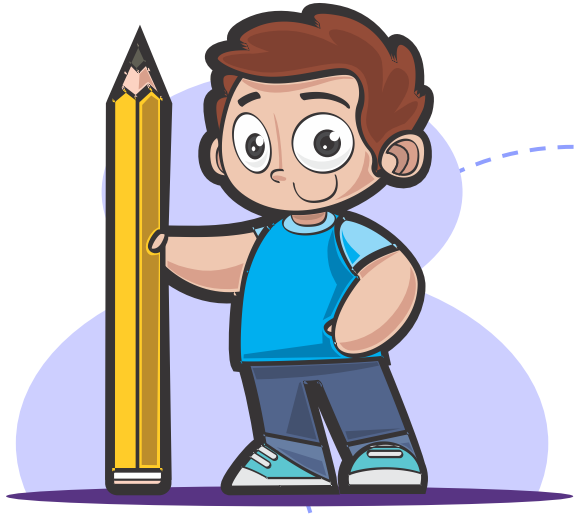




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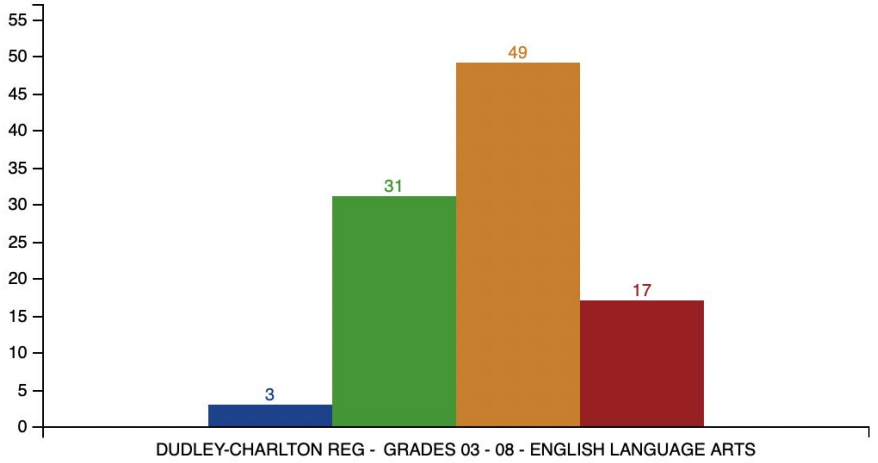
Overview of Student Achievement Report

- 2024 MCAS Data Grades 3-8 English Language Arts
- 2024 MCAS Data Grade 10 English Language Arts
- 2024 MCAS Data Grades 3-8 Math
- 2024 MCAS Data Grade 10 Math
- 2024 MCAS Data Grades 5-8 Science
- 2024 MCAS Data High School
- 2024 MCAS Data Subgroups Grades 3-8 ELA, Math, Science
- 2024 MCAS Data Subgroups Grade 10 ELA, Math, Science
- 2024 High School Advanced Placement
- Analysis and Conclusion

1. 2024 MCAS Data Grades 3-8 English Language Arts

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

- Overall performance decreased by 7% from 2023
- Writing continues to be a weakness across grades 3-8 when compared to the state with a difference of -2 to -15 in possible points earned
- Student growth in grades 4-8 remains in the low 40th percentile, which is at the lower end of average growth (40-60) with the exception of Heritage School which had an average growth of 58%

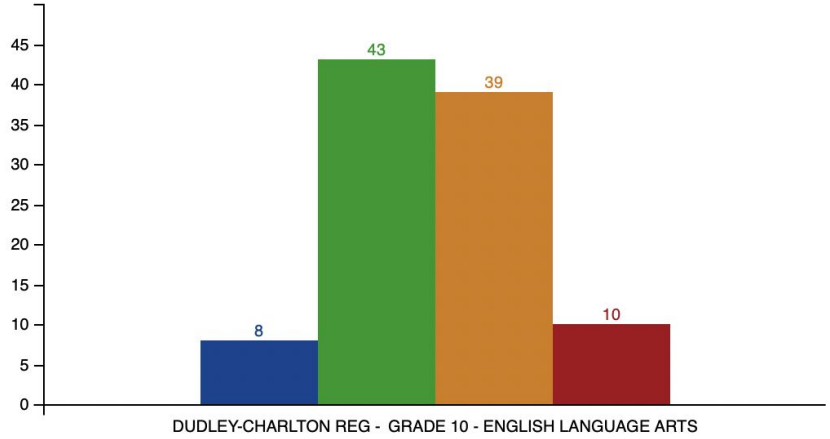


School	Avg. SGP	% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	Included in SGP	Part. Rate %
Charlton Middle School	42	34	579	100
Dudley Elementary	45	36	104	99
Dudley Middle School	44	32	517	99
Heritage School	58	37	144	99

2. 2024 MCAS Data Grade 10 English Language Arts

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

- Overall performance increased by 1% from 2023
- Writing continues to be a weakness in grade 10 when compared to the state with a difference of -5 to -7 in possible points earned
- Student growth in grade 10 remains below average at 35% growth (average= 40%-60%) which is down two percentage points from 2023

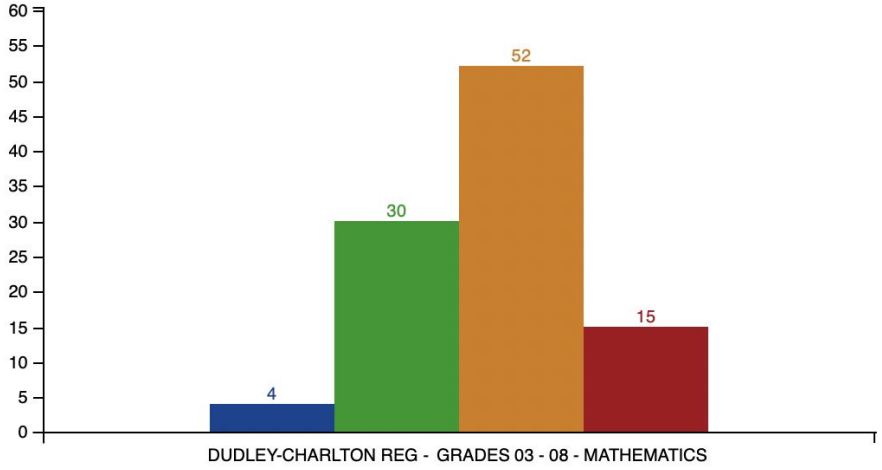


School	Avg. SGP	% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	Included in SGP	Part. Rate %
Shepherd Hill Regional High	35	52	227	99

3. 2024 MCAS Data Grades 3-8 Math

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

- Overall performance decreased by 5% from 2023
- Fractions up to grade 6 continue to be a weakness for students
- At grades 7 and 8, functions, and expressions and equations were the most challenging for students
- Student growth was above average at both Dudley Elementary and Heritage School, but below average at both middle schools

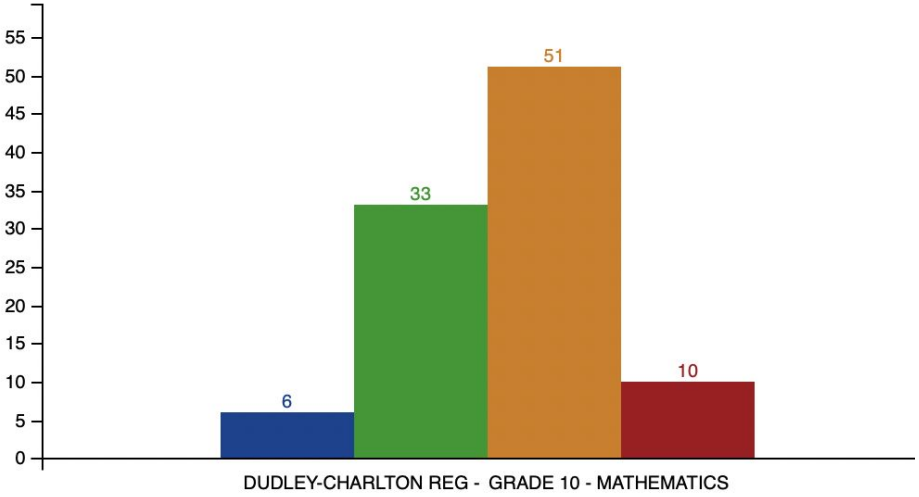


School	Avg. SGP	% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	Included in SGP	Part. Rate %
Charlton Middle School	39	30	576	100
Dudley Elementary	66	51	106	100
Dudley Middle School	38	26	517	98
Heritage School	66	45	145	99

4. 2024 MCAS Data Grade 10 Math

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

- Overall performance decreased by 11% from 2023
- Interpreting functions was the most challenging standard for students
- Geometry was a relative strength
- Student growth was average at 52% with average ranging from 40-60%

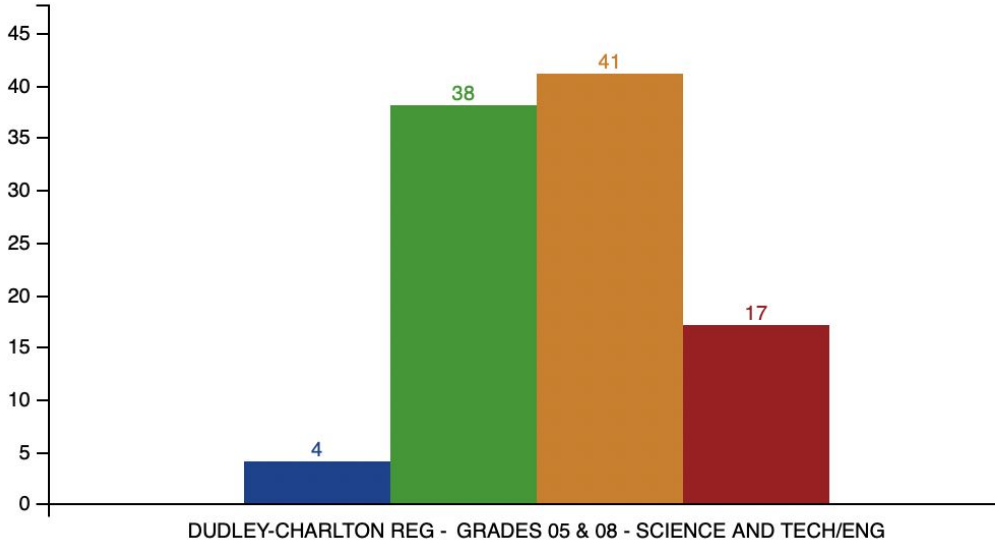


School	Avg. SGP	% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	Included in SGP	Part. Rate %
Shepherd Hill Regional High	52	40	226	98

5. 2024 MCAS Data Grades 5-8 Science

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

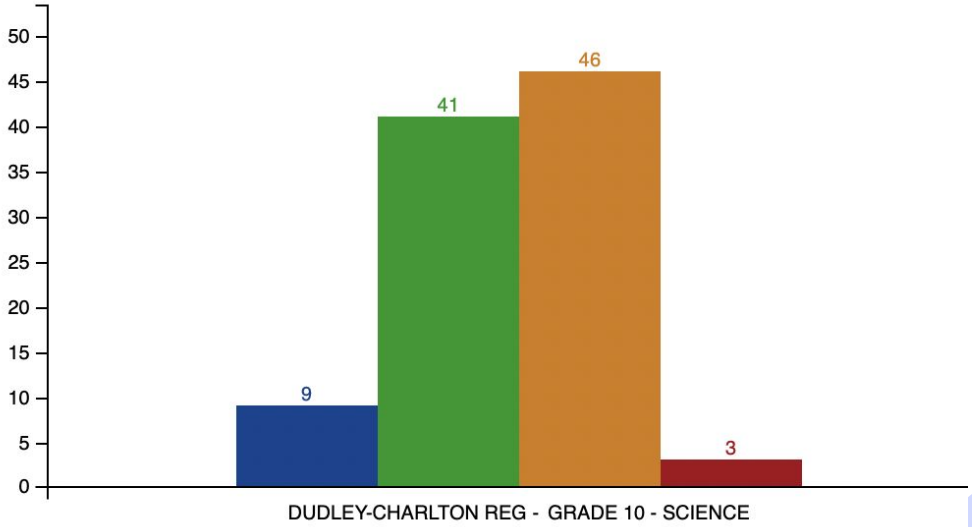
- Overall performance increased by 3% from 2023
- Earth Science and Tech/Engineering were relative strengths at grade 5
- Physical Science was more of a challenge at the 8th grade level
- Constructed responses as opposed to multiple choice questions, were a strength at grade 5 and a weakness at grade 8



6. 2024 Science MCAS Data High School

Performance Levels, Trends, and Key Observations

- Overall performance increased by 3% from 2023
- Molecules to Organisms was a strength in Biology
- We exceeded the state on 36 items out of a total of 42 items in Biology while we were below the state on 42 out of 43 items in Physics
- Constructed responses were a strength in Biology and a weakness in Physics



7. 2024 MCAS Data Subgroups ELA

MCAS Results: Non-High School (Grade 3-8)

MCAS Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Student Group

Student Group	2022	2023	2024	2024 # Included
All Students	44	41	34	1690
High Needs	28	27	20	849
Low Income	31	30	22	617
EL and Former EL	27	26	21	154
Students w/ disabilities	8	12	7	374
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.				2
Asian	67	23	50	12
Afr. Amer. / Black	46	33	37	51
Hispanic / Latino	30	31	24	201
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Latino	43	40	34	71
White	46	43	35	1353

MCAS Results: High School (Grade 10)

MCAS Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Student Group

Student Group	2022	2023	2024	2024 # Included
All Students	53	50	51	252
High Needs	36	31	30	96
Low Income	41	34	35	81
EL and Former EL			20	10
Students w/ disabilities	5	16	6	32
Asian				4
Afr. Amer. / Black			30	10
Hispanic / Latino	31	25	36	28
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Latino				9
White	57	52	54	201

- Overall performance decreased by 7% from 2023 for both High Needs and Low Income students in grades 3-8
- Overall performance decreased by 5% from 2023 for both Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities, with only 7% of SWD meeting or exceeding expectations in grades 3-8
- Grade 10 was relatively consistent from 2023 to 2024 for both High Needs and Low Income students, but had a decrease of 10% for Students with Disabilities





8. 2024 MCAS Data Subgroups Math

MCAS Results: Non-High School (Grade 3-8)

MCAS Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Student Group

Student Group	2022	2023	2024	2024 # Included
All Students	24	31	31	708
High Needs	21	28	26	538
Low Income	20	28	26	447
EL and Former EL	21	28	27	253
Students w/ disabilities	7	9	8	106
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.				4
Asian	61	69	61	28
Afr. Amer. / Black	24	33	31	396
Hispanic / Latino	17	20	24	134
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Latino	22	30	30	44
White	27	34	35	101

MCAS Results: High School (Grade 10)

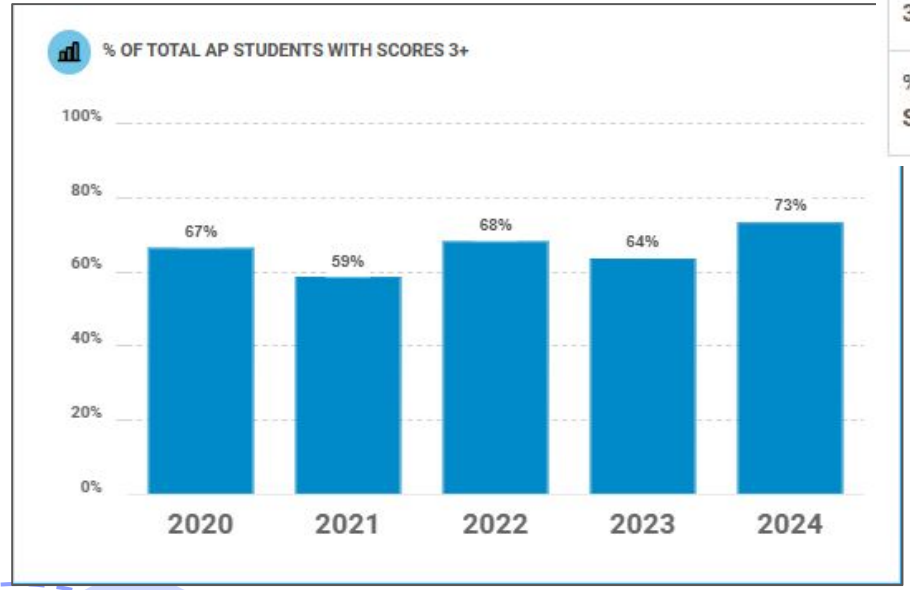
MCAS Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Student Group

Student Group	2022	2023	2024	2024 # Included
All Students	50	51	40	246
High Needs	33	33	17	93
Low Income	37	36	20	79
Students w/ disabilities	6	11		
Asian				4
Afr. Amer. / Black				9
Hispanic / Latino	21	24	11	28
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Latino				9
White	53	53	45	196

- Overall performance decreased by 2% from 2023 for both High Needs and Low Income students in grades 3-8
- Overall performance decreased by 1% from 2023 for Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities, with only 8% of SWD meeting or exceeding expectations in grades 3-8
- Grade 10 had a significant decrease for both High Needs and Low Income students. No Students with Disabilities met or exceeded expectations, which is a decrease from 11% in 2023

9. 2024 High School Advanced Placement

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total AP Students	227	264	253	198	229
Number of Exams	391	475	437	327	402
AP Students with Scores 3+	151	155	173	126	168
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	66.52	58.71	68.38	63.64	73.36



- Overall performance of students receiving a qualifying score of 3+ increased by 10%
- We increased student participation in AP classes by 31 students and 75 exams
- 67% of students taking AP English and 52% of students taking AP Math and 74% of students taking AP Science exams scored 3+
- 100% of students taking AP Foreign Language scored 3+ (13)

Next Steps and Recommendations

1. **Targeted Interventions**:
   - Continue to build in opportunities to improve our Multi-Tiered System of Support at every level. This will require intervention blocks at the secondary level, which are in place at the elementary level.
   - Focus on struggling subgroups, particularly SWD and Multilingual Learners, in ELA and Math.
   - Explore funding sources for HQIM to support intervention in math at the middle level and both math and reading at the high school level.
2. **Teacher Development**:
   - Enhance training for teachers in critical areas like writing, fractions, algebra, and science.
   - Continue to work on training teachers on universally designing lessons and providing personalized pathways to success.
   - Focus on Math pedagogy at the Elementary and High School levels during PD in preparation for updating HQIM.
   - Begin working with facilitators at the Elementary level on writing and comprehension instruction.
   - Promote instructional leadership through professional development for our Curriculum Facilitators, Team Leaders and Department Heads.
3. **Data-Driven Practices**:
   - Regularly analyze performance data to refine instructional strategies and address weaknesses.
   - Continue using standardized assessments at all levels for screening, progress monitoring and decision making.
4. **Expand AP Opportunities**:
   - Continue to grow AP offerings and support systems to sustain the progress.



Next Steps and Recommendations

6. **Resource Allocation**:

   - Our greatest resource is time for professional development and collaboration which is being addressed in the school calendar for 25-26.
   - To continue with HQIM at the Elementary and Middle School levels, the upkeep for Math and ELA is currently approximately $275,000. Our HQIM grants have ended with the exception of Open Sci Ed, which provides one more year of support under the grant. OSE will be moved into operating for 25-26 at the cost of approximately $20,000 per building. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY26
   - Explore options for HQIM in Science at the Elementary levels to improve programming and the necessary prerequisites for Middle School. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY27
   - We are awaiting to hear if we have been selected to participate in the PRISM Grant from DESE to support ELA instruction at the Elementary level.
   - We need to prepare for a new Math adoption at the Elementary level in 26-27. The anticipated cost is between $200-250K. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY27
   - Explore funding for summer curriculum work in all subjects at the Elementary and Middle levels.

7. **Writing Focus**:

   - Explore the introduction of the Writing Studio, a CKLA writing supplement, at the Elementary level to help boost student writing skills going into Middle School.



Q&A

Questions

- Seek clarification on specific data points
- Inquire about trends and comparisons
- Request additional context or information

Discussion Topics

- Implications of MCAS results on curriculum
- Strategies to address achievement gaps
- Resource allocation for improvement initiatives

DUDLEY-CHARLTON FY2026 BUDGET

January 29, 2025
Charlton Middle School

Steven M. Lamarche

Superintendent

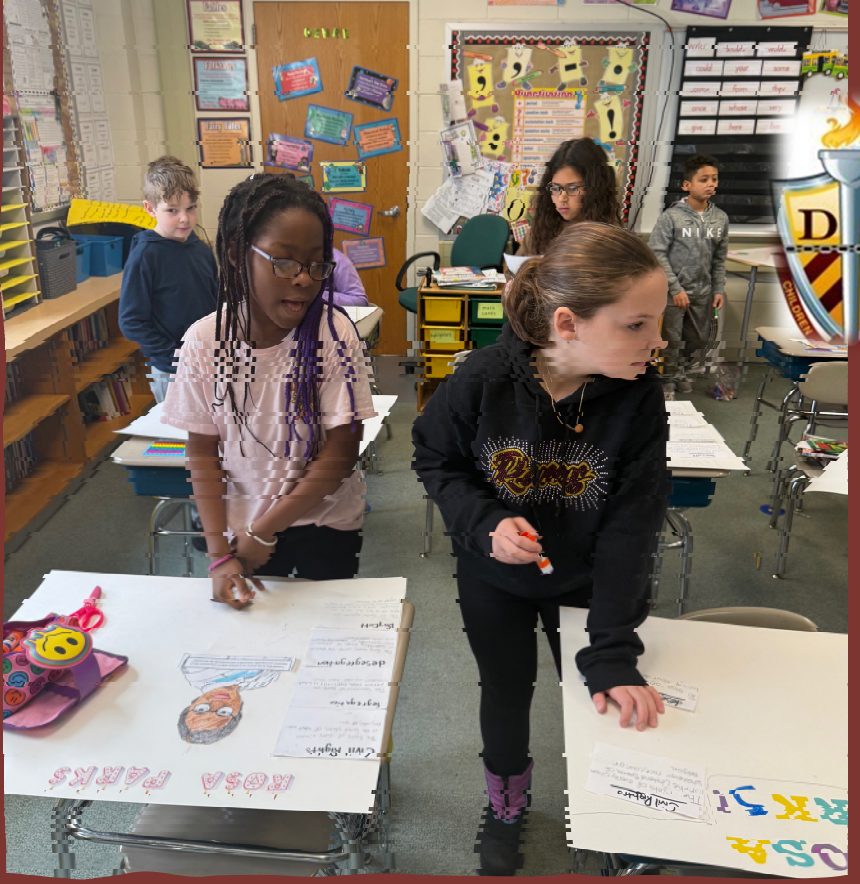
Joseph J. DeSantis

Director of Finance and Operations

AGENDA

- Relevant Information
- Assumptions/Risks
- Fiscal Year 2026
- Questions



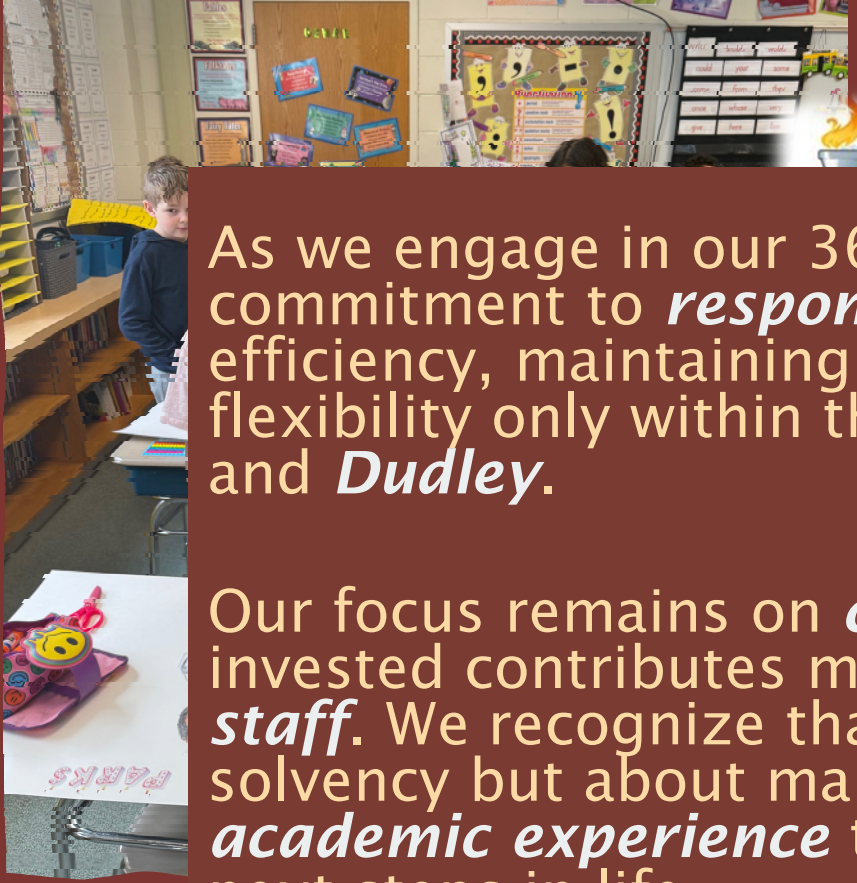




INTRODUCTION

The school budget, and 360 process, serves as a blueprint for how valuable tax dollars are invested in a DCRSD education. It transforms financial projections into real opportunities for student success, ensuring every dollar advances the district's commitment to excellence.

This process drives critical conversations, guiding tough choices as programs compete for limited resources.



As we engage in our 360 fiscal planning process, we do so with a commitment to ***responsible stewardship***, scrubbing expenditures to ensure efficiency, maintaining a ***conservative financial approach***, and exercising flexibility only within the limits of our financial relationships with ***Charlton*** and ***Dudley***.

Our focus remains on ***continuous improvement***, ensuring that every dollar invested contributes meaningfully to the ***well-being of our students and staff***. We recognize that fiscal responsibility is not just about maintaining solvency but about making thoughtful, strategic decisions that ***prioritize an academic experience*** that is both ***meaningful*** and ***preparatory*** for the next steps in life.

By balancing fiscal prudence with our core efforts, we ensure that resources are allocated ***where they matter most***, fostering an environment where students are supported, staff are valued, and the district remains well-positioned to meet both current and future challenges.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS





2024-2025

School Committee Goals



Fiscal Responsibility

The DCRSD School Committee will approve a revised **10-year Capital Plan** based on the **2024 architectural review** of all seven schools and will integrate **reports and evaluations** (e.g., Education Resource Strategies, Facilities Conditions Report) into **long-range planning**. This process will **shape Fiscal Year budget planning**, ensuring the **preservation of existing programs** while prioritizing expenditures that support a **comprehensive educational experience** for all students.

School Committee Goals

Enhance Educational Excellence

The DCRSD School Committee is committed to fostering a **unified district** by hiring, developing, and supporting staff who cultivate a **positive school culture**. Through **aligned professional development**, the Committee ensures **exceptional teaching and learning** for all students. Additionally, the Committee prioritizes **access to innovative platforms and technologies** while maintaining **oversight of curriculum evaluation, development, and adoption** to provide **high-quality instructional materials** that meet the evolving needs of all learners.



School Committee Goals



Enhance Community Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

The **DCRSD School Committee** will strengthen partnerships with **local boards and organizations** by serving as **active community liaisons**. Through **collaboration, transparent communication, and shared initiatives**, the Committee will align district priorities with community needs, advocate for resources, and ensure that **stakeholder voices** shape decision-making to benefit students, families, and staff.

DISTRICT PLAN

Strengthen the continuum of learning by ensuring access and opportunity for all students. *Enhance* instructional practices and support systems to *improve* student achievement and outcomes. *Foster* family and community engagement through *meaningful* partnerships and *effective* communication.









ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

- **Minimum Chapter 70 for FY2026** ☑
- **Excess & Deficiency stable for FY2026** ☑
- **School Choice/Charter Assessments stable FY2026** ☑
- **Level funded supplies/technology (FY21-FY26)** ☑ **[exception HQIM]**
- **Reimbursements remain stable for FY2026** ☐

  Transportation, Circuit Breaker, Medicaid



AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS

- Class Size
- Contractual Obligations
- Employee Benefits and Insurance



Areas with modest increases from past year's experiences

- Utilities
- Transportation
- Out of District Tuitions



PROJECTED CLASS SIZE

Average Class Size Projections FY26: With Staffing Changes

		S #	Proj Section	Ave Class	Noted Changes
MRS	Pre-K	64	2	32.00	
	K	107	5	21.40	
	1	109	6	18.17	
		280	*13*		
DES	2	118	5	23.60	Redistribute two sections from Grade 3: one to Grade 2 and one to Grade
	3	74	4	18.50	
	4	124	6	20.67	
		316	*15*		
DMS	5	117	6	19.50	
	6	119	6	19.83	Redistribute one section from Grade 7 to Grade 8
	7	136	6	22.67	
	8	146	7	20.86	
		518	*25*	21.72	

	S #	Proj Section	Ave Class	Noted Changes
CES	64	2	32.00	Reduction of one section from Grade 1
	114	6	19.00	
	117	6	19.50	
	295	*14*		
HES	157	7	22.43	Redistribute one section from Grade 3 to Grade 2
	130	6	21.67	
	145	7	20.71	
	432	*20*		
CMS	152	7	21.71	
	152	7	21.71	
	163	7	23.29	
	160	7	22.86	
	627	*28*	22.49	

THE AREAS OF SPECIFIC FOCUS

Contractual Obligations		$ 1,300,000
Employee Benefits and Insurance		$ 1,653,987
	Total	$ 2,953,987
Initial	*(811,829)*	*$ 2,142,728*



Variance work 4.73% to 3.57%



GOVERNOR'S REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT 95%
MINIMUM AIDE – $75 PER STUDENT
SCRUB ALL LINES – FRESH SET OF EYES
LOWER UTILITY COSTS (SOLAR)
1.0 FTE TEACHER
1.0 FTE DISTRICT OFFICE CLERK

= ($811,829)

BIG NUMBERS

FY25	$ 59,885,638	2.68%	
FY26*	$ 62,028,356	3.57%	$ 2,142,718
**Target*	*$ 61,528,346*	*2.74%*	*$ 1,642,718*

AMAZON FUNDING

Next Steps and Recommendations

6. **Resource Allocation**:

   - Our greatest resource is time for professional development and collaboration which is being addressed in the school calendar for 25-26.
   - To continue with HQIM at the Elementary and Middle School levels, the upkeep for Math and ELA is currently approximately **$275,000**. Our HQIM grants have ended with the exception of Open Sci Ed, which provides one more year of support under the grant. OSE will be moved into operating for 25-26 at the cost of approximately $20,000 per building. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY26
   - Explore options for HQIM in Science at the Elementary levels to improve programming and the necessary prerequisites for Middle School. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY27
   - We are awaiting to hear if we have been selected to participate in the PRISM Grant from DESE to support ELA instruction at the Elementary level.
   - We need to prepare for a new Math adoption at the Elementary level in 26-27. The anticipated cost is between $200-250K. *Potential use of Amazon monies FY27
   - Explore funding for summer curriculum work in all subjects at the Elementary and Middle levels.

7. **Writing Focus**:

   - Explore the introduction of the Writing Studio, a CKLA writing supplement, at the Elementary level to help boost student writing skills going into Middle School.

RECOMMENDED FY26 REDUCTIONS

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FY26 Budget - Initial 1/27/25

Assessments				
	FY25	FY26	$ Change	% Change
DCRSD	$ 59,885,638	$ 62,719,434	$ 2,833,796	4.73%
Charlton (53.79%)				
Minimum	13,953,628	15,494,647	1,541,019	11.04%
Transportation	1,116,704	1,158,776	42,072	3.77%
Additional	3,148,490	3,558,011	409,521	13.01%
Subtotal Operating	18,218,822	20,211,434	1,992,612	10.94%
Capital				
Sewer Charges	25,776	25,776	-	
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	68,904	58,639	(10,265)	
Sept. 2022 Capital (Voluntary)	-	-	-	
July 2024 Capital-Bond	272,467	230,050	(42,417)	
Subtotal Capital	367,147	314,465	(52,682)	-14.35%
Total Assessment - Charlton FY25	18,585,969	20,525,899	1,939,930	10.44%
Dudley (46.21%)				
Minimum	8,077,755	8,359,605	281,850	3.49%
Transportation	978,819	995,484	16,665	1.70%
Additional	2,759,729	3,056,621	296,892	10.76%
Subtotal Operating	11,816,303	12,411,710	595,407	5.04%
Capital				
Sewer Charges	9,224	9,224	-	
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	64,039	64,039	-	
July 2024 Capital-Bond	351,313	303,350	(47,963)	
Subtotal Capital	424,576	376,613	(47,963)	-11.30%
Total Assessment - Dudley - FY25	12,240,879	12,788,323	547,444	4.47%
Total Assessment	*30,826,848*	*33,314,222*	*2,487,374*	*8.07%*

NEXT STEPS

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

SC Budget – All Boards - SHRHS

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

SC Budget Hearing - CMS

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

SC Meeting - SHRHS

May 19, 2025 – Town Meetings

Charlton and Dudley

DUDLEY-CHARLTON FY2026 BUDGET

January 29, 2025
Charlton Middle School

QUESTIONS

Summary - District

Account Description	FY25 Final Budget	FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)	FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Salary				
Superintedent and Business Office	$ 1,213,020	$ (59,287)	$ 1,153,733	-4.89%
Technology	$ 242,278	$ 7,268	$ 249,546	3.00%
Special Education	$ 934,643	$ 13,895	$ 948,538	1.49%
Curriculum and Professional Development	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Total Salary	$ 2,389,941	$ (38,123)	$ 2,351,818	-1.60%
Other Expenses				
Technology	$ 185,877	$ 20,200	$ 206,077	10.87%
State Assessments	$ 566,906	$ 7,653	$ 574,559	1.35%
Special Education	$ 3,383,000	$ 40,986	$ 3,423,986	1.21%
School Committee	$ 88,400	$ 1,500	$ 89,900	1.70%
Superintendent and Business Office	$ 89,115	$ 2,885	$ 92,000	3.24%
Maintenance	$ 13,000	$ -	$ 13,000	0.00%
Contingency	$ 200,000	$ -	$ 200,000	0.00%
Professional Development	$ 93,038	$ 500	$ 93,538	0.54%
Transportation	$ 3,509,254	$ 27,106	$ 3,536,360	0.77%
Employee Benefits and Insurance	$ 10,672,661	$ 1,653,987	$ 12,326,648	15.50%
Total Other Expenses	$ 18,801,251	$ 1,754,817	$ 20,556,068	9.33%
Total - District	$ 21,191,192	$ 1,716,694	$ 22,907,886	8.10%

Summary - Mason Road

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	159,753	$	4,793	$	164,546	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	2,023,554	$	50,174	$	2,073,728	2.48%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	211,165	$	14,811	$	225,976	7.01%
Guidance and Psychological	$	106,802	$	3,204	$	110,006	3.00%
Pupil Services	$	80,915	$	5,484	$	86,399	6.78%
Operations and Maintenance	$	134,628	$	4,039	$	138,667	3.00%
Total Salary	$	2,716,817	$	82,505	$	2,799,322	3.04%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	7,240	$	760	$	8,000	10.50%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	37,618	$	1,532	$	39,150	4.07%
Professional Development	$	5,500	$	120	$	5,620	2.18%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	51,810	$	(6,502)	$	45,308	-12.55%
Guidance and Psychological	$	2,475	$	525	$	3,000	21.21%
Pupil Services	$	1,598	$	902	$	2,500	56.45%
Operations and Maintenance	$	176,232	$	5,222	$	181,454	2.96%
Total Other Expenses	$	282,473	$	2,559	$	285,032	0.91%
Total - Mason Road	$	2,999,290	$	85,064	$	3,084,354	2.84%

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Summary - Dudley Elementary							
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	162,677	$	4,880	$	167,557	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	2,466,816	$	35,442	$	2,502,258	1.44%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	130,144	$	3,987	$	134,131	3.06%
Guidance and Psychological	$	300,102	$	9,003	$	309,105	3.00%
Pupil Services	$	81,995	$	3,508	$	85,503	4.28%
Operations and Maintenance	$	170,314	$	5,109	$	175,423	3.00%
Total Salary	$	3,312,048	$	61,930	$	3,373,978	1.87%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	17,524	$	(774)	$	16,750	-4.42%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	65,462	$	1,508	$	66,970	2.30%
Professional Development	$	9,400	$	(275)	$	9,125	-2.93%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	65,479	$	(4,451)	$	61,028	-6.80%
Guidance and Psychological	$	3,500	$	(500)	$	3,500	-14.29%
Pupil Services	$	3,550	$	(550)	$	3,000	-15.49%
Operations and Maintenance	$	240,369	$	(9,017)	$	231,352	-3.75%
Total Other Expenses	$	405,284	$	(14,059)	$	391,725	-3.47%
Total - Dudley Elementary	$	3,717,332	$	47,871	$	3,765,703	1.29%

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Summary - Dudley Middle							
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	345,511	$	10,365	$	355,876	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	4,320,171	$	146,427	$	4,466,598	3.39%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	87,211	$	3,001	$	90,212	3.44%
Guidance and Psychological	$	297,094	$	8,913	$	306,007	3.00%
Pupil Services	$	83,823	$	(1,656)	$	82,167	-1.98%
Operations and Maintenance	$	253,070	$	14,230	$	267,300	5.62%
Total Salary	$	5,386,880	$	181,281	$	5,568,161	3.37%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	28,930	$	(7,430)	$	21,500	-25.68%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	46,192	$	(667)	$	45,526	-1.44%
Professional Development	$	8,500	$	181	$	8,680	2.13%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	105,431	$	-	$	105,431	0.00%
Guidance and Psychological	$	3,000	$	-	$	3,000	0.00%
Pupil Services	$	21,600	$	2,000	$	23,600	9.26%
Out of District Tuitions	$	12,500	$	-	$	12,500	0.00%
Operations and Maintenance	$	382,023	$	3,411	$	385,434	0.89%
Total Other Expenses	$	608,176	$	(2,505)	$	605,671	-0.41%
Total Dudley Middle	$	5,995,056	$	178,776	$	6,173,832	2.98%

Summary - Charlton Elementary

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	150,437	$	4,513	$	154,950	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	2,823,115	$	21,012	$	2,844,127	0.74%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	321,137	$	9,634	$	330,771	3.00%
Guidance and Psychological	$	125,997	$	3,780	$	129,777	3.00%
Pupil Services	$	79,832	$	2,335	$	82,167	2.92%
Operations and Maintenance	$	173,323	$	5,200	$	178,523	3.00%
Total Salary	$	3,673,841	$	46,474	$	3,720,315	1.26%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	9,324	$	241	$	9,565	2.58%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	45,378	$	1,348	$	46,726	2.97%
Professional Development	$	9,500	$	240	$	9,740	2.53%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	105,329	$	1,536	$	106,865	1.46%
Guidance and Psychological	$	3,250	$	-	$	3,250	0.00%
Pupil Services	$	2,800	$	450	$	3,250	16.07%
Operations and Maintenance	$	235,052	$	(15,739)	$	219,313	-6.70%
Total Other Expenses	$	410,633	$	(11,924)	$	398,709	-2.90%
Total - Charlton Elementary	$	4,084,474	$	34,550	$	4,119,024	0.85%

Summary - Heritage Elementary

Account Description	FY25 Final Budget	FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)	FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Salary				
Instructional Leadership	$ 178,323	$ 5,350	$ 183,673	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$ 3,440,871	$ 24,836	$ 3,465,707	0.72%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$ 275,408	$ 8,262	$ 283,670	3.00%
Guidance and Psychological	$ 144,978	$ 4,349	$ 149,327	3.00%
Pupil Services	$ 69,940	$ 1,978	$ 71,918	2.83%
Operations and Maintenance	$ 214,981	$ 46,829	$ 261,810	21.78%
Total Salary	$ 4,324,501	$ 91,604	$ 4,416,105	2.12%
Other Expenses				
Instructional Leadership	$ 12,638	$ (388)	$ 12,250	-3.07%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$ 55,664	$ (7,514)	$ 48,150	-13.50%
Professional Development	$ 8,750	$ 690	$ 9,440	7.89%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$ 104,016	$ (270)	$ 103,746	-0.26%
Guidance and Psychological	$ 3,000	$ -	$ 3,000	0.00%
Pupil Services	$ 4,350	$ -	$ 4,350	0.00%
Operations and Maintenance	$ 388,482	$ (13,037)	$ 375,445	-3.36%
Total Other Expenses	$ 576,900	$ (20,519)	$ 556,381	-3.56%
Total - Heritage School	$ 4,901,401	$ 71,085	$ 4,972,486	1.45%

Summary - Charlton Middle

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	337,504	$	10,125	$	347,629	3.00%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	5,005,378	$	34,191	$	5,039,569	0.68%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	157,444	$	4,723	$	162,167	3.00%
Guidance and Psychological	$	332,924	$	9,988	$	342,912	3.00%
Pupil Services	$	87,389	$	2,532	$	89,921	2.90%
Operations and Maintenance	$	331,319	$	9,940	$	341,259	3.00%
Total Salary	$	6,251,958	$	71,498	$	6,323,456	1.14%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	17,688	$	422	$	18,110	2.39%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	43,702	$	(2,446)	$	41,256	-5.60%
Professional Development	$	7,000	$	150	$	7,150	2.14%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	229,572	$	(97,361)	$	132,211	-42.41%
Guidance and Psychological	$	6,041	$	(250)	$	5,791	-4.14%
Pupil Services	$	25,350	$	(1,000)	$	24,350	-3.94%
Out of District Tuitions	$	12,500	$	-	$	12,500	0.00%
Operations and Maintenance	$	392,957	$	(2,538)	$	390,419	-0.65%
Total Other Expenses	$	734,810	$	(103,023)	$	631,787	-14.02%
Total - Charlton Middle	$	6,986,768	$	(31,525)	$	6,955,243	-0.45%

Account Description		FY25 Final Budget		FY26 Increases/ (Decreases)		FY26 Proposed Budget	FY26 % Change
Summary - Shepherd Hill High							
Salary							
Instructional Leadership	$	586,103	$	16,116	$	602,219	2.75%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	6,470,326	$	99,929	$	6,570,255	1.54%
Medical and therapeutic Services	$	84,757	$	2,543	$	87,300	3.00%
Guidance and Psychological	$	758,488	$	(37,568)	$	720,920	-4.95%
Pupil Services	$	134,104	$	3,918	$	138,022	2.92%
Operations and Maintenance	$	534,041	$	(22,643)	$	511,398	-4.24%
Total Salary	$	8,567,819	$	62,296	$	8,630,115	0.73%
Other Expenses							
Instructional Leadership	$	68,123	$	(1,123)	$	67,000	-1.65%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	$	233,727	$	(184)	$	233,543	-0.08%
Professional Development	$	26,000	$	1,750	$	27,750	6.73%
Instructional Equipment and Technology	$	122,116	$	(4,335)	$	117,781	-3.55%
Guidance and Psychological	$	27,250	$	-	$	27,250	0.00%
Pupil Services	$	287,900	$	(24,300)	$	263,600	-8.44%
Out of District Tuitions	$	25,000	$	-	$	25,000	0.00%
Operations and Maintenance	$	652,190	$	5,599	$	657,789	0.86%
Total Other Expenses	$	1,442,306	$	(22,593)	$	1,419,713	-1.57%
Total - Shepherd Hill	$	10,010,125	$	39,703	$	10,049,828	0.40%

Average Class Size Projections FY26: Without Staffing Changes

		Dudley Student #	Current Section #	Ave Class Size: Current
MASON RD	Pre-K	64	2	32.00
	K	107	5	21.40
	1	109	6	18.17
		280	*13*	
DUDLEY ELEM	2	118	4	29.50
	3	74	6	12.33
	4	124	5	24.80
		316	*15*	
DUDLEY MIDDLE	5	117	6	19.50
	6	119	6	19.83
	7	136	7	19.43
	8	146	6	24.33
		518	*25*	

	Charlton Student #	Current Section #	Ave Class Size: Current
CHARLTON ELEM	64	2	32.00
	114	6	19.00
	117	7	16.71
	295	*15*	
HERITAGE	157	6	26.17
	130	7	18.57
	145	7	20.71
	432	*20*	
CHARLTON MIDDLE	152	7	21.71
	152	7	21.71
	163	7	23.29
	160	7	22.86
	627	*28*	

Average Class Size Projections FY26: With Staffing Changes

		Dudley Student #	Projected Section #	Ave Class Size: Projected	Noted Changes
MASON RD	Pre-K	64	2	32.00	
	K	107	5	21.40	
	1	109	6	18.17	
		280	*13*		
DUDLEY ELEM	2	118	5	23.60	Redistribute two sections from Grade 3: one to Grade 2 and one to Grade 4
	3	74	4	18.50	
	4	124	6	20.67	
		316	*15*		
DUDLEY MIDDLE	5	117	6	19.50	
	6	119	6	19.83	Redistribute one section from Grade 7 to Grade 8
	7	136	6	22.67	
	8	146	7	20.86	
		518	*25*		

	Charlton Student #	Projected Section #	Ave Class Size: Projected	Noted Changes
CHARLTON ELEM	64	2	32.00	
	114	6	19.00	Reduction of one section from Grade 1
	117	6	19.50	
	295	*14*		
HERITAGE	157	7	22.43	Redistribute one section from Grade 3 to Grade 2
	130	6	21.67	
	145	7	20.71	
	432	*20*		
CHARLTON MIDDLE	152	7	21.71	
	152	7	21.71	
	163	7	23.29	
	160	7	22.86	
	627	*28*		

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District
2025-2026 School Calendar

SC. Review 01.22.2025

August (4)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September (21)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October (21)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November (17)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December (17)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January (19)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February (15)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March (21)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April (17)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May (20)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June (8)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

= Opening/Close of School
= Holiday/School Vacation - No School All Students
= Early Release Day All students
= Educator Orientation/In-Service No School All Students
= Class of 2026 Commencement

End of Trimester/Quarter Schedule PK-12+

Elementary Trimesters

Term 1 - Friday, November 21, 2025
Term 2 - Friday, March 6, 2026
Term 3 - Last day of School June 2026

SHRHS and Middle School Quarters

Quarter 1 - Friday, October 31, 2025
Quarter 2 - Friday, January 23, 2026
Quarter 3 - Friday, April 3, 2026
Quarter 4 - Last day of school June 2026

August 25 - Educator New School Year Orientation
August 26 - First Day of School 1-12+
August 29 - Early Release All

September 1 - Labor Day - No School All
September 2 - First Day of School PreK-K
September 26 - Early Release All Students/Educator PD

October 10 - No School All Students/Educator In-Service Day
October 13 - Columbus Day - No School - All

November 6 - Early Release All Students/Parent Conferences
November 11 - Veterans Day - No School All
November 26 - Early Release - All
November 27-28 - Thanksgiving - No School - All

December 12 - Early Release All Students - Educator PD
December 23 - Early Release - All
Dec. 24 - Jan. 2, 2026 - No School - All - Holiday Vacation

January 19 - MLK Day - No School - All

February 16-20 - No School All - Winter Vacation

March 6 - Early Release All - Educator In-service
March 26 - Early Release All Students/Parent Conferences
March 27- No School All Students/Educator In-Service Day

April 3 - Early Release - All Students (Good Friday)
April 20-24 - No School All - Spring Break

May 22 - Early Release - All Students/Educator PD
May 25 - No School All - Memorial Day
May 31 - Class of 2026 Commencement

June 10 - Early Release - Last Day of School 180th Day
June 17 - Early Release - 185th Day - w/5 Snow Days
June 19 - Juneteenth Day - No School All

State regulations require 185 (SY25/26) days be listed in the school calendar; the school year will end after the 180th day.

Changes to the School Year Calendar requires a School Committee Vote

AC - Non-Discrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY - AC

Non-Discrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity

I. Introduction

It is the goal of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and affirmatively provides access to employment and equal educational opportunity. Discrimination, including that based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity of an individual occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which individuals may be entitled access to educational opportunity, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination or retaliation against an individual for cooperating with an investigation of a discrimination complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal, acts of discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated and we have provided procedures by which inappropriate conduct will be addressed, if encountered by an employee, student or member of the community.

Because the district takes allegation of discrimination seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of discrimination in the workplace or educational settings and, where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goal of promoting an educational and workplace environment that is free of discrimination, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of discrimination.

II. Affirmative Statement of Release:

This policy is consistent with M.G. L. Ch. 75:5: “Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a persona who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, or gender identity.”

All persons should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination or harassment, and retaliation against an individual for cooperating with an investigation of a complaint, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization.

III. School Admissions and Participation

(1) All public schools in the district shall admit students without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

(2) No school shall discourage in any express or implied manner, applicants for admission because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

(3) The national citizenship of any applicant shall not be a criterion for admission to any public school, and nor shall national citizenship be a factor in the assignment or availability of courses of student or extra-curricular activities.

(4) Any standards used as part of the admissions process to any school [as referred to in 603 CMR 26.02 (1)] shall not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. A student's limited English-speaking ability (see MGL Ch. 71A) shall not be a deterrent to or limitation of a student's admission to a school.

(5) A school shall determine what courses or units of study are required of a student without regard to the race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity of the student.

(6) A school shall not schedule students into courses or units of study on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

(7) All district schools shall, through their curricula, encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

(8) Teachers shall review all instructional and education materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials shall be used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in such materials.

(9) Each school shall provide equal opportunity for physical education for all students. Goals, objectives and skill development standards, where used, shall neither be designated on the basis of sex, nor designed to have an adverse impact on members of either sex.

(10) Participation in extra-curricular activities shall be actively encouraged by each school for all students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

IV. Active Efforts

(1) The school district shall monitor all aspects of the K through 12 school program to ensure that all students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity are given an opportunity to participate in all programs offered by the school including athletics and other extra-curricular activities.

(2) All schools shall strive to prevent harassment or discrimination based upon students' race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity and each district school shall respond promptly to such discrimination or harassment when it has knowledge of its occurrence.

(3) The school committee and the superintendent shall provide in-service training for all school personnel at least annually regarding: (a) the prevention of discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity; and, (b) the appropriate methods for responding to such discrimination and harassment in a school setting.

V. Complaints of Discrimination: Procedures

If any student, employee or community member believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination, the individual has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally.

For specific contact information of coordinators of the following programs: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, MA General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistant Act, see the district website: www.dcrsd.org.

Any person who feels aggrieved as a result of policies and practices within the district with regard to educational opportunities regulated by 603 CMR 26:00, et seq. Will direct their complaints as follows:

- Grievances in regard to discrimination related to educational practices and opportunities shall be directed at first level to the building principal of the school which the student attends or seeks to attend.
- A resolution of the complaint or grievance will be attempted at that level. If the grievant, be they student or parent or guardian, is not satisfied with the resolution or disposition of the complaint, the grievant shall register a complaint with the superintendent of schools.

- If a just and equitable resolution of the complaint is not arrived at the level of superintendent of schools, the grievant, the parent or guardian of the grievant, shall request to be placed on the agenda of the most appropriate and convenient school committee meeting.
- Upon reviewing the matter of grievance, the school committee shall uphold the superintendent's decision, make suggestions to modify and resolve the problem or shall uphold the complainant and reverse or modify the superintendent's decision if and to the extent that in its judgment the decision was not in compliance with applicable law and this policy. The school committee decision and its reasons therefore shall be rendered in writing to the complainant, with a copy to the superintendent.

VI. Investigation of Allegations of Discrimination:

When the school district receives the complaint it will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair an expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include private interviews with: (a) the person filing the complaint; (b) any witnesses if any; and (c) the person alleged to have committed the discriminatory action. When the district has completed its investigation it will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the district will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate will also impose disciplinary action.

VII. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by a district employee, the district will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from retraining, to counseling to suspension or expulsion if warranted under applicable law, and may also include notification of law enforcement officials.

VIII. State and Federal Remedies

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC: 180 days: MCAD: six months).

The within policy is not intended to create and shall not have the effect of creating any additional judicial or administrative cause of action or remedy (other than the internal, administrative procedures and remedies set forth respectively in Section V, VI, and VII above), nor of affecting in any way the applicable period of time for filing a claim with the EEOC or MCAD.

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Mass. Commission Against Discrimination Worcester City Hall

JFK Federal Building Room 475 Government Center Boston, MA 02203 800-669-4000 617-565-3196 - FAX	455 Main Street, Room 101 Worcester, MA 01608 508-799-8010 508-799-8490 - FAX

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

District 504 Coordinator *(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy AC)*
(Heather Harriman)
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
68 Dudley-Oxford Rd.
Dudley, MA 01571
508-943-6700

LEGAL REFS:

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7905 (The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)

M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

Acts of 2022, Chapter 117

https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

ACAB, Sexual Harassment

GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity

IJ, Instructional Materials

JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

Original Adopted Date:
March 24, 2006

Amendment Dates:
November 14, 2012
April 10, 2019

AC-R - NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally- appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against another member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Definitions

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" are defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual´s actual or perceived race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law, discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district´s programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual´s education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment.

Harassment includes Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment which are more specifically addressed in File ACBB.

Retaliation means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any person by the District, a student, or an employee or other person authorized by the District to provide aid, benefit, or service under the District´s education program or activity, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or other Federal or State law providing protection against sex discrimination including sexual and sex-based harassment, or because the person has reported information, made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing as provided under District´s , including in an informal resolution process, in grievance procedures and in any other actions taken by the District under § 106.44(f)(1) of Title IX.

Resources

(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy AC-R)

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, and can be reached at:

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent)
68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571
508.943.6888 x282

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent)
68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571
508.943.6888 x282

In addition, *(Heather Harriman)* is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571
508.943.6888 x 278

Inquiries concerning the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Superintendent. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109; (617) 289-0111; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov; Website: www.ed.gov/ocr

*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

LEGAL REFS.:

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972

Title IX

Education Amendments of 1972

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7905 (The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)

M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

Acts of 2022, Chapter 117

https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

ACBB, Sexual Harassment

GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity

IJ, Instructional Materials

JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure

ACA - NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity,-sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school district's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District shall provide a notice of non-discrimination along with the contact information for its Title IX Coordinator as set forth below. The notice shall be given to students; parents, guardians, or other authorized legal representatives of elementary school and secondary school students; employees; applicants for admission and employment; and all unions and professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy ACA)

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION & RELATED TITLE IX INFORMATION

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee and the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Schools do not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education´s Office for Civil Rights, or both. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's Title IX Coordinator is *(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, ktrue2dcrsd.org, 508.943.6888 x282).*

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at *(https://www.dcrsd.org/about-dcrsd/district-policies)*.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please contact the Title IX Coordinator Title IX Coordinator is *(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, ktrue2dcrsd.org, 508.943.6888 x282).*

The District shall prominently include all elements of its notice of nondiscrimination set out above on its website and in each handbook, catalog, announcement, bulletin, and application form that it makes available to persons entitled to notice under this section, or which are otherwise used in connection with the recruitment of students or employees.

LEGAL REFS.:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)

M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

BESE 603 CMR 26:00

REFERENCE: USDOE Notice of Interpretation -

https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-confirms-title-ix-protects-students-discrimination-based-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure

ACA-R - NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX UNDER TITLE IX INCLUDING SEX-BASED HARASSMENT

I. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's obligation to respond under Title IX requires the District to be aware of discrimination based upon sex, including sex-based harassment. The District has actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment, that meet the definition of harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint.

Title IX Sexual Discrimination applies to conduct that occurs within the United States in an education program or activity of the District, regardless of whether such District program or activity is conducted on or off school grounds. Additionally, under Title IX, the District has an obligation to address a sex-based hostile environment under its education program or activity, even when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside the recipient´s education program or activity or outside the United States. A District education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the District exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred.

II. Designation of a Title IX Coordinator, Responsibilities & Training

(1) Title IX Coordinator. The District shall designate and authorize at least one employee, referred to herein as a Title IX Coordinator, to coordinate its efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX. In the event the District designates more than one Title IX Coordinator, it must designate one of its Title IX Coordinators to retain ultimate oversight over those responsibilities and ensure the District´s consistent compliance with its responsibilities under Title IX.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the District´s compliance with its obligations under Title IX and when notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX is required to take actions to promptly and effectively end any sex discrimination in its education program or activity, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects, pursuant to Title IX 106.44(f), in part by:

(i) Treating the complainant and respondent equitably;

(ii) Offering and coordinating supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant and if the grievance procedures has been initiated or an informal resolution process has been offered, for the respondent as well.

(iii) Notifying parties of the grievance procedure and the informal resolution process if available and appropriate;

(iv) Initiating the grievance procedure or the informal resolution process if available, appropriate, and agreed to by all parties;

(v) In the absence of a complaint or the withdrawal of any or all of the allegations in a complaint, and in the absence or termination of an informal resolution process,

determining whether to initiate a complaint of sex discrimination that complies with the grievance procedures. To make this fact-specific determination, the Title IX Coordinator must consider, at a minimum, the following factors:

(1) The complainant´s request not to proceed with initiation of a complaint;

(2) The complainant´s reasonable safety concerns regarding initiation of a complaint;

(3) The risk that additional acts of sex discrimination would occur if a complaint is not initiated;

(4) The severity of the alleged sex discrimination, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require the removal of a respondent from campus or imposition of another disciplinary sanction to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;

(5) The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee of the District;

(6) The scope of the alleged sex discrimination, including information suggesting a pattern, ongoing sex discrimination, or sex discrimination alleged to have impacted multiple individuals;

(7) The availability of evidence to assist a decisionmaker in determining whether sex discrimination occurred; and

(8) Whether the District could end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating its grievance procedures

If, after considering these and other relevant factors, the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct as alleged presents an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the complainant or other person, or that the conduct as alleged prevents the recipient from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its education program or activity, the Title IX Coordinator may initiate a complaint.

(vi) If initiating a complaint under paragraph (v) above of this section, notifying the complainant prior to doing so and appropriately addressing reasonable concerns about the complainant´s safety or the safety of others, including by providing supportive measures;

(vii) Regardless of whether a complaint is initiated, taking other appropriate prompt and effective steps, in addition to steps necessary to effectuate the remedies provided to an individual complainant, if any, to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the recipient´s education program or activity.

Parental, family, or marital status; pregnancy or related conditions.

The Title IX Coordinator shall coordinate actions on behalf of the District to promptly and effectively prevent sex discrimination and ensure equal access to the District´s education program or activity pursuant to the provisions of Title IX, §

106.40 once a student, or a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, notifies the Title IX Coordinator of the student´s pregnancy or related conditions. These actions shall include

(i) Informing the student, and if applicable, the person who notified the Title IX Coordinator of the student´s pregnancy or related conditions and has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, of the District´s obligations under paragraphs Title IX, §§ 106.40(b)(1) through (5), § 106.44(j) and providing the District´s notice of nondiscrimination.

(ii) Providing reasonable modifications to the District´s policies, practices, or procedures as necessary to prevent sex discrimination and ensure equal access to the District´s education program or activity. Each reasonable modification must be based on the student´s individualized needs following consultation with the student.to determine what modifications are required. A modification is not reasonable if the District can demonstrate that it would fundamentally alter the nature of its education program or activity.

(iii) Providing the student voluntary access to any separate and comparable portion of the District´s education program or activity.

(iv) Providing the student voluntary leave of absence from the District´s education program or activity to cover, at minimum, the period of time deemed medically necessary by the student´s licensed healthcare provider. If the student qualifies for leave under a leave policy maintained by the District that allows a greater period of time than the medically necessary period, the student may take voluntary leave under that policy instead if the student so chooses. When the student returns to the District´s education program or activity, the student must be reinstated to the academic status and, as practicable, to the extracurricular status that the student held when the voluntary leave began.

(v) Providing the student access to a lactation space, which must be a space other than a bathroom, that is clean, shielded from view, free from intrusion from others, and may be used by a student for expressing breast milk or breastfeeding as needed.

(vi) Not requiring supporting documentation under paragraphs (ii) through (v) above unless the documentation is necessary and reasonable for the District to determine the reasonable modifications to make or whether to take additional specific actions under paragraphs (ii) through (v) above

(vii) Treating pregnancy or related conditions in the same manner and under the same policies as any other temporary medical conditions with respect to any medical or hospital benefit, service, plan, or policy the recipient administers, operates, offers, or participates in with respect to students admitted to the recipient´s education program or activity.

(viii) Not requiring a student who is pregnant or has related conditions to provide certification from a healthcare provider or any other person that the student is

physically able to participate in the recipient´s class, program, or extracurricular activity unless:

- The certified level of physical ability or health is necessary for participation in the class, program, or extracurricular activity;
- The recipient requires such certification of all students participating in the class, program, or extracurricular activity; and
- The information obtained is not used as a basis for discrimination prohibited by this part.

(2) Delegation to designees. As appropriate, the District may delegate, or permit the Title IX Coordinator to delegate, specific duties to one or more designees.

(3) Training.

The District must ensure that the persons described in paragraphs (A) through (D) below receive training related to their duties under Title IX promptly upon hiring or change of position that alters their duties under Title IX and annually thereafter. This training must not rely on sex stereotypes.

A. All employees.

All employees must be trained on:

(i) The District´s obligation to address sex discrimination in its education program or activity;

(ii) The scope of conduct that constitutes sex discrimination under Title IX, including the definition of sex-based harassment; and

(iii) All applicable notification and information requirements in response to reports of sexual discrimination and pursuant to the District´s Title IX Grievance Procedure.

B. Investigators, decisionmakers, and other persons who are responsible for implementing the District´s grievance procedures or have the authority to modify or terminate supportive measures.

In addition to the training requirements in paragraph A. above, all investigators, decisionmakers, and other persons who are responsible for implementing the District´s grievance procedures or have the authority to modify or terminate supportive measures must be trained on the following topics to the extent related to their responsibilities:

(i) The District´s obligations to respond to sexual discrimination under Title IX § 106.44;

(ii) The District´s grievance procedures;

(iii) How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias; and

(iv) The meaning and application of the term “relevant" in relation to questions and evidence, and the types of evidence that are impermissible regardless of relevance under Title IX.

C. Facilitators of informal resolution process.

In addition to the training requirements in paragraph A. above, all facilitators of an informal resolution process must be trained on the rules and practices associated with the District´s informal resolution process and on how to serve impartially, including by avoiding conflicts of interest and bias.

D. Title IX Coordinator and designees.

In addition to the training requirements in paragraphs A. through C. above, the Title IX Coordinator and any designees must be trained on their specific responsibilities as set forth in paragraph (1) above and the requirements of the District´s recordkeeping system.

III. Receipt of Complaint

The Superintendent in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator shall designate the principal of each school in the district, or their designee (or some other appropriate employee(s)) as the initial entity to receive a sex discrimination complaint, including sexual and sex-based harassment. The Title IX Coordinator shall be informed, as soon as possible, of the filing of the complaint. Nothing in the District´s policy shall prevent any person from reporting the prohibited conduct to someone other than those above designated complaint recipients. The investigating officer may receive the complaint orally or in writing, and the investigation shall be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and in compliance with applicable law. The investigation will be prompt, thorough, and impartial, and will include, at least, a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. Also, the alleged harasser will be interviewed. When the investigation is completed, the complaint recipient will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

IV. Notification Requirements and Confidential Employees

All non-confidential employees are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX.

(1) The District shall notify all participants in the District´s education program or activity of how to contact its confidential employees, if any.

(2) The District shall require a confidential employee to explain to any person who informs the confidential employee of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX:

(i) The employee´s status as confidential for purposes of Title IX, including the circumstances in which the employee is not required to notify the Title IX Coordinator about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination;

(ii) How to contact the recipient´s Title IX Coordinator and how to make a complaint of sex discrimination; and

(iii) That the Title IX Coordinator may be able to offer and coordinate supportive measures, as well as initiate an informal resolution process or an investigation under the grievance procedures.

A confidential employee is:

(1) An employee of the District whose communications are privileged or confidential under Federal or State law. The employee´s confidential status, for purposes of this part, is only with respect to information received while the employee is functioning within the scope of their duties to which privilege or confidentiality applies;

(2) An employee of the District whom the recipient has designated as confidential under this part for the purpose of providing services to persons related to sex discrimination. If the employee also has a duty not associated with providing those services, the employee´s confidential status is only with respect to information received about sex discrimination in connection with providing those services.

V. Students With Disabilities

In the course implementing supportive measures, informal resolution, and/or a grievance procedure, and throughout the same, if either a complainant or respondent is an elementary or secondary student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator must consult with one or more members, as appropriate, of the student´s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, 34 CFR 300.321, if any, or one or more members, as appropriate, of the group of persons responsible for the student´s placement decision under 34 CFR 104.35(c), if any, to determine how to comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794.

VI. Emergency Removal & Administrative Leave

1. The District may remove a respondent from the District´s education program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that the District undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of a complainant or any students, employees, or other persons arising from the allegations of sex discrimination justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. This provision shall not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*

2. The District may place an employee respondent on administrative leave from employment responsibilities during the pendency of the District´s grievance procedures. This provision shall not be construed to modify any rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*

VII. Use of Supportive Measures

Supportive Measures are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the Complainant or Respondent, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and/or deter sexual discrimination.

Supportive Measures may be offered before or after the filing of a Formal Complaint or where no Formal Complaint has been filed. Supportive measures are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and/or deter sexual discrimination.

Supportive measures available to complainants and respondents include but are not limited to: counseling; extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments; modifications of work or class schedules; campus escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; changes in work locations; leaves of absence; increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the building and/or campus; and other similar measures. Violations of the restrictions imposed by supportive measures may be considered a violation of school rules and may also be considered in determining whether sexual discrimination has occurred.

VIII. Grievance Procedure

Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX will be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure. Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure.

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the District´s Civil Rights Grievance Procedure. (See exception under Section II, Part 4, Step 4 below). The

definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII, M.G.L. c. 151B, and M.G.L. c. 151C are set out in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.

IX. Informal Resolution

After a Formal Complaint is filed, and prior to determining whether sex discrimination occurred, the District may, at its discretion, opt to offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice. Both parties must give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt any offered informal resolution. Any informal resolution under this Procedure will be facilitated by trained personnel.

(1) The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of a student or if such a process would conflict with Federal, State or local law.

(2) The informal process is voluntary, and the respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time and resume the Formal Complaint grievance process. The District, as a condition of participation, must not require the parties to waive the right to an investigation and determination of a complaint as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or the exercise of any other right.

(3) The informal process shall not exceed thirty (30) calendar days, during which time the timelines of the Formal Complaint process will be stayed.

X. Due Process and Fairness

The District shall provide due process protections which include the following:

1) Equitable treatment of complainants and respondents.

2) Presumption that the respondent is not responsible until a determination is made.

3) Prompt timeframes for all major stages.

4) Reasonable steps to protect privacy of parties and witnesses during the grievance procedures.

5) Objective evaluation of relevant evidence and the exclusion of impermissible evidence.

6) If the District adopts procedures that apply to the resolution of only some complaints, articulate principles for how the District will determine which procedures apply.

7) Notice of allegations to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation.

8) Permitted dismissals in certain circumstances so long as the District offers an appeal and, as appropriate, supportive measures, and takes other steps to ensure sex discrimination does not continue or recur.

9) Permitted consolidation of complaints in certain circumstances.

10) Burden on the District to gather evidence and decide what is relevant or impermissible.

11) Equal opportunity for the parties to present fact witnesses and other evidence.

12) Equal opportunity for the parties to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence or an accurate description of this evidence (and if the District provides access to a description, it must provide access to the underlying evidence upon the request of any party); a reasonable opportunity to respond; and a requirement that the District take reasonable steps to prevent and address unauthorized disclosures.

13) A process for assessing credibility when credibility is in dispute and relevant.

14) Use of a preponderance of the evidence standard of proof to determine whether sex discrimination occurred, unless the clear and convincing evidence standard is used in all other comparable proceedings, in which case that standard may be used.

15) The decision maker shall not be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator unless the District otherwise provides for the same in the Grievance Procedure and specifically sets forth under what circumstances a single-investigator model may be used.

16) The facilitator for any informal resolution process shall not be the same person as the investigator or the decisionmaker in the District´s grievance procedures.

17) The decisionmaker for any appeal shall not have taken part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint;

18) If it is determined that sex discrimination occurred, the following actions will be taken:

1. Appropriate remedies will be provided to the complainant and others affected to address the consequences of the discrimination.
2. Individuals found responsible for the discrimination will face disciplinary actions, consistent with the Dudley-Charlton RSD policies and procedures.
3. Prompt and effective measures will be implemented to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur, including training, policy revisions, and enhanced oversight.

19) Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;

20) Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where an appeal is offered;

21) Upon filing a formal complaint, the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge

each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

22) An informal investigation process that may, upon the request of the complainant be followed by a formal process.

XI. Record Keeping

The District shall create records in accordance with its obligations under Title IX as noted below and maintain the same for a period of seven (7) years:

(1) For each complaint of sex discrimination, records documenting the informal resolution process and/or the grievance procedures and the resulting outcome.

(2) For each notification the Title IX Coordinator receives of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or records documenting the actions the District took to meet its obligations under Title IX.

(3) For all training all materials used to provide training to meet its obligations under Title IX. A District must make these training materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

CROSS REFS: ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure

ACGA - CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is committed to maintaining school environments free of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability.

Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in any form or for any reason is prohibited. This includes harassment or discrimination by administrators, personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. Retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or discrimination to the attention of school officials or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this Procedure is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

Persons who engage in harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school district administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

Non-Applicability of This Procedure to Title IX Sexual Discrimination Allegations

This policy (ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure) shall not apply to reports of sexual discrimination as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and its implementing regulations ("Title IX") effective August of 2024.

Allegations of conduct that could, if proven, meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall be addressed through the District´s Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure (ACGB). Similarly, allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sex-based harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure (ACGB).

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of **sex-based** harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.*

Definitions

For the purposes of this Procedure:

A. "Discrimination" means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or religion by which an individual is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school district.

B. "Harassment" means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity disability, or religion that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create or contribute to a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off color jokes,

threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which rises to the level of a hostile environment. A hostile environment is one which unreasonably interfered with an individual´s participation in, denied the individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjected the individual to discrimination under any program or activity of the District.

a. Non-Title IX Sexual Harassment

M.G.L. c. 151B, § 1 - the term "sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (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. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment.

M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1 - the term "sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual´s education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. A hostile environment on the basis of sex is created when the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment.

When determining whether an environment is hostile, the District shall consider the context, nature, frequency, and location of the incidents as well as the credibility of witnesses and the identity, number, and relationships of the persons involved. The District must consider whether the alleged harassment was sufficient to have created such an environment for a reasonable person of the same age, gender, and experience as the Complainant, and under similar circumstances. Off-campus conduct may constitute harassment if it creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; however, conduct does not constitute harassment where the incident occurs off-campus at a non-school sponsored activity and does not create a hostile environment at school for the victim.

C. Retaliation: Retaliatory acts against any individual who exercises their rights under the civil rights statutes covered by this Procedure or the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure are considered to be discrimination and are unlawful. Individuals are prohibited from coercing, intimidating, threatening, or interfering with an individual because the individual exercised any right granted or protected under these procedures and/or the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

D. Complainant: An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this Procedure. Parents and/or legal guardians of a complainant are not considered a complainant but may file formal complaints on behalf of a minor child and act on behalf of the minor child in any civil rights matter.

E. Party or Parties: The complainant and/or respondent.

F. Principal: The Principal or Principal´s designee.

G. Respondent: An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this Procedure.

How to make a complaint:

Any student or employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Students may also report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor. Any complaint received by a school personnel shall be promptly reported to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. A complaint will not be dismissed because it was reported to the incorrect school personnel. Students or employees who are unsure whether discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the Principal. There may be instances where another third-party, who has not experienced but is aware of the occurrence of prohibited conduct, may bring a complaint under this Procedure. In such circumstances, that person is referred to as the "reporter."

A. Any District employee who observes or receives a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation shall promptly notify the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, identified below. Any District employee who observes discrimination, harassment or retaliation against a student should intervene to stop the conduct and report it to Principal. Upon receipt of a report of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Principal shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator of the report, and the District will respond in a manner consistent with this Procedure. If the report involves an accusation against the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, the employee shall report the incident to the Superintendent or designee.

B. Informal Reports: Individuals may wish to file a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or to report informally (i.e., without initiating a formal complaint). Such informal reports may be made to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. The District shall inform anyone making an informal report that they may initiate a formal complaint at any time, regardless of what steps are being or have been taken in response to an informal report.

C. Anonymous Reports: Complainants and reporters should be aware that although the District will often be able to maintain confidentiality of reporting persons, the District may sometimes be required to take actions to protect the safety of the school community that may result in the identity of the reporting person being disclosed (to the police, for example). When reporters or Complainants seek to remain anonymous or have their identities kept confidential, they will be informed that honoring such a request may limit the ability of the District to respond fully to any reported event, including limitations on the ability to take disciplinary action against a Respondent.

D. Informal Process: If the District concludes that it is possible to resolve a matter, whether after formal complaint or an informal report, in a prompt, fair, and adequate manner through an informal process involving, and with the consent of, the Complainant and Respondent, the District may seek to do so. The informal process is voluntary, and the Complainant and/or Respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time, without penalty.

E. Formal Process: A formal complaint shall state (if known to the reporter or Complainant) the name(s) of the persons involved and witnesses to the conduct, describe the conduct, and identify, to the extent possible, the dates and locations of the conduct. The complaint shall be signed and dated by the reporter and/or Complainant. Complaints will be investigated promptly and equitably by the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal. Investigations may be initiated whenever warranted, in the absence of a formal complaint, or after a formal complaint has been withdrawn.

F. Initial Assessments: The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will make an initial assessment following a complaint. Based on that assessment, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may: (a) if the conduct, even if substantiated, would not constitute harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, dismiss the complaint; (b) if the alleged conduct (or complaint) could not, even if true, constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, but is within the scope of another procedure, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall refer the matter to the appropriate personnel; (c) if the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal concludes that it is possible to resolve the complaint in a prompt, fair, and adequate manner through an informal process involving and with the consent of both parties, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may seek to do so in accordance with Section D, above; or (d) if the alleged conduct, if substantiated, would constitute discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will initiate an investigation. The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may also identify and initiate any interim measures. See Section G.

G. Interim Measures: The District will provide prompt and reasonable interim measures during the pendency of the investigation, if appropriate, to support and protect the safety of the parties, the educational environment, and the District and/or school community; to deter retaliation; and to preserve the integrity of the investigation and resolution process. Any interim measures will be monitored to ensure they are effective based on the evolving needs of the parties. Violations of the restrictions imposed by interim measures could be considered a violation of school rules and may be considered in determining whether discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred.

H. Timeframes: The District will seek to complete any investigation within twenty (20) school days after receipt of a complaint and provide the written notice of the outcome of the investigation within twenty-five (25) school days. The investigator may impose reasonable timeframes on all parties to facilitate the timely completion of the investigation. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond the time period identified due to extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If a complaint or report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is received within three (3) weeks of the end of the academic school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the District will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame, but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, they will notify the Complainant and Respondent of the extension. A report to the law enforcement will not automatically delay an investigation; however, a request from law enforcement to delay the investigation may require a temporary suspension of an investigation, and the District will promptly resume its investigation upon being advised that law enforcement´s evidence gathering is completed. Any interim measures provided to the parties may continue during the period of postponement. See Section G.

I. Under the formal resolution procedure, the complaint will be investigated by the Principal, Civil Rights Coordinator, or other individual designated by the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator who has responsibility for seeking and gathering evidence relative to the investigation. A formal complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor´s authority. During the formal resolution procedure:

1. The Complainant shall be provided with an opportunity to be heard and have the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.

2. The Respondent will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator´s consideration.

3. The privacy rights of the parties shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

4. The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.

5. The investigation will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

6. The notification of the outcome of the investigation, including, if appropriate, a description of the remedies taken, will be provided to the parties within twenty-five (25) school days of the receipt of the complaint, unless extended for good cause.

7. Nothing in this Procedure will preclude the investigator, in their discretion, from completing the investigation sooner than the time period described above.

J. Standard of Proof: The investigation shall make factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

K. If the investigator determines that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred, the District shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which shall include but not be limited to:

1. Identifying what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment or retaliation, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and

2. Informing the Complainant and Respondent or, in the case of minor children, the parties´ parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) in accordance with the above timelines. The notification will include the notice of the opportunity for appeal; however, failure to provide notice of appeal shall not constitute a violation of this policy.

The school district administration may also refer the offender for disciplinary procedures to be conducted in accordance with federal and state law. Nothing in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure shall be interpreted as limiting or prohibiting the District´s ability to take appropriate disciplinary action against the offender in accordance with the applicable code(s) of conduct or employment contracts or policies, where appropriate, prior to completion of the investigation, in accordance with the due process rights of employees and students, as applicable. When informing the parties´ parent(s)/legal guardian(s) about the results of the investigation, the school district may consider appropriate notification processes when special circumstances may apply (e.g., disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression).

L. Appeal: If the Complainant or the Respondent is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the Superintendent or designee within seven (7) calendar days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation, except for circumstances in which the Respondent is subject to long-term suspension as a result of a finding of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. In such an instance, the appeal rights of the Respondent will be provided in a manner consistent with the disciplinary due process requirements applicable to the circumstances (e.g., M.G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾). Appeals must be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the Superintendent, Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571. The Superintendent will decide the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of receipt of the written appeal.

M. Identification of Civil Rights Coordinator for complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation under this Procedure is:

(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy ACGA)

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, ktrue@dcrsd.org, 508.943.6888 x282)

N. Employment Agencies: The contact information for state and federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies is as follows: (1) Federal: United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); John F. Kennedy Federal Building; 15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475; Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000; EEOC Boston Area Office Website: https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location; and (2) State: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Headquarters; One Ashburton Place; Sixth Floor, Room 601; Boston, MA 02108; (617)-994-6000;

MCAD Website: https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-against-discrimination.

LEGAL REFS.:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Act;

M.G.L. c. 151B and c. 151C; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5;

CROSS REFS.:

JICFB, Bullying Prevention

AC, Nondiscrimination

ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure

ACGB - TITLE IX SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is committed to maintaining school environments free of sexual discrimination.

Sexual discrimination in any form or for any reason is prohibited. This includes sexual discrimination by administrators, personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school related events.

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

Retaliation against any individual who has brought sexual discrimination to the attention of school officials, or against an individual who has participated, or refused to participate, in the investigation thereof is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Conduct that reasonably may constitute retaliation is subject to this Grievance Procedure.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District has adopted grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or the Title IX regulations.

SCOPE

The Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure has been developed in accordance with the revised Title IX regulations, 34 CFR Part 106, effective August 1, 2024, which mandate specific procedures for responding to and investigating allegations of sexual discrimination under Title IX. This Grievance Procedure applies to all allegations of sexual discrimination under Title IX, including sex-based harassment which is further defined in the Definitions section below. For the purposes of this procedure the term "sexual discrimination" shall include the terms "sex-based harassment" and "sexual harassment" except as may otherwise be distinguished.

The Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure applies to conduct that occurs within the United States in an education program or activity of the District, regardless of whether such District program or activity is conducted on or off school grounds. Additionally, this Grievance Procedure applies to the District´s obligation under Title IX to address a sex-based hostile environment under its education program or activity, even when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside the recipient´s education program or activity or outside the United States. A District education program or activity includes locations,

events, or circumstances over which the District exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred.

Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX will be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure. Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure.

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the District´s Civil Rights Grievance Procedure. (See exception under Section II, Part 4, Step 4 below). The definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII, M.G.L. c. 151B, and M.G.L. c. 151C are set out in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.

Essential Requirements of Title IX Grievance Procedure:

A. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District will treat complainants and respondents equitably.

B. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District requires that any Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. A decision-maker may be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator.

C. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District presumes that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of its grievance procedures.

D. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District has established timeframes for the major stages of the grievance procedures which are set forth in detail below. See: II Filing a Title IX Formal Complaint

E. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District allows for the reasonable extension of timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause with notice to the parties that includes the reason for the delay as set forth below. See II. Filing a Title IX Formal Complaint, Step (10); Step 10, paragraphs (2) and (6).

F. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the parties and witnesses and keep the identity of complainants, respondents, and witnesses confidential, except as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as otherwise required by law, and/or as necessary during its grievance procedures. These steps will not restrict the ability of the parties to obtain and present evidence, including by speaking to witnesses; consult with their family members, confidential resources, or advisors; or otherwise prepare for or participate in

the grievance procedures. The parties cannot engage in retaliation, including against witnesses.

G. The Dudley-Charlton Regional Schools will objectively evaluate all evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Credibility determinations will not be based on a person´s status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

H. The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (i.e., will not be accessed or considered, except by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies; will not be disclosed; and will not otherwise be used), regardless of whether they are relevant:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;

- A party´s or witness´s records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the party or witness, unless the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District obtains that party´s or witness´s voluntary, written consent for use in its grievance procedures; and

- Evidence that relates to the complainant´s sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the complainant´s prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant´s consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

I. In the course implementing supportive measures, informal resolution, and/or a grievance procedure, and throughout the same, if either a complainant or respondent is an elementary or secondary student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator must consult with one or more members, as appropriate, of the student´s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, 34 CFR 300.321, if any, or one or more members, as appropriate, of the group of persons responsible for the student´s placement decision under 34 CFR 104.35(c), if any, to determine how to comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794.

DEFINITIONS

Complainant: An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual discrimination under Title IX. Parents and/or legal guardians of a complainant are not considered a complainant but may file a Formal Complaint on behalf of a minor child and act on

behalf of the minor child in any Title IX matter. For the purpose of this Procedure the terms "complainant" and "alleged victim" shall have the same meaning.

Formal Complaint: A document or electronic submission filed by a complainant, that contains the complainant´s physical or digital signature or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the Formal Complaint, or a document signed by the Title IX coordinator, that:

(1) alleges sexual discrimination against a respondent; and

(2) requests that the District investigate the allegation of sexual discrimination

At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the District´s education program or activity with which the Formal Complaint is being filed.

Sex-Based: Under Title IX, Sex-Based is a form of sexual discrimination which includes three (3) types of misconduct based on sex:

(1) any instance of quid pro quo harassment by a school employee;

(2) unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, including unwelcome conduct based on sex stereotyping or on the basis of traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, that is sufficiently severe and pervasive and objectively offensive conduct, effectively denying a person equal educational access; or

(3) any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined below.

Sexual Assault: An offense that meets the definition of rape, fondling, incest, or statutory rape as used in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting system and set out below:

- Rape: The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

- Fondling: The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental incapacity. In Massachusetts, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 265, § 13B, a child under the age of 14 is incapable of giving consent to indecent touching.

- Incest: Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

- Statutory Rape: Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent. In Massachusetts, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 265, § 23, the statutory age of consent is 16 years of age.

For the purposes of the definition of sexual assault, the term "consent" shall be defined in a manner consistent with Massachusetts laws.

Dating Violence: Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party´s statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition, dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence: A felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim; by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred; by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person´s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

Stalking: Engaging in a "course of conduct" directed at a specific person that would cause a "reasonable person" to fear for the person´s safety or the safety of others or suffer "substantial emotional distress."

For the purposes of this definition:

"Course of conduct" means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person´s property.

"Reasonable person" means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

"Substantial emotional distress" means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Party or Parties: The complainant and/or respondent.

Principal: The Principal or Principal´s designee.

Respondent: An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual discrimination

Superintendent: The Superintendent or Superintendent´s designee.

Supportive Measures: Individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the Complainant or Respondent, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and/or deter sexual discrimination

- Supportive Measures may be offered before or after the filing of a Formal Complaint or where no Formal Complaint has been filed. Supportive measures are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and/or deter sexual discrimination

• Supportive measures available to complainants and respondents include but are not limited to: counseling; extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments; modifications of work or class schedules; campus escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; changes in work locations; leaves of absence; increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the building and/or campus; and other similar measures. Violations of the restrictions imposed by supportive measures may be considered a violation of school rules and may also be considered in determining whether sexual discrimination has occurred.

Title IX Coordinator: Employee(s) designated by the District to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX.

I. REPORTING SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

A. Who May Report Sexual Discrimination: Anyone may report an allegation of sexual discrimination.

B. How to Report Sexual Discrimination: Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator or the Principal, but any District employee who receives a report of sexual discrimination will respond to the report as outlined below.

C. Internal Reporting: Any District employee who receives a report of sexual discrimination shall respond by promptly informing the Principal or Title IX Coordinator of the report. Any District employee who observes sexual discrimination of a student should intervene to stop the conduct and shall promptly inform the Principal or Title IX Coordinator of the incident. If a report involves an allegation against the Principal or Title IX Coordinator, the District employee shall instead report the allegation to the Superintendent.

Any Principal who receives a report of sexual discrimination shall promptly inform the relevant Title IX Coordinator of the report.

D. District´s Response to Report: The District will respond to all reports of sexual discrimination promptly and equitably, and in a manner consistent with this Procedure and any other relevant District procedures and policies. Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator shall:

(1) Promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures;

(2) Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint;

(3) Consider the complainant´s wishes with respect to supportive measures;

(4) If the District does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and

(5) Explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint. Only the filing of a Title IX Formal Complainant will trigger the Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process, outlined in Section II.

II. FILING A TITLE IX FORMAL COMPLAINT

Only the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint will trigger the Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process, outlined below.

A. Who may file a Title IX Formal Complaint: Although anyone may report sexual harassment, only a complainant or a Title IX Coordinator may file a Title IX Formal Complaint. If a complainant chooses not to file a Formal Complaint, the complainant´s choice to not initiate an investigation will generally be respected, unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a Formal Complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The Title IX Coordinator will take into account concerns articulated by the parties, the best interests of the community, fairness to all concerned, and the District´s legal obligations under applicable state and federal laws. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs the Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during the grievance process and must comply with the requirement to be free from conflicts or bias.

B. Processing of a Title IX Formal Complaint: Title IX Formal Complaints will be investigated promptly and equitably by the Title IX Coordinator or designee, as follows:

Step 1: Title IX Formal Complaint is filed:

(1) A Formal Complaint shall state (if known to the reporter or alleged victim) the name(s) of the persons involved, witnesses to the conduct, if any, a description of the conduct, and to the extent possible, the dates and locations of the conduct. A Formal Complaint will not be dismissed solely because it was not completely filled out or it was filled out incorrectly.

(2) A Formal Complaint may be filed at any time, including during non-business hours. Formal Complaints submitted outside of normal business hours will be deemed received on the following school working day.

(3) At the time of the filing of the Formal Complaint, the alleged victim must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the school district with which the Formal Complaint is filed.

(4) A Formal Complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information for the Title IX Coordinator listed in this Procedure, and by any additional method designated by the school.

(5) Consolidation of Formal Complaints: The District may consolidate complaints of sex discrimination against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same

facts or circumstances. When more than one complainant or more than one respondent is involved, references below to a party, complainant, or respondent include the plural, as applicable. The District is not permitted to consolidate complaints if consolidation would violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Consolidation would not violate FERPA when the District obtains prior written consent from the parents or a student who has reached 18 years of age to the disclosure of their education records.

(6) The District may consider the use of the Informal Resolution Process with the consent of the parties. See Section II(E).

(7) Throughout this process, there shall be a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

Step 2: Consider Supportive Measures for both the complainant and the respondent: Once a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will ensure that supportive measures are considered for both parties. See Section I(D).

Step 3: Written Notice of Allegations: Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the District shall send written notice to the parties which shall include:

1) The District´s Title IX grievance procedures and any informal resolution process;

2) Sufficient information available at the time to allow the parties to respond to the allegations, including the identities of the parties involved in the incident(s), the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination, and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s);

3) A statement prohibiting retaliation;

4) A statement prohibiting knowingly submitting false information;

5) A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct;

6) That a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;

7) That the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney; and

8) That the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence or an accurate description of this evidence. If the District provides a description of the evidence the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence upon the request of any party.

If, in the course of the investigation, the District decides to investigate allegations of sexual harassment that are not included in the initial written notice of allegations, the

District shall provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

Step 4: Consider Whether Dismissal of Formal Complaint Warranted: Some Formal Complaints will be subject to mandatory or discretionary dismissal under Title IX.

1) The District may dismiss a complaint of sex discrimination if:

- The District is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The respondent is not participating in the District´s education program or activity and is not employed by the District;
- The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and the District determines that, without the complainant´s withdrawn allegations, the conduct that remains alleged in the complaint, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX even if proven; or
- The District determines the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. Before dismissing the complaint, the District will make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

2) Upon dismissal, the District will promptly notify the complainant in writing of the basis for the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the District will also notify the respondent simultaneously of the dismissal and the basis for the dismissal.

3) The District will notify the complainant that a dismissal may be appealed and will provide the complainant with an opportunity to appeal the dismissal of a complaint. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the District will also notify the respondent that the dismissal may be appealed. Dismissals may be appealed on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the dismissal was made; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that would change the outcome.

4) If the dismissal is appealed, the District will:

- Notify the parties of any appeal, including notice of the allegations, if notice was not previously provided to the respondent;
- Implement appeal procedures equally for the parties;

- Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint;
- Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal has been trained consistent with the Title IX regulations;
- Provide the parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; and
- Notify the parties of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

5) When a complaint is dismissed, the District will, at a minimum:

- Offer supportive measures to the complainant as appropriate;
- If the respondent has been notified of the allegations, offer supportive measures to the respondent as appropriate; and
- Take other prompt and effective steps, as appropriate, through the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District´s education program or activity.

6) Dismissal of a Formal Complaint for purposes of Title IX shall not preclude the District from addressing the allegations under any other relevant District policies or procedure(s), including but not limited to, the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, the Student Code of Conduct, and/or a collective bargaining contract, nor will it preclude the District from addressing the allegations pursuant to the grievance process set out in Section II of this Procedure. The Title IX Coordinator shall have the discretion to make any such referrals and proceed as appropriate in regard to the allegations.

Step 5: Initial Investigation: All Formal Complaints will be investigated by the Title IX Coordinator or other individual designated to serve as the investigator by the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator shall be responsible for seeking and gathering evidence relative to the investigation. Any Formal Complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor´s authority. During the Formal Complaint resolution process:

(1) The District will provide for adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints.

(2) Standard of Proof: The investigator shall make factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

(3) The burden is on the District —not on the parties—to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred.

(4) The District will review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and what evidence is impermissible regardless of relevance.

(5) The District shall provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.

(6) The District shall not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no "gag" orders).

(7) Each party may have one (1) advisor of their own selection and at their own expense participate in this grievance process. In the case of a student under the age of 18, this advisor may be in addition to the student´s parents/guardians. Any restrictions on the participation of an advisor will be applied equally to each party. The advisor may, but is not required to, be an attorney. Any evidence received by an advisor in this process is subject to confidentiality and may be used only for the purpose of the grievance process. Advisors are prohibited from disseminating or disclosing such evidence outside of the grievance process.

(8) The District shall send prior written notice to the parties of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings in which their participation is invited or expected.

(9) Privacy of Medical Treatment and Mental Health Treatment Records: The District may not access or use either the complainant´s or the respondent´s medical, psychological, or similar treatment records unless the District obtains the party´s written consent to do so.

(10) The investigator may impose reasonable timeframes on all parties as required to facilitate the timely completion of the investigation. The investigator may extend any of the timeframes beyond the time periods identified in this Procedure for good cause. If a complaint or report of sexual discrimination is received within three (3) weeks of the end of the academic school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the District will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the applicable time frames, but may extend the investigation period to account for the unavailability of witnesses while school is not in session. If the investigator extends the investigation, the investigator will notify the parties of the extension and the reasons therefore in writing.

Step 6: Opportunity for Parties to Access and Respond to Evidence: The District must provide the parties with an equal opportunity to access either the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, or an accurate description of this evidence. Such should be sent to the parties, and their advisor(s) (if they have one), in electronic format or hard copy. If the District provides a description of the evidence, it will provide the parties with an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence upon the request of any party. Parties shall be afforded ten (10) calendar days to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence. The District shall not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use evidence that constitutes information protected from disclosure by a legally recognized privilege, unless it has been waived by the holder of the privilege.

(1) Prior to providing evidence to the parties, the investigator may redact confidential information that is not directly related to the allegations or that is

otherwise barred from use under Title IX or by privilege (e.g., treatment records), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and/or 603 CMR 23.00. Information that is directly related to the investigation, and that is not expressly barred from disclosure under Title IX (e.g., treatment records), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and/or 603 CMR 23.00, must be made available for review by both parties.

(2) The parties and their advisors shall be prohibited from dissemination of any of the evidence for any purpose not directly related to this grievance procedure.

Step 7: Completion of the Investigative Report: The District must send the parties, and their advisor, an Investigative Report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence but does not reach any conclusions regarding responsibility, in electronic format or hard copy, within twenty-five (25) school days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, unless otherwise extended for good cause. A copy of the Investigative Report will also be sent to the decision-maker. The decision-maker shall not be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator unless the District has otherwise provided for the same in this Grievance Procedure and has specifically sets forth under what circumstances the single-investigator model may be used.

Step 8: Parties´ Opportunity to Respond to Investigative Report: The District shall provide each party ten (10) calendar days for the parties to respond to the investigative report. The Investigative Report will notify the parties of the opportunity to submit to the decision-maker directed questions of the other party and/or any witness within that same ten (10) calendar days. (See Step 9).

Step 9: Directed Written Questions from the Parties: After the Investigative Report has been sent to the parties, but prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker shall afford both the complainant and the respondent the opportunity to submit to the decision-maker written, relevant questions of the other party or any witness, provide the party with the other party´s and/or witness´s written responses to said written questions, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party in writing. Questions that seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and/or 603 CMR 23.00 shall not be permitted, unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege.

(1) The complainant shall be protected from answering questions about the complainant´s prior sexual behavior unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant´s consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

(2) Upon receipt of the Investigative Report, each party shall have ten (10) calendar days to submit directed relevant questions to the decision-maker in writing.

a. All questions must be posed in a respectful manner (e.g., without profanity and without attacking a person´s character or motivations).

b. Questions that are not relevant will be excluded, and the decision-maker shall explain to the party posing the question the reason(s) for excluding any question.

(3) Upon receipt of the directed questions from the District, each party and witness shall have five (5) calendar days to respond to those questions in writing.[1]

(4) After receipt of the answers by the parties, any follow-up questions by the parties shall be submitted to the decision-maker in writing within three (3) calendar days, and those follow-up questions shall be responded to in writing within three (3) calendar days of receipt.

(5) Each party will be provided a copy of the other party´s or witness´s written answers.

Step 10: Determination of Responsibility/Findings of Fact by the Decision-Maker:

(1) The decision-maker shall issue a written determination of responsibility for any sex discrimination that was determined to have occurred under Title IX. The determination shall be sent to all parties and shall include a description of the procedural steps taken, findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, the range of disciplinary sanctions to which the respondent may be subject, whether remedies will be provided to the complainant, and procedures and bases for appeal. The decision-maker's written determination shall not be completed by the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator.

(2) Standard of Proof: The decision-maker shall make factual findings to determine whether sex discrimination occurred based on a preponderance of the evidence standard. The standard of proof requires the decision-maker to evaluate relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence for its persuasiveness. If the decision-maker is not persuaded under the applicable standard by the evidence that sex discrimination occurred, whatever the quantity of the evidence is, the decision-maker will not determine that sex discrimination occurred

(3) The decision-maker´s findings shall be based on an objective review of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person´s status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

(4) The decision-maker shall not draw inferences about the determination of responsibility based solely on a party´s failure or refusal to answer questions.

(5) The written determination must be sent simultaneously to both parties.

(6) This determination shall be sent within twenty (20) school days of the issuance of the investigative report unless an extension is agreed upon by the parties or if the process is otherwise reasonably delayed. Except where the parties have agreed to an extension of the timeline or where the process is otherwise reasonably delayed, the written determination shall be issued within sixty (60) school days of receipt of the Formal Complaint.

C. Remedies: If the decision-maker determines that sexual discrimination has occurred, the Title IX Coordinator will, as appropriate:

(1) Coordinate the provision and implementation of remedies to a complainant and other people the District identifies as having had equal access to the District´s education program or activity limited or denied by sex discrimination;

(2) Eliminate the harassing environment, which must include but need not be limited to providing remedies to a complainant that are designed to restore or preserve the complainant´s equal access to the District´s education programs and/or activities. These remedies may be the same individualized services as the supportive measures outlined in Section I(D) above and/or may consist of alternative interventions and/or punitive or disciplinary sanctions that burden the respondent.

(3) Take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District´s education program or activity.

D. Discipline: Persons who engage in sexual discrimination or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination, expulsion (if applicable under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H ½), or other sanctions as determined by the District administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements. The Title IX Coordinator will, as appropriate:

(1) Coordinate the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions on a respondent, including notification to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions;

(2) Take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District´s education program or activity;

(3) Comply with the grievance procedures before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions against a respondent; and

(4) Not discipline a party, witness, or others participating in the grievance procedures for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on the determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

Although the respondent may, in accordance with Title IX, be subject to emergency removal at any time, the respondent may not be subject to disciplinary sanctions for the

misconduct defined under this Procedure until after this grievance process has been completed.

No discipline may be imposed on a respondent for sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX unless there is a determination at the conclusion of the grievance procedures that the respondent engaged in prohibited sex discrimination.

Not withstand the above paragraph a determination of no responsibility for purposes of Title IX shall not preclude the District from addressing the allegations under any other relevant District policies or procedure(s), including but not limited to, the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, the Student Code of Conduct, and/or a collective bargaining contract, nor will it preclude the District from addressing the allegations pursuant to the grievance process set out in Section II of this Procedure. The Title IX Coordinator shall have the discretion to make any such referrals and proceed as appropriate in regard to the allegations.

E. Informal Process: At any time prior to determining whether sex discrimination occurred pursuant to the district´s grievance procedure, the district, at its discretion, may opt to offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice. The district may determine whether or not it is appropriate to offer an informal resolution process when it receives information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or when a complaint of sex discrimination is made. Both parties must give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt any offered informal resolution. Any informal resolution under this Procedure will be facilitated by trained personnel.

(1) The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of a student or such a process would conflict with Federal, State, or local law.

(2) The informal process is voluntary, and the alleged victim and/or respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time and resume the Formal Complaint grievance process. The District, as a condition of participation, must not require the parties to waive the right to an investigation and determination of a complaint as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or the exercise of any other right.

(3) The informal process shall not exceed thirty (30) calendar days, during which time the timelines of the Formal Complaint process will be stayed.

(4) During the informal process the Title IX Coordinator shall take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District´s education program or activity.

F. Emergency Removal under Title IX: The District may remove a respondent on an emergency basis at any time provided that the District: (1) undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis; (2) determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual discrimination justifies removal and that there is no alternative to the respondent´s

emergency removal to mitigate the threat presented; and (3) provides the respondent with notice and the opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

G. Anonymous Reports: The District may be on notice of an allegation of sexual discrimination through receipt of an anonymous report. In cases of anonymous reports, the District´s obligation is to respond in a manner that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. If the anonymous reporter is the complainant and they request confidentiality, the District can and should offer supportive measures to the extent consistent with maintaining the request for confidentiality. If an anonymous report is received without a disclosure of the complainant´s identity, the District will be unable to provide the complainant supportive measures in response to that report. The District may in conformance with applicable state laws and regulations be required to report sexual discrimination identified in an anonymous complaint to state and/or local authorities such as the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families in conformance with state statutes and regulations and/or take actions to protect the safety of the school community (contacting the police, for example) that may result in the identity of the reporting person being disclosed. Although the District shall respond to anonymous reports of sexual discrimination in accordance with this Procedure, a Formal Complaint cannot be filed anonymously.

H. Appeals: The complainant or respondent may appeal from a determination regarding responsibility and/or from the District´s dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein, only on the following bases:

(1) procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;

(2) newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter; and/or

(3) Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.

(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy ACGB)

An appeal may be made to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) calendar days after receiving the determination of responsibility or dismissal. Appeals must be made in writing, email is sufficient, to the Superintendent, *(Steven M. Lamarche slamarche@dcrsd.org)*, Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, 508.943.6888 *(x142)*

The Superintendent or designee shall:

(1) Notify the parties of any appeal, including notice of the allegations consistent with paragraph (c) of this section if notice was not previously provided to the respondent;

(2) Implement appeal procedures equally for the parties;

(3) Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint;

(4) Provide the parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of, or challenging the outcome;

(5) Decide the appeal no later than thirty (30) calendar days of the date of receipt of the written appeal.

In cases in which it has been determined that a respondent student is subject to long-term suspension as a result of a finding of sexual discrimination in accordance with this Procedure, the respondent may elect to exercise their appeal under the disciplinary due process requirements applicable to the circumstances (e.g., M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾) in place of this appellate procedure.

The Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process is deemed complete when either the time period for appeal has lapsed or upon the issuance of the Superintendent´s decision on a timely filed appeal.

I. Recordkeeping: Records related to this Procedure will be maintained for a period of seven (7) years:

(1) For each complaint of sex discrimination, records documenting the informal resolution process and/or the grievance procedures and the resulting outcome.

(2) For each notification the Title IX Coordinator receives of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or records documenting the actions the District took to meet its obligations under Title IX.

J. Employment Agencies: The contact information for state and federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies is as follows: (1) Federal: United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); John F. Kennedy Federal Building; 15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475; Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000; EEOC Boston Area Office Website: https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location; and (2) State: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Headquarters; One Ashburton Place; Sixth Floor, Room 601; Boston, MA 02108; (617)-994-6000; MCAD Website: https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-against-discrimination

K. Identification of key personnel involved in Title IX process for reports and/or Formal Complaints of sexual discrimination:

Identification of key personnel involved in Title IX process for reports and/or Formal Complaints of sexual discrimination:

(Items in ( ) are not approved by School Committee for Policy ACGB)

- **Title IX Coordinator:**

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, 508.943.6888 x282 ktrue@dcrsd.org)

- **Investigator(s):**

  - **Elementary Level:**

(Jen Desto, Principal Mason Road Elementary School, 508.943.4312, jdesto@dcrsd.org)

(Laura Ramos, Principal Charlton Elementary School, 508.248.7774, lramos@dcrsd.org)

(Christopher Audette, Principal Dudley Elementary School, 508.943.3351, caudette@dcrsd.org)

(Peter Olson, Principal Heritage Elementary School, 508.248.4884, polson@dcrsd.org)

  - **Middle School Level:**

(Gregg Desto, Principal Dudley Middle School, 508.943.2224, gdesto@dcrsd.org)

(Stacy Monette, Principal Charlton Middle School, 508.248.1423, smonette@dcrsd.org)

  - **High School:**

(Darren Elwell, Principal Shepherd Hill RHS, 508.943.6700, delwell@dcrsd.org)

  - **All Staff:**

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, 508.943.6888 x282 ktrue@dcrsd.org)

- **Decision-maker:**

(Jen Desto, Principal Mason Road Elementary School, 508.943.4312, jdesto@dcrsd.org)

(Laura Ramos, Principal Charlton Elementary School, 508.248.7774, lramos@dcrsd.org)

(Christopher Audette, Principal Dudley Elementary School, 508.943.3351, caudette@dcrsd.org)

(Peter Olson, Principal Heritage Elementary School, 508.248.4884, polson@dcrsd.org)

(Gregg Desto, Principal Dudley Middle School, 508.943.2224, gdesto@dcrsd.org)

(Stacy Monette, Principal Charlton Middle School, 508.248.1423, smonette@dcrsd.org)

(Darren Elwell, Principal Shepherd Hill RHS, 508.943.6700, delwell@dcrsd.org)

- **Appeal Officer:**

(Steven Lamarche, Superintendent, 508.943.6888 slamarche@dcrsd.org)

- **Informal Resolution Facilitator:**

(Kelly True, Assistant Superintendent, 508.943.6888 x282 ktrue@dcrsd.org)

The District will notify students, employees, applicants for admission or employment, parents and legal guardians of students, and unions of the name, title, office address, email address and

telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator. This information will be prominently displayed on the District´s website.

LEGAL REFS.:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act;

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Act;

M.G.L. c. 151B and c. 151C; and M.G.L. c. 76, § 5

CROSS REFS.:

JICFB, Bullying Prevention;

AC, Nondiscrimination

ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

JIC, Student Discipline

ADDA - Background Checks

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY - ADDA

It shall be the policy of the Dudley-Charlton Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I) and Sex Offender Registry Information (S.O.R.I) from the Criminal History Systems Board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain C.O.R.I. data for employees of transportation vendors, e.g., yellow bus or specialized transportation, that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils. In addition, Dudley-Charlton Public Schools will also require S.O.R.I. data.

This policy is applicable to any fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check made for non-criminal justice purposes and requested under applicable federal authority and/or state statute authorizing such checks for licensing or employment purposes. Where such checks are allowable by law, the following practices and procedures will be followed.

The Superintendent or her/his certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the Criminal History Systems Board and Sex Offender Records Information from the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) on all employees. This includes individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including transportation vendors, employees and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children during their term of employment or volunteer service.

The Superintendent or his/her certified designees may also have access to Criminal History Record Information and Sex Offender Records Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Requesting CHRI (Criminal History Record Information) checks

Fingerprint-based CHRI checks will only be conducted as authorized by state and federal law, in accordance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations. If an applicant or employee is required to submit to a fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check, they shall be informed of this requirement and instructed on how to comply with the law. Such instruction will include information on the procedure for submitting fingerprints. In addition, the applicant or employee will be provided with all information needed to successfully register for a fingerprinting appointment.

Pursuant to a Department of Education C.O.R.I. Law Advisory dated February 17, 2003, "Direct and unmonitored contact with children means contact with a child when no other C.O.R.I. or S.O.R.I. cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students."

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available C.O.R.I. and S.O.R.I. data from the Criminal History Systems Board. In the event that a current employee has questions concerning the signing of the request form, he/she may meet with the Superintendent. However, failure to sign the C.O.R.I. or S.O.R.I request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent or her/his designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

C.O.R.I. / S.O.R.I. is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. C.O.R.I. / S.O.R.I. may be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, upon his or her request, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the Criminal History Systems Board or the Sex Offender Registry Board.

Access to C.O.R.I. / S.O.R.I. material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, C.O.R.I / S.O.R.I. material should be obtained only where the Superintendent has determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing C.O.R.I.: the type and nature of the offense, the date of the offense, and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant.

Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on C.O.R.I. checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the C.O.R.I. request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the C.O.R.I. check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's C.O.R.I. policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the C.O.R.I. record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information or Sex Offender Registry Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information or Sex Offender Registry Information.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records which the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: "An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances, or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances, and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment, or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all the legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

Determining Suitability

In determining an individual's suitability, the following factors will be considered: these factors may include, but not necessarily be limited to: the nature and gravity of the crime and the underlying conduct, the time that has passed since the offense, conviction and/or completion of the sentence, nature of the position held or sought, age of the individual at the time of the offense, number of offenses, any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof and any other factors deemed relevant by the district.

A record of the suitability determination will be retained. The following information will be included in the determination:

The name and date of birth of the employee or applicant;
The date on which the school employer received the national criminal history check results; and,
The suitability determination (either "suitable" or "unsuitable").

A copy of an individual's suitability determination documentation must be provided to another school employer, or to the individual, upon request of the individual for whom the school employer conducted a suitability determination.

Relying on Previous Suitability Determination.

The school employer may obtain and may rely on a favorable suitability determination from a prior employer, if the following criteria are met:

The suitability determination was made within the last seven years; and

The individual has not resided outside of Massachusetts for any period longer than three years since the suitability determination was made; and either

The individual has been employed continuously for one or more school employers or has gaps totaling no more than two years in his or her employment for school employers; or

If the individual works as a substitute employee, the individual is still deemed suitable for employment by the school employer who made a favorable suitability determination. Upon request of another school employer, the initial school employer shall provide documentation that the individual is still deemed suitable for employment by the initial school employer.

Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

If inclined to make an adverse decision based on an individual's CHRI, the district will take the following steps prior to making a final adverse determination:

Provide the individual with a copy of their CHRI used in making the adverse decision;
Provide the individual with a copy of this CHRI Policy;
Provide the individual the opportunity to complete or challenge the accuracy of their CHRI;
and
Provide the individual with information on the process for updating, changing, or correcting CHRI.

A final adverse decision based on an individual's CHRI will not be made until the individual has been afforded a reasonable time depending on the particular circumstances not to exceed thirty days to correct or complete the CHRI.

If a school employer receives criminal record information from the state or national fingerprint-based background checks that includes no disposition or is otherwise incomplete, the school employer may request that an individual, after providing him a copy of said background check,

provide additional information regarding the results of the criminal background checks to assist the school employer in determining the applicant's suitability for direct and unmonitored contact with children, notwithstanding the terms of General Laws chapter 151B, S. 4,(9,9 ½). Furthermore, in exigent circumstances, a school employer may, pursuant to the terms of DESE regulations (see specific regulations in legal references), hire an employee on a conditional basis without first receiving the results of a national criminal background check. After exhausting several preliminary steps as contained in the above referenced regulation the district may require an individual to provide information regarding the individual's history of criminal convictions; however, the individual cannot be asked to provide information about juvenile adjudications or sealed convictions. The superintendent is advised to confer with legal counsel whenever they solicit information from an individual concerning their history of criminal convictions.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 6:167-178, 15D:7-8; **71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St. 2002, c.385,** 276:100A

P.L. 92-544; Title 28 U.S.C. § 534; Title 28 C.F.R. 20.33(b)

42 U.S.C. § 16962

603 CMR 51.00**MCAD Regulations and D.O.E. Advisory on C.O.R.I. Law (Feb 17, 2003) 803 CMR 2.00, 3.05 (Chapter 14 of the Acts of 2004)**

Original Adopted Date:
June 25, 2014

Amendment Date:
May 8, 2024

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GBA - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (NEW)

The School Committee subscribes to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors. Any individual who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision must understand that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit, and ability.

*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:4;

603 CMR 26:00

Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 - https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

IJ - INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (NEW)

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school district. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.

2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.

3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.

4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.

5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual orientation.

6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30B:7; 71:48; 71:49; 71:50

BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REF.: KE, Public Complaints

IGA/IGD, Curriculum Development and Adoption

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY - ACAB

Sexual & Sex-Based Harassment and Retaliation

The Dudley-Charlton RSD School Committee and Dudley-Charlton Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members. that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual and sex-based harassment as provided under MA and Federal law. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Dudley-Charlton Public Schools.

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously the District shall respond promptly and meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment and shall investigate every formal complaint of harassment including sexual and sex-based harassment as well as retaliation and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, the District shall act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth the District´s goals of promoting an environment that is free of harassment including sexual and sex-based harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the District´s authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of harassment or sexual or sex-based harassment.

Definitions of Sexual Harassment

TITLE IX

Sex-based harassment prohibited by Title IX is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including as described in § 106.10 of Title IX, that is:

(1) Quid pro quo harassment. An employee, agent, or other person authorized by the District to provide an aid, benefit, or service under the District´s education program or activity explicitly or Impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person´s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

(2) Hostile environment harassment. Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person´s ability to participate in or benefit from the District´s education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment).

(3) Specific offenses. (i) Sexual assault (ii) Dating violence; (iii) Domestic violence; (iv) Stalking

TITLE VII

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits sexual harassment which is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. A hostile environment on the basis of sex is created when the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment.

M.G.L. c. 151B

M.G.L. c. 151B, § 1 - the term "sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (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. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment.

M.G.L. c. 151C

M.G.L. c. 151C, § 2 (g) prohibits the sexual harassment of students in any program or course of study in any educational institution and M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1 (e) defines "sexual harassment" as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a)) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual´s education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

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

- Unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences;
- Discussion of one's sexual activities; and
- Sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion as well as physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent)

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A , requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

Retaliation against a complainant, because they have filed a harassment or sexual harassment complaint assisted or participated in a harassment or sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. A student or employee who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination.

The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX will be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure. Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure.

The District´s Title IX Grievance Procedure is available at: [Title IX Grievance Procedure].

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the District´s Civil Rights Grievance Procedure. (See exception under Section II, Part 4, Step 4 below). The definitions of sexual harassment

under Title VII, M.G.L. c. 151B, and M.G.L. c. 151C are set out in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.

The District´s Civil Rights Grievance Procedure is available at: [Civil Rights Grievance Procedure].

This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

List the name and phone number of the District's Title IX Coordinator

● The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Title IX Coordinator is (Kelly True at 508.943.6888 x 282 and ktrue@dcrsd.org)**School specific complaints will be received by:**
(Items in () are not approved by School Committee for Policy ACBB)

● **Mason Road School** – (Principal Jennifer Desto 508.943.4312 x 611 and jdesto@dcrsd.org)

● **Charlton Elementary School** – (Principal Laura Ramos 508.248.7774 x 251 and lramos@dcrsd.org)

● **Heritage Elementary School** – (Principal Peter Olson 508.248.4884 x302 and polson@dcrsd.org)

● **Dudley Elementary School** – (Principal Chris Audette 508.943.3351 x610 and caudette@dcrsd.org)

● **Dudley Middle School** – (Principal Gregg Desto 508.943.2224 x1101 and gdesto@dcrsd.org)

● **Charlton Middle School** – (Principal Stacy Monette 508.248.1423 x1102 and smonette@dcrsd.org)

● **Shepherd Hill Regional High School** – (Principal Darren Elwell 508.943.6700 x160 and delwell@dcrsd.org)

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination
1 Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-994-6000

Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor

Boston, MA 02109
Phone: 617-289-0111

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John F. Kennedy Bldg
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203

Please note the above entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

CROSS REF.: ACGA, Civil Rights Grievance Procedure
ACGB, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure
Federal Clery Act

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DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

JICFB - BULLYING PREVENTION (updated from A)

The School Committee 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.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members 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 themselves, or of damage to their property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- 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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of electronic medium in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as 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/guardians and families are expected.

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

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,

- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district;

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 school district if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan

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

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

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.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

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.

Investigation 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 perpetrator 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 which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, 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 they shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent 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 fourteen 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 school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, 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.

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 school district website.

~~**POLICY – A**~~

~~**Bullying**~~

~~**I. Policy**~~

~~**A.** It is the policy of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to take pro-active, reasonable measures designed to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and other members of the school community free from sexual harassment, bullying, hazing and intimidation. These terms are referenced herein as "harassment", which is more particularly defined below. The district in the strongest possible terms condemns harassment, whether based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other reason.~~

~~"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students or 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 para-professional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear or harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.~~

~~**B.** It is a violation of policy for any student or member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, to engage in or condone harassment in school, on school grounds or at or in a school-related function, activity, communication or contact, or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when he/she becomes aware of an incident of harassment.~~

~~**C.** This policy is not designed or intended to, nor shall it, limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action to take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school, but has a sufficient nexus to school under applicable law, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school-related activities. Reports of harassment, including but not~~

limited to cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed, and, when a sufficient nexus to school or school-related work exists, will result in discipline.

D. It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent/guardian to recognize acts of harassment and take reasonable action to see that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. All members of the school community are, and must act as partners in such efforts if we are to have any reasonable chance of success in preventing or minimizing activity of this type, which is harmful to both the victim and the perpetrator. The children attending our schools are in critical, formative stages of their lives. To the extent that we, working together, are able to show them a better way, they will reap immeasurable, lifelong benefits.

E. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment has the right to file a complaint and to receive reasonably prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. While proper enforcement of this policy foreseeably may require disclosure of any or all information received, all reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality to the extent consistent with such enforcement.

F. The building principal/designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment.

II. Prohibition and Definitions

A. Harassment, including bullying, may take a variety of forms. It is utterly unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, neither any student, nor employee nor other member of the school community shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying in any public educational institute.

Bullying is further defined as behavior that must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges:

1. being offered by or through the school district; or
2. during any district-related educational program or activity; or
3. while in school, on or using school district property or equipment, in a school vehicle, on a school bus, at school-designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or
4. through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute related to or provided or facilitated by the district; or
5. in circumstances otherwise having a sufficient nexus with the school district.

B. "Electronic communication" as used in this policy means any communication through an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

III. Guidelines and Procedures for Investigating and Processing Harassment Claims

Harassment may take many forms. In a school district such could involve an instance of staff member to staff member, staff member to student, student to staff member, or student to student. It conceivably could also include parent to a student other than the parent's child, staff member to parent, or parent to staff member. This listing is illustrative and the procedures set forth herein are not intended to limit the definition of harassment, nor the district's authority to take appropriate action as to same except to the extent that specific subject matter is expressly addressed herein.

Guidelines and procedures for dealing with any charge of harassment are as follows:

A. By law, harassment is defined by the victim's perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the victim make it clear to the harasser that the behavior is objectionable.

B. In all charges of harassment, the victim should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. If possible victim should sign the complaint. Oral and anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result, no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by what the administration in the good faith exercise of its reasonable discretion deems to be clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard, namely whether the administration in the exercise of its aforementioned discretion, taking into account all material information and circumstances, concludes that a violation of this policy more likely than not has occurred.

C. Any school employee who has reasonably reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person may be a target of harassment, bullying or intimidation shall immediately, as a condition of employment report it to the administration. Each school shall document each prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report each such incident and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals if any, to the superintendent's office in a timely fashion and without any avoidable delay.

D. A good faith report from a staff member is not grounds for any legal liability and, since such reports are a condition of the staff member's employment, is considered to have been made in the course of employment for purposes of employment the Municipal Tort Claims Act, M.G.L. Ch. 258. As a result, the employee would not be subject to damages simply by reason of making such a report, and in the event of a suit based solely thereon would be covered by the school district's insurance policy which provides defense of such suits.

E. If an instance of student to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II above, is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the building principal/designee in timely fashion. If the alleged harasser would otherwise be responsible for conducting an investigation, the Alternate Harassment Coordinator designated by the

superintendent or school committee, who is presently the curriculum coordinator, shall conduct the investigation and report to the alleged harasser's immediate supervisor.

F. If a situation involving a charge of staff member to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II. above, is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the building principal immediately.

G. Once a charge of harassment has been made, the following course of action should be taken.

1. The building principal or such principal's designee should conduct a reasonable, factual investigation by means of discussions with the individuals involved, any other witnesses if any, review of any documents and other, written or electronic materials, etc.

If the principal himself or herself does not conduct the investigation, he or she should review the designee's report and supporting documentation (by way of example only, any written, signed statements by the complainant setting forth the allegations, any such statement by the accused and witnesses, and any other materials such as those mentioned above), as appropriate to the then current stage of the investigation and before making any determination as to whether a violation more likely than not has occurred, and if the principal deems such necessary or advisable should conduct direct interviews himself or herself during or following such review and before making a determination.

In situations involving allegations against an employee, the employee should be accorded all rights provided by any applicable statute and/or collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to being informed of his/her right to have a third party present at the time of the discussion if apt, and, in the case of a teacher, of the right to counsel if the any discussion could conceivably lead to a suspension (see, M.G.L. Ch. 71:42D).

In situations involving harassment of students, the principal should conduct an investigation with the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents/guardians will be informed of the situation and invited to participate in resolution discussions if warranted.

Parents/guardians of students alleged to have engaged in harassment as to whom suspension is imposed shall be notified that they, or one of them must attend a meeting at which the behavior, words or images giving rise to the complaint may be reviewed. Before any final decision is made as to whether to impose discipline exceeding ten (10) school days, and the nature of such discipline, the student and her or his parent(s)/guardians will be informed in reasonable detail of the factual allegations underlying the complaint and given an opportunity to respond to and provide any information material to same.

In the school administration's discretion, depending on its preliminary assessment of the seriousness of a reported incident of alleged harassment, a student accused of harassment may be suspended from school under the procedures for suspension set forth in the student-parent handbook and not readmitted to the regular school program until the student and his or her parent(s) attend such meeting. A ten (10) school day suspension if deemed

reasonably necessary by the administration may be imposed prior to such a meeting, but before any such were imposed the student shall be informed of the ground(s) for such possible suspension in sufficient detail to allow the student to respond to the charge(s). A satisfactory conference with the student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must occur prior to the students' readmission.

It is important that each situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as circumstances reasonably permit.

2. At any stage of the proceedings the alleged harasser and the victim may discuss the matter at a resolution meeting in the presence of the principal/designee and/or parent when appropriate. During this discussion, the offending behavior should be described by the victim and the administration If warranted a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop and not recur. If circumstances do not permit a face to face meeting the administration will present the victim's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution, if any, is voluntarily reached at such a meeting will result in appropriate discipline. The principal or his or her designee at the close of the meeting shall prepare a written summary of the discussion held at the meeting and of any resolution, if any, agreed to at same, and shall ask the parties attending the meeting to review, date and sign the agreement. The administrator shall sign the summary, and if any party to the meeting refuses to sign shall note that fact thereon. No such memorandum must be included in a student's school record or an employee's personnel file unless otherwise required by law, but the principal shall keep a copy of same in her or his records.

H. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the building principal determines that further disciplinary action must be taken, the following may occur:

1. In instances involving student to student or student to staff member harassment, subject to applicable law and the disciplinary procedures set forth in the student-parent handbook, the student may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to counseling, suspension or expulsion.

2. In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member harassment, findings will be reported to the superintendent of schools for further action. Personnel action, up to and including discharge from employment, may also be initiated at this point, consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.

3. In all cases where in the good faith judgment of the principal or superintendent the circumstances so warrant, a referral to law enforcement will be made. School officials will coordinate with the Dudley or Charlton police departments to identify a police liaison for harassment cases.

IV. Retaliation:

~~In the event of retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed, or provided any information as to, a complaint relating to harassment, any employee or student found to have engaged in same shall be subject to discipline in accordance with applicable law. In the case of an employee, discipline may be up to and including dismissal from employment, and in the case of a student may be up to and including expulsion. If warranted, a referral to law enforcement shall also be made.~~

~~**V. Confidentiality:**~~

~~Reports of harassment should be kept completely confidential to the extent consistent with necessary investigation procedures, with the goal of protecting the victim and stopping the behavior.~~

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

603 CMR 26:00

M.G.L. 71:37O; 265:43, 43A; 268:13B; 269:14A

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination

ACAB, Sexual Harassment

JIC, Student Discipline

JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing