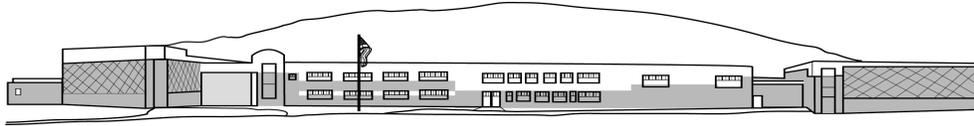


# **Gateway Regional School**



**Student-Family Handbook**  
**2025-2026 School Year**



**GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL**

12 Littleville Road • Huntington, MA 01050 • Tel: (413) 685-1102 • Fax: (413) 667-5593

**William Sullivan**  
*Principal*

**Valerie Zeh**  
*Assistant Principal*

**Letter from the Principal:**

Dear Gateway Regional Students and Families,

Welcome to Gateway Regional School (GRS). GRS serves students in grades 6-12 and is committed to supporting students where they are at and where they hope to be when they graduate. We are so excited for the 2025-2026 school year as there are many new and exciting things happening at GRS. With our new graduation requirements and coursework we are offering, the interests, needs, and desires of our students will be able to be prioritized. *“At Gateway Regional School, students are empowered to excel in life after graduation through intentionally personalized learning pathways and opportunities, crafted to foster a future of achievement, contribution, understanding, leadership, and community impact.”*

This year at GRS, students in grades 8-12 will take part in NEST each day for 24 minutes. During this time, students will be able to get extra help from teachers, participate in clubs and competitions, build community, and do some college and career preparation. In addition, students in grades 9-12, during their ELA classes, will have the opportunity to participate in extended studies. Extended studies are available to all students and there will be one each quarter. Students will opt into the extended studies and, if they earn a passing grade, will earn Honors credit on their transcript. Finally, students can also take part in new courses in grades 9-12 ranging from earth science and scientific writing, to athletic administration and mural painting. Students in grades 6-8 will also have an increase in Exploratory options. This year, there will be over 25 different Exploratory options for students to choose from that are focused on career exploration or skill development.

This is a very exciting time at GRS and we are excited to take part in this journey with each and every one of our students and staff. While here, we want you to work hard, make friends, feel part of a community, and feel ready for the next step in your life. As always, your dedicated staff and administration are here to support you and welcome any and all collaboration with the community.

Cheers to a great year!

William Sullivan, Principal

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Gateway Regional School  
12 Littleville Road  
Huntington, Massachusetts 01050

GRS Office	Phone: (413) 685 – 1102 Fax: (413) 667 – 5593 Website: <a href="https://www.grsd.org/">https://www.grsd.org/</a>
Grade 6-12 Attendance Line	Phone: (413) 685 – 1112
School District	Phone: (413) 685 – 1100 Website: <a href="https://www.grsd.org/">https://www.grsd.org/</a>
Pupil Services	Phone: (413) 685 – 1017
School Counseling Office	Phone: (413) 685 – 1107 Fax: (413) 667 – 0259
Nurses Office	Phone: (413) 685 – 1240
School Based Health Center	Phone: (413) 667 – 0142
Technology	Phone: (413) 685 – 1022
Athletic Director	Phone: (413) 685 – 1101
Gator Athletic Line	Phone: (413) 685 – 1111
Wellness Center	Phone: (413) 685 – 1040
Staff Emails	First name initial, last name @grsd.org (ex. jdoe@grsd.org)

# GATEWAY REGIONAL'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE AND EXCELLENCE

*At Gateway Regional School, students are empowered to excel in life after graduation through intentionally personalized learning pathways and opportunities, crafted to foster a future of achievement, contribution, understanding, leadership, and community impact.*

## Instructional Vision

### Students will:

- Engage in their school community
- Recognize their strengths and areas of growth to reach their potential
- Work together to support each other as members of the learning community
- Seize opportunities and direct next steps for learning based on interests and abilities
- Push through challenging tasks with a positive attitude.
- Know what they are learning and why they are learning it.

### Gateway Staff will:

- Know and reach every student
- Believe in every student's potential
- Push every student to grow as a learner and community member
- Create meaningful and personalized opportunities for all students
- Trust students to succeed after **productive struggle**
- Empower students to know what and why they are learning.

Students are empowered through **intentional design**.

## Gateway Gators are...

- Leaders
- Service-minded
- Technologically Skilled
- Communicators
- Collaborative
- Perseverant
- Knowledgeable
- Engaged
- Resourceful
- Self-directed

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL/OTHER EMERGENCIES

Schools may be closed because of inclement weather and/or hazardous traveling conditions or other emergencies. Announcements regarding school closings will be made on:

- radio stations WHYN (93.1FM), WTIC (1450AM), WNNZ (640AM), WHMP (1400AM, 99.3FM), WAQY (102.1FM), WMAS (94.7FM)
- television stations [WWLP](#) (channel 22) and [WGGB](#) (channel 40).

### COMPUTER USE: GUIDELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following are considered violations and will be reported to the administration immediately.

1. Tampering with hardware or software on the network, hard drive, or floppy drive.
2. Accessing or using unauthorized programs, data files, or disks-including student owned disks on the network, hard drive, or floppy drive.
3. Accessing another student's files.
4. Copying any copyrighted material, including computer programs and/or data files.

### DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

When a dismissal is necessary and is known in advance the following steps **must** be taken:

1. The request for dismissal must be brought to the main office.
2. The request must state the student's name, reason for dismissal, and time to be dismissed.
3. Dismissals for dental or doctor's appointments must be confirmed with a note from the physician's office in order to be excused medically. (Failure to do this will be considered an unexcused absence under the attendance policy.) When a student is aware of a scheduled appointment before the date and may arrive late to school, notification should be given to the office before the day of the appointment.
4. The office will give the student a dismissal note to be released from class.
3. Students who have completed the "rights of an 18 year old" paperwork must abide by the above policy. (see p.13)

### DISPENSING OF MEDICATION

The State of Massachusetts requires that the following forms must be on file in your child's health records before we begin to give any medicine at school:

1. Signed consent by parent or guardian to give the medicine: Please complete the consent form and give it to your school nurse. This is necessary for over-the-counter medicine as well as prescription medicine.
2. Signed medicine order: The written medication order form should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (your child's physician, nurse practitioner) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year. This is necessary for over-the-counter medicine as well as prescription medicine.

Medicines should be delivered to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by the parent or guardian. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to the school.

For short-term medications, those requiring administration for ten school days or fewer, the pharmacy-labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order; if the nurse has any questions she may request a licensed prescriber's order.

**No over-the-counter medications (Tylenol, cough medicine, lozenges) will be dispensed without a doctor's order and a signed consent by the parent or guardian.**

## FIELD TRIPS

At times during the school year, teachers may arrange for classes to go on a field trip to supplement student learning. Students are strongly encouraged to go on field trips, but are not required to go on field trips. However, students who are not on the field trip are expected to attend school that day.

Teachers have deadlines to meet when making reservations for events and arranging for transportation. Therefore, students must meet the prescribed deadline for permission slips, medical forms, and payments in order to attend the field trip. All financial obligations to the school must be met before going on a field trip.

**Some field trips will incur a cost for families. If any family cannot afford to pay the cost of the trip, please reach out to Dr. Sullivan, Ms. Zeh, or the field trip coordinator.**

Due to the nature of field trips, students demonstrating behavior in violation of the Student Handbook may be excluded from field trips at the discretion of the administration.

Parents serving as chaperones must have a CORI check. This can be completed at the central office. Results of the CORI check must be received prior to the field trip.

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

**We encourage and support all students to participate in co-curricular activities, field trips, etc. However, all financial obligations to the school must be met before such participation may occur.** Co-curricular activities include field trips, sports, clubs, student government and student council, and prom and other dances.

At the close of the school year, students are to return all issued supplies and materials, including their texts to the issuing teachers. Students in first semester courses are to return all issued supplies and materials, including their texts at the end of the first semester. Students will be assessed a replacement cost for non-returned items. Unfulfilled financial obligations will be carried over to the next school year.

Financial obligations can be earned by intentionally destroying school property (ie. Chromebook), not returning textbooks, uniforms, or technology, and/or owing the school district money in any way.

## FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

Teachers will explain detailed instructions for fire drills and evacuations. Directions for leaving the building are posted in every classroom. If in doubt, ask individual teachers to show you where the directions are and to explain the evacuation route from that room. All students and personnel should exit as quickly and as quietly as possible.

## GRADUATION PROTOCOL

We remind students and parents/guardians that participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right (**City of Boston v Bureau of Special Education Appeals, No. 01-3705-H (Suffolk Superior Court, September 18, 2002 (Giles, J), held that there is no property involved in excluding a student from graduation. A graduation ceremony serves as a symbolic conclusion to the education process, but attendance at a ceremony is not a prerequisite to receiving the diploma).**

- Members of the senior class are expected to be at **all** senior class activities (with the exception of those that require payment i.e., Senior Banquet, senior class trip)
- Members of the senior class are duly informed that all school rules are in effect up to and including graduation
- **Any current debt to Gateway Regional School must be rendered before participation in commencement exercises may take place. Only cash payments will be accepted within the two weeks prior to graduation.** \*Students will still earn their diploma.

Student attire is to be reflective of the dignity of the ceremony. The graduation gown is to be free of any design or ornament, and should be ironed and neat. Mortarboard decorations **must follow approved guidelines**, and be worn as instructed. (Please note: caps and gowns are the property of the students, they do not need to be returned to the school.)

**Commencement Exercises will be held in the Gateway Performing Arts Center and a simulcast of the event will be televised in the high school gymnasium (as needed). All efforts will be made to have the graduation ceremony outside on Booster's Field.**

*\*Please remember to be courteous of others when using cellphones/cameras.*

### **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

The School Counseling Department is located on the second floor of the building. The department's mission is to provide a comprehensive and developmental program, in line with the Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs that fosters the academic, career and personal/social growth of all students. As such, the counselors provide all students with opportunities for academic advising, career exploration activities and assessments, and with the information they need to make informed decisions about college choices, the application processes, and financial aid. In order to make this information accessible to all students, the counselors hold several evening information sessions, an annual College Fair, host college representative visits to the school, create a "Career Plan" document with each student, collaborate with teachers in the classrooms and teach 9th and 11th grade seminars. The counselors also coordinate aspects of special education, 504 Plans, My Career and Academic Plans (MyCAPs), the internship/work study program, career speakers, dual enrollment, and mental health counseling and outside services. Students who wish to make an appointment with their counselor can do so through the counseling secretary, or by phone at 413-685-1107.

### **HALL PASSES**

All students (6-12) will be using the platform E-Hallpass during the 2025-2026 school year. Students will be expected to utilize this electronic program to sign in and out of the classroom. Students are not allowed to be in the halls during class time without a pass.. Teachers and office staff can issue passes. Students without hall passes could be subject to disciplinary action.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The Health Office is located in the main lobby area of the school. In order to provide adequate health services, both parents and students should cooperate with the following standards. The school is responsible for the administration of emergency care (immediate and temporary care given in the case of accident or sudden illness.) Treatment and aftercare is not the responsibility of the school. This is the responsibility of the family.

Parents are requested to keep ill children home until they are capable of functioning in the classroom setting and free from spreading illness to others. This includes any student with symptoms of illness and a temperature of 100 degrees or above. Children who become ill at school should report to the nurse, who will make further arrangements.

Any student who has been absent from school due to contagious illness, accident, or hospitalization is requested to present a doctor's certificate to the main office upon returning to school, stating the student is capable of returning to school and also listing any restrictions, which will be sent to the nurse. In addition, students who have been absent from school for 5 or more school days because they have been sick or in an accident will be required to give a doctor's note to the nurse when they return to school. This note should include any instructions the doctor might order, including restrictions, if any.

All medical excuses for exclusion from any physical education class must be brought to the Health Office, where it will be attached to the student's health record. The nurse will present an authorized form to the student, which indicates the period of medical absence from Physical Education class. This form must be forwarded to the Physical Education Instructor. **THE NURSE WILL BE AVAILABLE BETWEEN 7:05 AM - 2:25 PM.**

Student athletes who are injured and under medical care, or seen by a doctor, must give a medical release in order to return and participate in either practice or games.

The following health and physical screenings will be provided for students:

Hearing Screenings: Grade 7  
Postural Screenings: Grades 7&8

Vision Screenings: Grade 7  
SBIRT: Grade 7\*

\*(Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment)

State law requires that all student immunizations must be kept up to date. When a student receives an immunization, it should be reported to the school nurse as a written, signed form from the student's private physician.

The following are required for 7<sup>th</sup> grade entry:

1. Two doses of varicella vaccine or physician-certified reliable history of chickenpox disease
2. Three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
3. Two doses of MMR #2
4. One dose of Tdap
5. A Physical Examination

**These vaccines must be administered and written verification presented to the school nurse prior to the first day of school. If immunizations are not up to date, the student will be excluded from school.**

All students in the **ninth grade** will be screened for scoliosis, vision, hearing, and SBIRT (Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment). Students in the **tenth grade** will be screened for height and weight. If you would prefer that your child's physician screen your child, you must provide written verification from the physician that the screening has taken place.

**If you do not want your child screened, please send a letter to the building principal. Any screening not done at school will need to be done by the child's primary care provider. Documentation of the screening must be provided to the school nurse.**

A student who is pregnant is permitted to remain in general education classes and participate in extracurricular activities throughout her pregnancy. After giving birth, a student is permitted to return to the academic program in which she was enrolled and is permitted to participate in extracurricular programs. The district does not require a pregnant student to obtain certification from a physician that she is physically and emotionally able to continue in school unless certification is required for all students with other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

The Learning Media Center is located on the second floor above the Cafeteria. It provides students and staff with a wide range of library materials in a variety of formats. These materials are selected to enrich and support the curriculum while taking into consideration a variety of abilities, learning styles and outside interests. The Center includes the library's book collection, student study/reading areas, a computer lab, AV storage room and the librarian's office/work area.

Faculty and students are encouraged to make full use of the space. The Library Media Center houses over 12,000 volumes in its circulating and reference book collection, and subscriptions to more than 20 magazines and newspapers. There are 12 computer stations available for word processing of Internet research. In addition, the faculty library includes professional books, videotapes, DVDs and audio book tapes.

Students may use the library with their classes, individually with a pass from their subject area teacher, and/or before or after school. Upon entering the LMC, students must show their ID/pass and sign in to the facility. The LMC uses the Follett automation system for our catalog and circulation. Therefore, students must have their ID cards to check books out of the library. Students are able to access the library's holding in school using Gateway's LAN (local area network) or at home online at the [LMC's web address](#).

All Patrons deserve a library that is conducive to study, research and reading. Therefore, students exhibiting inappropriate behavior while in the LMC will be sent back to their classroom. Classroom teachers will be notified when students have had their library privileges suspended.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM**

The cafeteria, with a seating capacity of approximately 350, is located on the first floor. Students have their choice of type A lunch or an approved A La Carte selection, which includes a variety of low fat, health conscious products. ALL students are accountable for the cleanliness and general condition within the Cafeteria. Careless littering or other acts, which reduce conditions within the cafeteria, will not be condoned. Information regarding free or reduced lunches will be made available to students during the first week of school. The cafeteria uses a computerized point of sale system. All students purchasing lunch must "swipe" their ID cards to purchase lunch. Students may also apply money to an account at any time. This time saving feature helps the lunch lines move quicker.

Students are allowed to exit the cafeteria only with the permission of one of the lunch monitors. Permission to be outside is given at the discretion of administration or lunch monitors. When granted, students must 1) remain in view (i.e. not behind the building or around the corner), 2) properly dispose of or return any trays, food and drinks brought outside 3) follow any specific guidelines determined and defined by administration.

### **RIGHTS OF THE 18 YEAR OLD**

The student who has reached the age of majority (18) has the right, provided by statute, to assume responsibility for his/her/their dealings with the school. The student must sign a form obtained from the principal's office and provide proof of age. The principal or his/her/their designee will notify the parent or guardian of the student's intent.

**Students opting to exercise these rights should be aware that they are still bound by all school rules, including those relating to attendance and dismissal.**

### **SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER**

The School Based Health Center, a program of the Hilltown Community Health Centers, is located in the main entrance lobby. It is open during school hours and provides easy access to quality health care. It is staffed by a nurse practitioner, who provides physical exams, prescriptions, treatment of illness, immunizations, selected laboratory tests, and sports physicals. A social worker provides behavioral treatment. A student, if under eighteen years of age, must have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian to access the services of SBHC. The staff of the SBHC can be reached at 685-2134 to answer questions, make appointments, or to receive a consent form.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE (STUDENT COUNCIL)**

A person's type of dress is an expression of his/her/their attitude toward themselves and toward others. Although we, the Student Council of Gateway Regional School, believe that all students should be allowed the license to dress comfortably and fashionably, this privilege also carries with it a responsibility. The responsibility of man cannot exist without affecting others by its existence; therefore, society sets standards, which allow for freedom of choice to a certain extent, yet restrict the individual from offending or distracting others. There is a safety, public health, and maintenance factor involved in the use of certain school facilities (i.e. gymnasium, shop area, science laboratory). Teachers in charge of such classrooms will prescribe dress. When an article of clothing is deemed unsafe or inappropriate, and is substantially disruptive to the school day, the student will be asked to change the clothing. Additionally, sunglasses may **not** be worn in school. The Student Council wishes to emphasize to students and parents that Gateway is an educational institution. Its purpose, duties, and responsibilities are to be carried out in a business-like manner. It is logical to expect that proper dress and grooming will reflect this philosophy.

### **STUDENT IDS**

**Students should have their school ID at all times during the school day.** IDs must be shown for the purchase of school lunch, library usage, and identification. Students will be provided with one ID and one lanyard each school year free of charge. Replacement IDs cost \$5.00 and lanyards \$1.00. IDs may not be altered, defaced, or misrepresent the owner.

### **STUDENT LOCKERS**

Each student will be assigned a hall locker. Students will keep the same locker throughout their enrollment. They are for the individual use of students and should not be shared. Because the locker is the property of the school and not the student, the administration has the right to open and examine the contents of a student's locker in order to maintain the integrity of the school environment and to protect other students. The use of the locker is entrusted to the student, and it is the obligation of each student to keep the locker neat, orderly, free of marks/writing and secure at all times. Students are responsible for the locker assigned to them by the office. Students who insert objects into the locking mechanism causing the locker to remain unlocked are liable for any items removed or damage done to the locking mechanism. Gateway Regional School District is NOT responsible for items left unattended.

## STUDENT PARKING

Parking at GRS is a privilege; failure to live up to the standards prescribed by this handbook may result in a revoking of this privilege at the discretion of administration.

The following regulations apply to all Gateway Regional School students who drive their vehicle to school and park in the Student Parking Lot:

1. Students wishing to park their vehicle on school property must have a valid parking decal that must be affixed to the driver's side, rear window such that it is easily visible when the vehicle is pulled front-end first into a parking space.
2. Parking stickers and passes are available in the central office on a first-come first-served basis. Students must have a sticker to park on school property when school is in session (7:05A.M - 2:25 P.M.).
3. (Day passes necessitated by special circumstances may be granted if requested ahead of time, and approved by administration.)
4. Student parking is restricted to the north parking lot abutting Booster Field. Student vehicles parked in any other parking lot will be subject to disciplinary action.
5. Students are subject to all applicable motor vehicle laws. Violation of any laws will result in suspension of parking privileges and/or a citation by the school's community resource officer.

These violations include, but are not limited to:

- Speeding (the speed limit in a school parking area is 5 mph)
- Driving on any lawns, fields, medians, or sidewalks, etc.
- Passing a school bus on school property
- Parking in bus drop off/pick up area
- Trying to exit the parking area while the buses are in the process of leaving

The consequences for violation of these laws, in addition to any citations are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> violation – written warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> violation – suspension of driving privileges for 1 week
- 3<sup>rd</sup> violation – suspension of driving privileges for 2 weeks
- 4<sup>th</sup> violation – suspension of driving privileges for remainder of school year

In the summer prior to senior year, seniors will be given a parking spot that they will be allowed to paint a design that they choose. Seniors choosing to paint a spot must follow the expectations below:

- Seniors must bring all of their own materials--paint, brushes, rollers, etc. (and dispose of all materials off campus)
- Seniors will **ONLY** be allowed to paint on the designated dates and times above. Students are not allowed to paint at any other time unless approved by administration/**Contact Office for a a Parking Pass.**
- Not all student parkings spots are available for decorating and administration has the final say in which sections of the student lot will be decorated.
- Students may swap spots on their own if they so choose.
- The spot will be "cleared" at the end of the school year.
- **If you paint or deface anyone else's parking spot, you will lose your parking privileges at Gateway.**

## STUDENT RECORDS

The temporary records of any student enrolled at Gateway Regional School shall be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school system. Former students desiring information from their records may obtain them by requesting such information from the high school principal on or before the date of destruction. Any student, fourteen years or older desiring information from his/her/their school records may obtain it by making an appointment with the School Counseling Department.

## **SURVEYS & USE OF STUDENT NAMES, IMAGES AND WORK IN THE MEDIA**

There will be times that we will need to provide statistical information for state & federal grant applications. As a result, the Gateway Regional School District & the School-Based Health Center will need to survey the student body. If you object to your child's participation in such surveys, please send a statement requesting exclusion from the survey to the building Principal.

Parents may also wish to opt out of granting permission for the following by completing the proper paperwork that is handed out to students at the beginning of the school year:

- Publication of student work on the internet
- Publication of student name and/or photograph on the Internet, radio, or television, or in newspapers.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Students wishing to make phone calls must do so before or after school. The office (school and counseling) telephones are reserved for school business only.

Students will not be called from class to take a telephone call except in an emergency. When deemed necessary, the school secretary will take telephone messages from a parent/guardian. Students who must have access to a telephone for an emergency must use the telephone in the main office with the permission of the front office staff (secretary/administrator).

## **CELL PHONES**

Students are expected to follow the guidelines below; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Grade 6 and 7:

- No cell phones
- Cell phones will be stored in student lockers
- Cell phones will be stored in backpacks during specials (end of the day)

Grade 8:

- Cell phones are permitted during lunch
- Cell phones will be stored in student lockers during class and passing time
- Cell phones will be stored in backpacks during exploratories (end of the day)

Grades 9 - 12:

- Cell phones will be stored in the phone pouch throughout class (every classroom has one); students may also choose to keep their cell phone in their bag
- Cell phones may be accessed in case of emergency (teacher permission required)
- Students are not allowed on their cell phones during class
- Cell phones are permitted if explicitly directed by the teacher for educational purposes

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

All requests for transcripts should be addressed to the Counseling Office. Under the Privacy of Information Act all requests for information must be accompanied by written permission from the student to release the information, also specifying the person, school, or organization to which the transcript is being sent. A \$5.00 charge will be required for all transcripts provided to post graduates.

## **WITHDRAWAL OR TRANSFER**

Transfer: Guidance office must receive a signed release of information from the new school. Upon receipt of such release form, all records will be forwarded.

Withdrawal: Students must be 16 years of age in order to withdraw from school. Parent/guardian consent/signature is required. Students over 18 years of age do not need parental consent.

Any student who plans to withdraw from school or transfer to another school must follow the following procedure:

1. Inform their counselor one week prior to the anticipated last day of attendance.
2. Clean out locker and return all books and other issued materials

3. Fulfill all outstanding financial obligations.

The guidance secretary will complete a withdrawal form requesting grades for current courses. Staff will confirm the return of all books and materials and any fees owed.

### **WORK PERMITS**

Students residing within the Gateway Regional School District can obtain state required work permits in the School Counseling Office at Gateway Regional School. All students between the ages of 14 and 18 must obtain a permit for employment purposes. For students 14 to 16, obtaining a permit requires the employer's signature and your physician's signature. When this first card is returned with the proper signatures on it, the second part of the permit will be issued. The student **MUST** be present for this part to be issued. For students 16-18, a permit may be obtained without any other signatures, but again the student **MUST** be present when completing this form.

# ACADEMICS AND ATTENDANCE

The administration and staff of Gateway Regional High School strive to provide a quality education for all students. To accomplish this, academic and attendance standards have been established. All parents/guardians and students should read the following information carefully. Questions concerning any of the material in this section should be addressed to the guidance office, health office, or administration.

## COURSE OF STUDY

Each year the high school publishes a Program of Studies booklet, specifically describing each program and class that a student may wish to schedule. Parents/guardians should contact the appropriate counselor to be sure a schedule is built to meet the student's personal goals and objectives. All students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness, have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district.

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION (BEGINS 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE YEAR)

Any of the below requirements may be waived if it can be documented that a requirement will impede a student's ability to complete a viable educational program as determined by the guidance department and administration. The proper forms and directions for this waiver may be obtained from the School Counseling Office.

## PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Semester courses are worth 5 credits; year courses are worth 10 credits; A/B courses are worth 2.5 credits.

Entrance to grade 10.....	60 credits
Entrance to grade 11.....	120 credits
Entrance to grade 12.....	180 credits
Graduation.....	240 credits

### Graduation Requirements

For students to graduate from Gateway Regional School there are four requirements that must be met:

- 1)Course of Study Requirements
- 2)Competency Determination
- 3)Demonstration of Learning
- 4)Habits of a Scholar Requirements

**Course of Study Requirements**

Course of Study Requirements (Class of 2028 and Beyond)

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Amount of Credits</b>	<b>Description</b>
English	40	
Mathematics	40	
Science	30	Three years of lab science required for students planning to attend a 4 year college (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc.)
Social Studies	30	Must include World History and U.S. History. Students are also responsible for completing the state required civic action project.
World Languages	20	
Visual or Performing Arts	10	
Physical Education and Health	12.5	Students are required to take a PE/Health class each year of high school. (PE waivers will be allowed for approved activities).
Electives	57.5	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>240</b>	

Class of 2026:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 40 Credits  
 Science- 30 Credits  
 Social Studies- 35 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 12.5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 15 Credits  
 Electives- 57.5 Credits  
**Total- 230**

Class of 2027:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 40 Credits  
 Science- 30 Credits  
 Social Studies- 30 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 12.5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 12.5 Credits  
 Electives- 75 Credits  
**Total- 240**

Course of Study Requirements (Chapter 74 Vocational Pathway: Welding): (Class of 2028 and Beyond)

Subject Area	Amount of Credits	Description
English	40	
Mathematics	30	
Science	30	Must include two years of lab science. Three years of lab science recommended for students planning to attend a 4 year college (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc.); <b>not required for graduation in this pathway.</b>
Social Studies	25	Must include World History and U.S. History. Students are also responsible for completing the state required civic action project.
Metals Technology A&B	7.5	These courses will be taken during a student's ninth grade year and students must earn passing grades in both to remain in the program.
Shop (Welding)	50	Amount of credits per year will be personalized for each student through collaboration with school counselors.
Visual or Performing Arts	5	
Physical Education and Health	12.5	Students are required to take a PE/Health class each year of high school. (PE waivers will be allowed for approved activities).
Electives	40	Students can take additional shop classes if their schedule allows it and if there is availability in the shop  Two years of a world language are required for entry into a 4 year college; <b>not required for graduation in this pathway.</b>
<b>Total:</b>	240	

Class of 2026:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 30 Credits  
 Science- 25 Credits  
 Social Studies- 30 Credits  
 Metals Technology A&B- 7.5 Credits  
 Shop (Welding)- 50 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 15 Credits  
 Electives- 27.5 Credits  
**Total- 230**

Class of 2027:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 30 Credits  
 Science- 30 Credits  
 Social Studies- 30 Credits  
 Metals Technology A&B- 7.5 Credits  
 Shop (Welding)- 50 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 12.5 Credits  
 Electives- 30 Credits  
**Total- 240**

Course of Study Requirements (Chapter 74 Vocational Pathway: EEC): (Class of 2028 and Beyond)

Subject Area	Amount of Credits	Description
English	40	
Mathematics	40	
Science	30	Must include two years of lab science. Three years of lab science recommended for students planning to attend a 4 year college (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc.); <b>not required for graduation in this pathway.</b>
Social Studies	30	Must include World History and U.S. History. Students are also responsible for completing the state required civic action project.
Intro to Early Education and Care A&B	7.5	These courses will be taken during a student's ninth grade year and students must earn passing grades in both to remain in the program.
Shop (EEC)	50	Amount of credits per year will be personalized for each student through collaboration with school counselors.
Visual or Performing Arts	5	
Physical Education and Health	12.5	Students are required to take a PE/Health class each year of high school. (PE waivers will be allowed for approved activities).
Electives	25	Students can take additional shop classes if their schedule allows it and if there is availability in the shop.  Two years of a world language are required for entry into a 4 year college; <b>not required for graduation in this pathway.</b>
<b>Total:</b>	240	

Class of 2026:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 40 Credits  
 Science- 30 Credits  
 Social Studies- 30 Credits  
 Intro to EEC A&B- 7.5 Credits  
 Shop (Welding)- 50 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 12.5 Credits  
 Electives- 15 Credits  
**Total- 230**

Class of 2027:

English- 40 Credits  
 Mathematics- 40 Credits  
 Science- 30 Credits  
 Social Studies- 30 Credits  
 Metals Technology A&B- 7.5 Credits  
 Shop (Welding)- 50 Credits  
 Visual or Performing Arts- 5 Credits  
 Physical Education and Health- 12.5 Credits  
 Electives- 25 Credits  
**Total- 240**

### **Competency Determination**

To meet the state requirements of a competency determination in Mathematics, Science, and English Language Arts, students must do the following:

**Mathematics:** Complete and pass required coursework in topics covered on the Grade 10 Mathematics MCAS (Algebra and Geometry). Equivalent coursework or evidence of mastery of grade level content can be accepted but is at the discretion of the principal.

**Science:** Complete and pass required coursework in topics covered on the Grade 9 Science MCAS in Biology. Students can also complete and pass required coursework in topics covered on the Grade 9 Science MCAS in Introductory Physics. Equivalent coursework or evidence of mastery of grade level content can be accepted but is at the discretion of the principal.

**English Language Arts:** Complete and pass required coursework in topics covered on the Grade 10 English Language Arts MCAS (English I and II). Equivalent coursework or evidence of mastery of grade level content can be accepted but is at the discretion of the principal.

\*Students are required to showcase their learning in these areas during their “Demonstration of Learning” at the end of their grade 10 year.

### **Demonstration of Learning**

(Beginning with the Class of 2028)

Students are expected at the end of their 10th grade year to complete a “Demonstration of Learning” to school administration, counselors, and select teachers. Parents/Guardians are also welcome, and encouraged, to attend. The presentation will include a (1)description of coursework covered during grade nine and ten, (2)evidence of meeting the Competency Determination requirements for graduation, (3)evidence of meeting requirements for the “Habits of a Scholar” in grades nine and ten, (4)goals for their life after graduation, (5)action steps for reaching these goals, and (6)requests for their coursework for grades eleven and twelve.

Students will be scored by administration, counselors, and teachers on a scale of 0-4 for each of the six requirements for the presentation. The scores of administration, counselors, and teachers will be averaged together. The average score needs to be 20/24 to complete this requirement for graduation. Students will be eligible to redo their demonstration of learning again at the end of their 10th grade if they do not earn a passing score. They will also be able to take it at the end of each quarter for the rest of their career at GRS until they earn a grade that meets requirements.

\*Students will work on their “Demonstration of Learning” presentation during mainly their advisory period in 9th and 10th grade. There will be some additional expectations in classes as well to prepare students.

### **Habits of a Scholar Requirements**

(Class of 2029 and Beyond)

To encourage and build skills that students will need to be successful at Gateway Regional School and beyond, students will be expected to work on skills each year. The skill work will begin in grade six and be part of the requirements for promotion to the next grade. In grades 9-12, students will be required to meet the required expectations to show mastery of each skill, each year. Required expectations will vary depending on grade. The skills that students will need to show mastery of each year are the following:

#### **Gateway Gators are...**

- Leaders
- Service-minded
- Technologically Skilled
- Communicators
- Collaborative
- Perseverant
- Knowledgeable
- Engaged
- Resourceful
- Self-directed

\*Tracking the expectations for each skill will be done by the student and NEST teachers.

## GRADE SCALE

<u>LETTER</u>	<u>NUMERICAL</u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>HONORS</u>	<u>COLLEGE PREP</u>
A+	100	5.00	4.50	4.00
A+	99	4.93	4.43	3.93
A+	98	4.86	4.36	3.86
A	97	4.79	4.29	3.79
A	96	4.72	4.22	3.72
A	95	4.65	4.15	3.65
A	94	4.58	4.08	3.08
A	93	4.51	4.01	3.51
A-	92	4.44	3.94	3.44
A-	91	4.37	3.87	3.37
A-	90	4.30	3.80	3.30
B+	89	4.23	3.73	3.23
B+	88	4.16	3.66	3.16
B	87	4.09	3.59	3.09
B	86	4.02	3.52	3.02
B	85	3.95	3.45	2.95
B	84	3.88	3.38	2.88
B	83	3.81	3.31	2.81
B-	82	3.74	3.24	2.74
B-	81	3.67	3.17	2.67
B-	80	3.60	3.10	2.60
C+	79	3.53	3.03	2.53
C+	78	3.46	2.96	2.46
C	77	3.39	2.89	2.39
C	76	3.32	2.82	2.32
C	75	3.25	2.75	2.25
C	74	3.18	2.68	2.18
C	73	3.11	2.61	2.11
C-	72	3.04	2.54	2.04
C-	71	2.97	2.47	1.97
C-	70	2.90	2.40	1.90
D+	69	2.83	2.33	1.83
D+	68	2.76	2.26	1.76
D	67	2.69	2.19	1.69
D	66	2.62	2.12	1.62
D	65	2.55	2.05	1.55
D	64	2.48	1.98	1.48
D	63	2.41	1.91	1.41
D-	62	2.34	1.84	1.34
D-	61	2.27	1.77	1.27
D-	60	2.20	1.70	1.20
F(ailing)	59-0	0.00	0.00	0.00

## **CLASS RANK**

Rank-in-class for students earning/attempting to earn a GRS diploma is determined by calculating a grade point average. Each grade and level is assigned a numerical weight depending on grades of 100 through 60. Honors/Advanced Placement courses are rated highest.

A transfer student must be in attendance at Gateway Regional School for their junior and senior year in order to be accurately ranked. Determination will be based in such cases on final grade averages from previous school(s) attended as well as Gateway grades. If a student attends Gateway Regional School for only their senior year, any class rank issued will be only approximate and consequently the student is not eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian honors.

## **REPORT CARDS**

The School year is 180 days in length for students. Report cards are shared four times during the school year. Progress can be viewed at any time via the [PowerSchool Student and Parent Portal](#). Each term is forty-five days long and halfway through each term is approximately twenty-two days. These dates are approximate due to weather, teacher professional development days, exams, and parent/teacher conferences. All four report cards will be sent electronically to families approximately two weeks after the quarter closes. Students and families will need their Student ID Number. In addition, the final report card will be mailed by the main office after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **BASIS FOR GRADES**

As many as six categories may make up a grade in any subject area. These areas are test results, quiz results, projects, class work, homework, and class participation. All six areas are important but some count more than others. Also, because classes are different, one area might count more in one class than in another. For example, projects might count more in social studies than in math class, but tests might count more in English than in science. To help with these differences, a chart may be given to you by each teacher for each class or subject. Here is an example of a rubric that might be used:

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>
Tests	30%
Quizzes	20%
Projects	15%
Class Work	15%
Homework	15%
Class Participation	5%

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY**

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Students must minimally pass three of the four core academic courses for the year to be promoted to the next grade level (grades 6-8). In order to be eligible for summer work to prevent retention, students must earn a 50 in the core class.

## **FINAL EXAM EXEMPTIONS**

Finals will be given in Math, Science, Social Studies, and ELA. Students are expected to be in attendance for their final unless they have been exempt. Students attaining a grade of 93 or higher in a 10 credit course may be exempt from final exams in (1) subject area. Other finals could be given in courses and will be up to the discretion of the teacher.

## HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS

First Honors - All A's in all courses taken.

Second Honors - A minimum of two A's with B's in all other courses taken.

Third Honors - A minimum of one A with B's and no more than one C in courses taken.

If a student carries a D or F in any subject, this automatically disqualifies him/her from consideration for honors. Students with incomplete grades are not considered for honors until the final grades are given.

## SCHEDULE CHANGES

Once schedules are distributed, it becomes very difficult to make changes without disrupting a student's entire schedule. Students may meet with their school counselor to discuss schedule changes for the following reasons:

1. To correct placement on the wrong academic level in a course
2. To meet college admissions or high school graduation requirements
3. To meet a requirement stipulated in an individual educational program (IEP)
4. A student is newly enrolled to GRS

**Changes can only be made within the first two weeks of a semester.** Should a student withdraw from a course beyond the two week period, the student will receive a grade of WP or WF on his/her/their transcript. The withdrawal will take place only if the parent/guardian, counselor, teacher, student, and administration are in agreement with the schedule change.

## HOMEWORK POLICY (approved by School Committee)

The purpose of homework at Gateway Regional is to build on skills and content knowledge that have recently been taught in class, complete assignments from class, preview upcoming content, work on long term projects or prepare for assessments. Homework can also help to build other essential skills like responsibility, integrity, and hardwork. Homework can be assigned to all students. It is recommended that homework be graded only on participation/completion. Homework should not count for a large portion of a student's grade (no more than 15%). Homework should be able to be completed independently.

Students and families can expect homework to be assigned almost every night (Mon-Thurs) of the week in core classes (6-12). *Homework can be assigned on Friday as well.* Nightly homework will allow for deeper learning to take place in the classroom. It is possible that assigned homework might not be due the following day. It is recommended that teachers assign homework at the beginning of the week and have it due at the end of the week.

Maximum suggested time allotments when homework is assigned:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Total Maximum Amount</u>
6-8	Daily (M-Th)	15 minutes per core subject daily or 60 minutes weekly
9-12	Daily (M-Th)	20 minutes per core subject daily or 80 minutes weekly

\*Non-core classes can assign homework and should follow the maximum daily amount of classes. *Homework in non-core classes could be less frequent than nightly.*

\*\*AP classes should expect 45-60 minutes of homework each night.

*Times listed reflect developmentally appropriate expectations and should not be exceeded by the time allotments. If a student reaches the maximum amount of time for a specific class, the student should stop working and meet with the teacher the following day.*

## **EXTRA HELP**

Students are encouraged to seek extra help whenever the need arises. Arrangements are to be made in advance with the teacher. All faculty members are required to remain after school for one day every week. All teachers will announce which day they are available.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

### ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism will include taking information from any online or printed source and not giving credit to the original author or taking credit for something that is not your original work. This could include words, phrases, videos, or images.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Copying material from the source, including the internet, without citing the source, or citing the source but omitting quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing the source without proper citation.
- Copying stories, in whole or part, which appear in books, magazines, television, or video.
- Copying directly, without making any changes, alterations or adaptations from a drawing, painting, illustration, photographic/digital image, or graphic symbol without citing the source.
- Submitting papers written in whole or part by someone else, including those found on the internet.
- Submitting papers on which the student has received substantial assistance from peers and/or adults that dramatically changes the character of the work so that it is no longer the student's own.
- Submitting a paper purchased from a research or term paper service, including, but not limited, to the internet.

Other forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Looking at someone else's test or using answers from a graded test.
- Copying homework and/or giving your homework to someone else to copy or complete.
- Using unauthorized materials (notes, study guides, etc.) during a test or assignment
- Using a mobile device and/or the internet to find answers to a test or an assignment, unless expressly permitted by the classroom teacher.
- Working on an assignment or project collaboratively when it is supposed to be done independently.
- Hiring or asking someone to complete an assignment for you.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)/large language model for any of the work process, unless explicitly allowed by the teacher, will constitute plagiarism. AI may not be used in any unauthorized way.

Students agree to appropriately cite and give credit to the original author when using work created by others.

Infractions related to plagiarism and academic dishonesty could include receiving a failing grade for the assignment in question, communication with parents or guardians, and/or additional disciplinary outcomes by administration through the code of conduct. Under specific circumstances, students may be provided the option to redo the assignment for partial credit. This decision will be at the discretion of the instructor.

If plagiarism of any kind is suspected, students will have the ability to appeal the decision to the teacher first and then to school administration. Students who wish to appeal should be prepared to provide evidence supporting their claim. The final decision of any appealed suspected act of plagiarism will be made by the school administration.

## **COLLEGE VISITATIONS**

Arrangements must be made in advance with the student's counselor. A signed confirmation of the visit by the college admissions office is required upon return in order for the day's absence to be considered excused. Students will be allowed a maximum of five such visits.

## **MAKE-UP OF CLASS WORK AND HOMEWORK**

Students are responsible for promptly arranging to make up work missed due to an absence from class. Teachers are not obligated to remind students about the need to make-up missed work. Teachers are authorized to give failing grades for work that is not made up in a satisfactory manner **within a time frame equal to their absence** (*for example, a student out for 3 days will have 3 additional days to complete their work upon their return*). The safest plan for the student is to arrange for making up work immediately upon their return to school after an absence. Students who are truant or who intentionally miss an assigned class period will forfeit all privileges to make up work. Students on internal or external suspension are entitled to receive homework assignments and make up any work missed during the suspension. If the work is sent home, students are expected to make an effort to complete the work while outside of school. If externally suspended students need teacher assistance before completing their work, they are expected to make arrangements with their teacher for completing the missed work. Students absent for illness, or other approved reasons, such as a school-sponsored activity may make up class work.

## **MAKE-UP OF COURSES FAILED DURING SCHOOL YEAR**

Any student who fails a course should repeat the course the next semester if possible, especially if the course is required for graduation. The only options currently available to a student making up a course are to repeat the course at Gateway or take the course in summer school or through an approved online or correspondence school. It is important to note that the guidance department, subject to the approval of the principal, makes the final decision on the granting of credit for a summer school or correspondence course. Final exams for correspondence courses must be taken under the supervision of a counselor, who will submit the results to the correspondence school. **Students must have a final grade of 50% to be eligible to make up the course through an online or correspondence program. All final decisions rest with the administration.**

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

The school district schedules two days per year for parent conferences. Please refer to the school calendar for those dates. Additionally, hours after school are often set aside for parent conferences, as needed. Please contact your child's teacher or school counselor.

## **TEXTBOOKS/LIBRARY BOOKS**

Students are issued textbooks and library books on a loan basis. Students are expected to use, not abuse them. When a student loses a text or library book, the teacher or librarian will issue the student a form indicating the lost text/library book and price. For a lost textbook, the student presents the form and money to the office. The teacher will be notified. A replacement text may then be issued. In the case of a lost library book, the student brings the money to the library and receives a receipt for the lost book. If the text or library book is found later in good condition, the money will be refunded.

## **ONLINE EDUCATION**

The Gateway Regional School District is committed to providing its students with access to the best education possible. The emergence of distance education as a viable means of allowing students access to academic content outside the walls of the classroom is another way to continue this commitment. Students will have the opportunity to choose their courses through the online provider Edgenuity ([www.edgenuity.com](http://www.edgenuity.com)), and will work with their guidance counselor to choose an appropriate course. The student's guidance counselor and administration must approve any and all arrangements for distance education.

### **Criteria for selection:**

1. Students need to be in grades 10-12.
2. Seniors will be given priority when all other criteria have been met.
3. Students must have a minimum simple GPA of 2.5.
4. Students may take a course offered at GRS but not taught due to under enrollment.

5. The course must be taken at GRS under staff supervision.
6. The course must be scheduled during one of the five available blocks and may not exceed the 50 yearly potential credits students can attain at GRS.
7. The course must be taken from an accredited online program.
8. No lab courses may be taken.
9. Students may only take one course per semester.
10. Students may take enrichment courses not offered at GRS (on a space available basis).
11. Courses will be included in the student's GPA according to the corresponding GRS policy and grade scale.
12. Circumstances not covered in these guidelines will be addressed by guidance/administration.

### **WORK STUDY/CO-OP PLACEMENTS/INTERNSHIPS**

Students may wish to pursue a work-study placement, cooperative education or an internship opportunity during their **junior and/or senior year**. These learning opportunities may take place inside or outside the school or district. They must be arranged through and supervised by the student's guidance counselor. Internships and work-study placements may be taken for credit and may be either paid or unpaid. The school does not provide transportation to and from work placement sites. **If a student does not earn a passing grade for their work study, internship, or co-op placement, they will be ineligible for similar coursework in the future.** This can be appealed to school administration. Students and families should be prepared to address the reasons for not completing or passing the coursework associated with the work study, internship, or co-op placement, their goals for their next placement, and how they will make improvements from the prior experience.

### **MUSIC DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students electing band and/or chorus are responsible for attending all scheduled performances and rehearsals of their music group. To give parents and students ample time to plan for these events, the dates of all performance commitments will be announced and posted in the music room at the beginning of the school year. Any changes in this schedule will be announced as soon as possible.

Since a performance is a course requirement which also tests the student's knowledge and mastery of the music taught in the classroom, failure to attend any performance will affect the student's grade for that quarter. More specific information governing student participation in the music program is available in a music handbook issued to students each year.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION- (STUDENT SAFETY – MEDICAL)**

The Physical Education Department realizes that participation in any physical activity can be dangerous; with safety as one of our prime concerns, we have verbally stressed and enforced the following regulation:

Any unauthorized use of Physical Education or gymnastic equipment without proper supervision will result in the student's removal from Physical Education class for the remainder of the quarter and a grade for that quarter will be computed as of the time of removal. At the end of the quarter in which the violation occurred, the student will be reassigned to a Physical Education class. Students who are excused for medical reasons for more than two weeks will be reassigned.

Student athletes enrolled in Physical Education courses must participate in class in order to participate in athletics that day.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT

Gateway Regional High School offers two Chapter 74 Vocational programs: Early Education & Care (EEC) and Welding. Students interested in other programs may apply to outside vocational schools per the following state regulation:

**4.04(6)(b)2** *Non-resident students shall submit an application of admission to the receiving school no later than March 15th of the preceding school year and shall be subject to the admissions criteria of the receiving school. A non-resident student must submit the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Program Non-resident Student Tuition Application to the district of residence no later than April 1 of the preceding school year. If a student moves to a non-resident district after April 1, the student shall submit a new Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Program Non-resident Student Tuition Application to their district of residence as soon as practicable.*

Gateway Regional School District requires students wishing to pursue a vocational education program to **complete the application process through our Guidance department by March 1** for review.

## IHBG - HOME SCHOOLING (approved by School Committee)

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Homeschooling program meets with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program. When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for their child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law.

### ***Application Process to Homeschooling Program***

Prior to removing the child from public school: The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the Superintendent or designee 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment. It may take up to 14 days before the program is approved once all information is submitted.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the District, the name, age, date of birth, place of residence, current grade, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent or designee will require home school applications to include the following information to ensure that the program is in compliance with the law:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents/guardian (or other instructors) to teach the children. Proof of competency may include information regarding academic background, and life experiences.
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents/guardian.
4. Periodic assessment and standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

If the application does not include sufficient information, the Superintendent or designee will give notice to the family indicating where the application is out of compliance. Information regarding any of these factors may be asked for from the family at any time. Failure to produce evidence of the required information may result in the withdrawal of approval of the homeschool application.

### ***Auditing Homeschooling Program***

Auditing functions of the School District for the home instruction will include **an annual review of all work product submitted as required by the Home School plan.**

### ***Record Keeping for Homeschooling Program***

*For High School Transcripts:* Consistent with school policy relating to courses taken outside of Gateway Regional School, home education courses will not be calculated into a student's grade point average (GPA). Other examples of courses taken outside of the school that are not included in the calculation of a student's GPA are summer school courses, correspondence courses, courses taken while participating in a foreign exchange program in another country, and courses taken as part of a dual enrollment program at local colleges and universities.

The portion of a student's transcript covered by a home education program will be clearly identified and reported separately from any course work completed at Gateway Regional School. Student placement in courses taken at Gateway following participation in a home education program will be done based on principal determination.

### ***Participation in Public School Activities***

A student being educated in a Home School program within the District may have access to extracurricular activities including band, chorus, and athletics, subject to the approval of the Superintendent. Access to core academic programming is not permitted without enrolling in the school district. Field trip participation is at the discretion of the administration based on the specific parameters of the trip. A student being educated in a Home School program participating in any school-based program must follow the code of conduct. The school may revoke participation at any time due to a failure to follow school rules and expectations.

### **GRSD ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**Whenever a student is absent from school on a particular day, it is the parent/guardians' responsibility to call the School Attendance Line (685-1112) prior to 9:00AM on the day of the absence** (MGL Chapter 76, S 1A). Attendance at all school sessions is necessary for the academic and social growth of all students. It is also the law as mandated in Chapter 76, sections 1 and 2 of the General Laws of Education Relating to School Committees. Punctuality is also important. If a student is habitually tardy, not only is a portion of the class missed, but the learning process is disrupted for others.

The Gateway Regional School Committee has set the limits of non-medically excused absences per semester. **A student (grades 9-12) will be denied credit for any semester course when more than ten (10) unexcused absences have been accumulated. Students will be denied credit for any yearlong course when more than twenty (20) unexcused absences have been accumulated. For every other day courses, five (5) per semester and ten (10) are allowed per year.** Students whose absence exceeds these limits will be allowed to remain in the course, but no academic credit will be awarded to the student.

Instances that will **NOT** be counted toward the day limit (i.e. excused absences) include:

1. The student is under the direct care of a physician, who attests in writing to a student's inability to attend school due to an illness.
2. The hospitalization and period of recuperation when a student is under the care of a physician results in days being missed.
3. The absence is due to religious observances, court appointment, attendance at a funeral of a family member or close acquaintance, or a school-approved college visitation.
4. The student has been excused/sent home by the school nurse.
5. Time spent out of school by a student while serving an external suspension will be considered an excused absence for the purposes of this policy.

**Unless other arrangements have been made with the principal, all medical documentation of excusable absence MUST be received in the high school office no later than 10 school days from the date of the absences.**

As part of the school protocol, home is contacted when a student is absent. Continuing, the school communicates via a written correspondence from the assistant principal when attendance appears to be an issue that may affect course credit. (MGL Chapter 76, Section 1A)

Beginning July 1, 2014, a new section of MGL (MGL Chapter 76, Section 1B) reads as follows:

“The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall have a pupil absence notification program in each of its schools. The program shall be designed to ensure that each school notifies a parent or guardian of the child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the parent or guardian within 3 days of the absence.

Each school committee shall have a policy of notifying the parent or guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. The notification policy shall require that the school principal or headmaster, or a designee, make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or headmaster, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies."

School protocol will continue with parent/guardian notification when a student is absent. In addition, parents/guardians can expect more frequent communication from the school, through both phone calls and mailings, when a student reaches significant levels of unexcused absences. At the time of communication, a meeting will be scheduled to address attendance issues and to establish an action plan to address lack of attendance.

The Gateway Regional School Committee establishes the specific dates for school to be in session prior to the beginning of the school year. Any student who will miss school due to a planned absence (e.g., family vacation) must inform the school in advance of the absence. This notification will allow the student to make arrangements with teachers to make up any work that is missed during the absence. The days missed are not excused under the school's attendance policy; students may face a loss of credit if these days contribute to student absences exceeding the established limit.

In sequential courses (e.g., Algebra I, Spanish I), a student absent from that course for more than the prescribed number of days will not receive credit for the course, but he/she may be allowed to continue the sequence and progress to the next level. The student will in most cases be required to take an additional course to satisfy credit requirements for graduation within a department.

As part of the school protocol, home is contacted when a student is absent. Continuing, the school communicates via a written correspondence from the assistant principal or counselor when attendance appears to be an issue that may affect progress. Also, once a student's attendance during a semester becomes a concern, attempts will be made to arrange a conference with the student, his/her parent or guardian, the student's counselor, a member of the administration, and the school nurse to discuss the physical and academic well being of the student. (MGL Chapter 76, S 1A) **Additionally, chronic unexcused absences may result in court action or retention.**

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

If a student has exceeded the above-mentioned limits and therefore has lost credit for a course, he/she may wish to appeal the loss of credit. This request should be submitted to the Principal within 5 school days from the day Report Cards are distributed. Appeals will be heard within 3 weeks of the date Reports Cards are distributed. The board is comprised of teachers and administration. Following such an appeal hearing, the student (and parent/guardian) will be informed of the board's decision within 5 school days. Further appeals may be made to the Superintendent of Schools by furnishing an appeal to the superintendent within 5 school days of the denial of credit notification from the appeal board. **Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a loss of credit.**

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS**

All students must be scheduled for a course every block of each day. Attendance is taken each block (9-12); students must attend their classes/internship/co-op/work study and do so promptly or become subject to disciplinary action. The dismissal of class is the responsibility of the teacher. Students are to remain in the classroom until the bell rings. Bells are sounded as a reminder. Students are not to leave class until the bell is rung **and** the teacher has given permission for students to leave.

Tardy students will report to the office directly upon arrival for a pass to class. Students failing to report to the office and failing to sign in will be subject to disciplinary action. Students are reminded to consult the Code of Conduct list for disciplinary action, which will be taken regarding tardiness to school. An excused tardy to school usually will mean the need for medical documentation. Other extenuating circumstances may constitute an excused tardiness. The principal will make the final decision on the determination of excused/unexcused tardiness to school. Students who drive to school, who are chronically late to school will lose their driving privileges. A student who arrives to class up to halfway through a block is considered tardy to that class. A student who arrives at class more than halfway through a block will be considered absent from that class.

## DISMISSAL REQUESTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Telephone requests from a parent/guardian the day of a requested dismissal will be honored upon confirmation of the authenticity of the call. Requests made in person, by a parent/guardian, will be honored when identification has been established and accepted. All students leaving school grounds for any reason during the school day may do so only when authorized by the administration or the school nurse. Any student leaving school grounds during the school day must sign out on the sign-out sheet maintained in the office. Students who leave school grounds for a reason not deemed acceptable by administration will not be allowed to return to school that day; they may return the next school day (this includes students who have completed the "rights of an 18 year old" paperwork)

## CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/CLUBS

Gateway Regional School offers a wide variety of co-curricular activities. These include an array of dramatic presentations, musical productions, concerts, class-sponsored events and club activities. Throughout the school year, Gateway also provides equal opportunity for students to participate in varsity and junior varsity interscholastic athletics. The district does not exclude students from extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the district based on race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

Unless prior permission has been obtained from the athletic director, advisor and/or the principal, a student absent from school cannot participate in any co-curricular activity conducted on that day. **A student externally/internally suspended from school may NOT participate in any co-curricular activity held on the day(s) of a suspension. A student suspended externally/internally on a Friday may not participate until at least one school day has taken place. A student must be passing courses totaling a minimum of at least half the student's credits in a given semester in order to be academically eligible.**

**ALL SCHOOL RULES ARE IN EFFECT AT ANY AND ALL SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS.**

## CHEMICAL HEALTH RULE

RULE 62: Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

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

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render "guilt by association", e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports/co-curricular due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

### **First Violation Minimum Penalties:**

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic/co-curricular contest totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, penalties will be determined by the current or next season/event/co-curricular activity of participation. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. Any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty
1-7	1
8-11	2

12-15	3
16-19	4
20 or over	5

**Second and Subsequent Violations Minimum Penalties:**

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic/co-curricular contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, penalties will be determined by the current or next season of participation. Any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty
1-3	1
4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10-11	6
12-13	7
14	8
15-16	9
17-18	10
19	11
20 or over	12

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

# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty
1-4	1
5-7	2
8-9	3
10-12	4

13-14	5
15-17	6
18-19	7
20 or over	8

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty(s) during the fall season of the next academic year.)

## CLUBS

All forms of clubs are encouraged, subject to approval of the Student Council and administration. Any group of students wishing to form a new club will present their ideas to the Council. A staff member or an advisor, approved by the Principal, must supervise every club.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The purpose of the Student Council is to promote communication between students and faculty, take shared responsibility for their own welfare, and advise the administration and school committee on student concerns.

### Criteria for Impeachment of an Officer

- More than one suspension, internal or external, is grounds for impeachment.
- Officers must attend at least 2/3 of scheduled meetings.
- Officers must "carry their weight" (meet their commitments/responsibilities as an elected official) as determined by advisor(s).
- Officers must maintain a passing average in 50% of their classes.
- Advisors determine impeachment after a hearing.

## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The Dana O. Webber Chapter of the National Honor Society is a group of students elected annually on the basis of scholarship, leadership, character, and service. The selection procedure for the National Honor Society membership is as follows:

1. A list of juniors and seniors with an overall average of 88 will be compiled by the advisor.
2. In addition to the scholastic requirements, **each student must take a minimum of three honors level courses each year and at least one each semester in his/her/their sophomore, junior, and senior year to be eligible for consideration.** After selection, members must continue to maintain this distribution of advanced/honors courses or he/she will automatically lose membership.
3. A form letter of notification will be sent to all eligible students.
4. Any student wishing consideration for membership shall write a letter of no more than one page, to be typed and double spaced, listing his/her/their qualifications in regards to service, character, and leadership. The letter shall be personally presented to the advisor by the designated deadline.
5. The NHS council will review all applications and this committee will compile a list of recommended applicants to be presented to the full faculty.
6. Any faculty member has the right to challenge the qualifications or suitability of any applicant for membership, but he/she must present a specific reason for doing so.
7. Any applicant's questionable qualifications will be reviewed by the Faculty Council, which shall make the final decision in regards to selection.

8. Any applicant rejected for membership shall receive a written letter from the advisor stating this fact. He/she shall have the opportunity to determine the reason(s) for his/her/their rejection from the Council at an appointed time.

# GRS CODE OF CONDUCT

## INTRODUCTION

All students have the right to a safe and respectful school environment. The following code of behavior has been established to assist students, teachers, parents and administrators to promote patterns of behavior, which enhance an orderly learning community within our school.

This code classifies unacceptable behavior into four domains; Respectful, Responsible, Safe, and Kind. Behaviors are categorized into one of these four domains. Based on the degree to which it disrupts students and the learning environment. All disciplinary actions implemented by the school will reflect consideration of the developmental level of each individual involved. Because it is neither easy nor helpful to list all unacceptable behaviors and the appropriate reaction to each, examples of behavior in each category are provided. These examples are not exhaustive but explanatory and exemplary.

In cases where suspension or expulsion from school is determined to be the response to the misbehavior, all rights to due process hearings will be offered. A detailed description of these due process rights follows this statement of school behavior. Additional copies can be obtained from the Principal.

## DESCRIPTIONS OF BEHAVIORS

Behavior Types	Definition	Examples
Defiance	Student engages in brief or low- intensity failure to respond to adult requests.	Not following directions, not completing classwork, telling, “no,” rolling eyes, ignoring requests, etc.
Inappropriate Language	Student verbalizes or writes using language that is inappropriate for school.	Name calling, cursing, written or verbal insults, etc.
Physical Contact	Student engages in <u>non-serious, but inappropriate</u> physical contact, not including Harassment or Sexual Harassment (Title IX).	Pushing, pulling, spitting, accidental hitting, horseplay, etc.
Property Misuse	Low intensity misuse of property.	Littering, erasable writing on property, breaking pencils, etc.
Technology Violation	Student engages in low-intensity misuse of any school technology.	Use of technology without staff permission, improper handling of equipment, not following staff directions when using technology, etc.
Theft	Student is in possession of, having passed on, or being responsible for removing someone else’s property	Taking pencils, erasers, items of little value.

Abusive Language; Harassment; Teasing	Repeated verbalizing or writing using language that is inappropriate for school. Student engages in delivering disrespectful messages (verbally, writing, gesture) to another person that include threats and intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures, or written notes.	Repeated name calling, cursing, written or verbal insults. Negative comments based on race, religion, gender, age, and/or national origin; sustained or intense attacks based on ethnic origin, disability, or other personal matters.
Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs *	Student is in possession of, distributing, or using	
Disrespect, Defiance	Refusal to follow directions, talking back, or socially rude interactions.	Repeated minor behaviors, or behavior that sustain over a long period of time, or with greater intensity.
Disruption	Behavior causing an interruption in a class or activity. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling or screaming noise with materials, horseplay or roughhousing, and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.	Sustained behaviors such as: Humming, tapping, blurting out, playing with items, talking, etc. Yelling/screaming (verbal fighting), crying, tantrums, etc.
Fighting, Physical Aggression	Intentional actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur.	Hitting, kicking, punching, scratching, hair pulling, biting, etc.
Leaving School Property	Student leaves the school building without permission or stays out of class.	Student exits the building without permission, student refuses to re- enter the building after recess or an outdoor activity.
Weapons *	Student is in possession of knives or guns. (objects readily capable of causing bodily harm).	Student has a knife or gun; student uses an alternative object with the purpose of inflicting harm to others.
Vandalism, Property Damage	Student participates in an activity that results in the destruction or disfigurement of property.	Repeated minor behaviors, damage that cannot be easily fixed or cleaned.

\* Behaviors covered under the Code of Conduct do not include infractions listed in MGL 37H and 37H1/2. Information regarding these processes can be found on page 16

## **DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL OUTCOMES FOR BEHAVIORS**

Potential outcomes for behavior are broken up into three types. Green outcomes are restorative, emotionally supportive, or learning opportunities; green outcomes are reserved for behaviors where learning and restoration is most appropriate. Yellow outcomes include meeting with administrators and potential detentions; yellow outcomes are reserved for conduct that needs to be addressed with a tangible consequence. Red outcomes include internal suspension, external suspension, and expulsion; red outcomes are reserved for the most serious behaviors. **One behavior could warrant outcomes from more than one level.**

### **Blue Outcomes:**

Conference with Administrator: Meeting with administrator could include a conversation, verbal reprimand, parent phone call, safety plan, resetting expectations, preventative measures etc. *Conference with Administrator will always take place as either the the only outcome or in concert with other potential outcomes listed below.*

### **Green Outcomes:**

Alternative Remedies/Restorative Measures: Alternative remedies could include, but are not limited to, individualized lessons, training, or programs related to specific behavior. Restorative measures could include repair work and righting any wrongs caused by the behavior. The goal would be to provide students with requisite understanding to avoid behavior happening again.

Mediation: Mediation could include meeting with other students or teachers to build a plan moving forward to avoid further behaviors.

Social/Emotional Supports: Social/Emotional supports could include meeting with SAC or School Counselors.

### **Yellow Outcomes:**

Lunch Detention: Lunch detention takes place from the beginning of lunch, through recess, to the beginning of the next block. Students will get their lunch and report to the lunch detention room. Inappropriate behavior in lunch detention could result in additional detentions or consequences.

After School Detention: After school detention takes place after school from 2:15-3:15 in the office. Students can complete school work or sit quietly. Inappropriate behavior in after school detention could result in additional detentions or consequences.

### **Red Outcomes:**

Internal Suspension: In-school suspension is the separation from regularly scheduled classes and restriction of movement within the school or participation in any extracurricular activities or athletics. Students are responsible for completion of work and all school assignments. Students must abide by the Discipline Code and rules of the school. Parents have the right to come in and talk about internal suspension.

#### **Rules for In-School Suspension:**

1. Students must report to the In-School Suspension Room by 7:25A.M.
2. Students are required to bring all school materials with them.
3. No forms of entertainment, food, or beverages are allowed in the room.
4. Students are to remain in their assigned seat; no talking allowed.
5. Students will be escorted to scheduled restroom breaks.
6. Students will eat lunch in the In-School Suspension Room.
7. Students may also be expected to participate in a counseling session to avoid further difficulties.
8. Students who fail to comply with the rules will face further disciplinary action.

External Suspension: External suspension from school involves the temporary denial of a student's ability to come to school or participate in any extracurricular activities or athletics. This action is taken when no other action is suitable or likely to result in the correction of the student's unacceptable behavior. Students may make up all work missed during the suspension period. **All suspended students reserve the right to a hearing.**

Expulsion: Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from the regular education setting due to a serious infraction of school rules or policies. An expulsion hearing would take place to determine whether the student can return to school based on the behavior.

## **DESCRIPTION OF MATRICES**

The charts below provide the general structure by level of disciplinary infractions and their potential associated consequences. The charts are intended merely as a guideline, and do not cover every possible infraction, and do not preclude the administration from responding to conduct that is deemed inappropriate for the school setting in a manner other than as set forth below. Gateway reserves the right to consequence, suspend, expel, or otherwise remove a student from the school setting; consistent with state and federal law and to consider the severity of each incident, whether the student was involved in prior disciplinary incidents and other relevant factors. When infractions occur, consequences will be applied in an equitable manner. A student's past performance may influence the choice of a consequence.

Note: The Gateway Regional School District has a signed "Memorandum of Understanding" with the local and state law enforcement agencies. This memorandum dictates that some behaviors will be reported to local law enforcement agencies.

The school will try in most situations to attempt alternative remedies prior to suspension per the November 8, 2022 update to 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.

### Responsible

Behaviors	Conference with Administrator	Alternative Remedies/ Restorative Measures	Mediation	Social and Emotional Supports	Lunch Detention	After School Detention	Internal Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (6-10 Days)	Expulsion
Inappropriate Use of Technology	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Leaving School Grounds; Out of Bounds	X	X			X	X	X			
Skipping Class; Truancy; Class Cut	X	X			X	X				
Violation of School or Classroom Rules or Expectations	X	X	X		X	X				
Tardiness	X	X			X	X				
Academic Dishonesty or Plagiarism *	X	X	X		X	X	X			

### Respect

Behaviors	Conference with Administrator	Alternative Remedies/ Restorative Measures	Mediation	Social and Emotional Supports	Lunch Detention	After School Detention	Internal Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (6-10 Days)	Expulsion
Vandalism	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Theft of School Supplies	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Destruction of School Property	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Theft of Personal Property	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Destruction of Personal Property	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Use of Vulgar or Obscene Language (Spoken or Written)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Cell Phone Misuse **	X	X			X	X				
Defiance of School Personnel	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Personal Space Violation	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Inappropriate PDA	X	X	X	X		X	X			

### Safe

Behaviors	Conference with Administrator	Alternative Remedies/ Restorative Measures	Mediation	Social and Emotional Supports	Lunch Detention	After School Detention	Internal Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (6-10 Days)	Expulsion
Possession or Use of a Weapon ***	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Unsafe Behavior (running in hallways; horseplay; etc.)	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Verbal or Written Threats (general)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Physical Confrontation (Pushing)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Physical Altercation (Fight)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Sexual Harassment ****	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Possession or Use of an Incendiary Device	X	X				X	X	X	X	
Possession or Distribution of a Controlled Substance, Alcohol or Illegal Drug or Paraphernalia***	X	X	X				X	X	X	X
Use of a Controlled Substance, Alcohol or Illegal Drug	X	X		X		X	X	X		
Possession or Use of Tobacco	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Verbal or Written Threats to Teachers	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Physical Contact with Teacher (intentional or unintentional) ***	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Dangerous Behavior	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Inciting a Disturbance	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Causing a False Fire Alarm	X	X	X				X	X		

**Kind**

Behaviors	Conference with Administrator	Alternative Remedies/ Restorative Measures	Mediation	Social and Emotional Supports	Lunch Detention	After School Detention	Internal Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (1-5 Days)	External Suspension (6-10 Days)	Expulsion
Verbal Confrontation	X	X	X		X		X			
Discriminatory Language or Hate Speech (spoken or written)	X	X	X			X	X	X		
Harassment, Bullying, Cyber Bullying, Hazing *****	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Disrespectful or Discourteous Behavior	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Verbal or Written Threats to Students	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

**Additional Comments:**

- \*- Refer to Academic Honesty Policy
- \*\* -Refer to Cell Phone Policy
- \*\*\*-Refer to M.G.L 37H
- \*\*\*\*- Refer to Sexual Harassment Policy
- \*\*\*\*\*-Refer to District Bullying Policy

**Repeated instances of the same behavior could result in progressive consequences**

**BULLYING POLICY:**  
**Priority Statement**

Gateway Regional School District expects that all members of the school community will treat one another in a respectful manner. The District is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, secure, and positive school climate and culture. This positive culture will increase student engagement and promote academic achievement. The District will purposefully build a kind, inclusive community.

The District is legally responsible to create a safe environment for *all* students and will teach all students strategies to prevent and respond to teasing, bullying, cyber bullying, and harassment. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

The District understands certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Teachers and staff have the professional responsibility to monitor vulnerable students and provide additional support, as required by law.

The District must establish separate discrimination or harassment policies that include these or other categories of students. Nothing in this section shall alter the obligations of the district to remediate any discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. The District will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. The District will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, the District has established this Bullying Prevention Plan to prevent, intervene, and respond to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent shall be responsible for investigating the report and taking other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and taking other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

### **Policy Scope**

At Gateway Regional, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or cyber-harassment is prohibited:

1. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds; or
2. at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or
3. through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or
4. at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district; or
5. if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

This plan applies to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, paraprofessionals, food service workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, extracurricular advisors, wrap around staff, substitutes, volunteers and contracted service providers. Although the school district cannot make directives to caregivers or community members, district administrators will include local law enforcement to settle matters outside the district's control.

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

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

### **Collaboration with Families**

The District is committed to working with families to ensure that bullying is addressed immediately. If families have questions or concerns about this plan or bullying in general, please contact the school principal or superintendent.

A number of resources for caregivers that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the District can be found on our website at <https://www.grsd.org/general-information/bullying>.

The District will inform caregivers of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used in the student/family handbook available on our website each year. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety.

## **Reporting Bullying**

Any member of the school community, students, staff, caregivers, or other community members may make a complaint and report bullying, harassment or retaliation behavior orally or in writing. All individuals who are reported as aggressors, targets, witnesses, or are otherwise involved in a bullying incident will be afforded the same protection regardless of their legal status. Any member of the school community who retaliates against another for reporting bullying or harassment, or who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

The school principal or their designee will be responsible for investigating reports of bullying immediately but no later than two school days after the report is received.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, caregivers, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing by their administrator. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, caregivers, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. Written reports may be submitted via email to the principal, via the incident report form found on our website or in the student/family handbook, or via [this anonymous reporting google form for students in grades 6-12](#) and [this anonymous reporting google form for grades PreK-5](#).

### **Reporting by Staff**

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when an administrator is the alleged aggressor, or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. Reports can be made via email, SWIS, verbally in person, or in writing.

### **Reporting by Students, Caregivers, and Others**

The District expects students, caregivers, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports can be made via email, verbally in person, or in writing. Students, caregivers, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report.

### **Anonymous Reporting**

Any school community member may make an anonymous report of bullying, harassment, or retaliation. Anonymous information cannot be used by itself for disciplinary proceedings, but it

may lead to an investigation into the allegation if additional corroborating evidence is determined.

## **Responding to Reports of Bullying**

### **Safety**

Immediately after receiving a report of bullying, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating an interim safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. Safety plans are shared with staff who have direct responsibility for supervising the alleged aggressor and the alleged target, which may include staff assigned to hallway duties and general supervision.

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

### **Obligation to Notify**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the caregivers of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts caregivers prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

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

### **Investigation**

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

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

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

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

Investigation of the complaint will be concluded within 14 school days of the filing of the initial report. Most investigations will be concluded within 10 school days.

There are circumstances in which an incident is referred to the Superintendent of Schools.

- When a parent, guardian, or student feels an incident was not resolved at the building level.
- When an incident involves the Equity Officer or principal or other building staff responsible for an investigation.
- When a situation remains unresolved after an investigation and corrective action. Usually this would be two or more substantiated incidents involving a single individual or group.
- Adult to adult bullying behavior.

### **Determination**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's caregivers, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the caregivers of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

### **Responses to Address Bullying**

#### **Teaching Appropriate Behaviors**

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v).

Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions with a counselor;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with counselors and/or other appropriate school personnel;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

#### **Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with this Plan and with the school's code of conduct.

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

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of

bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Ensuring Safety**

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. This may include but not be limited to extending the interim safety plan to run through the remainder of the school year or through a set time determined by the school administration.

Safety plans will be written to parties involved, and will be clearly communicated (both verbally and in writing) to the students, the teachers and support staff that supervise the students, and with the caregivers of both students. Safety plans will include expectations of both students, as well as the consequences for not meeting these expectations. Safety plans are expected to have written acknowledgement from the caregivers, the administrators and the students, and will be shared in writing to teachers, counselors, support staff and anyone who supervises the students on a plan. If written acknowledgement is intentionally withheld by the student, parent and/or guardian after it is shared with them, the safety plan will still be implemented as written. In these instances where a student, parent and/or guardian refuses to sign the plan, the principal or designee will inform the superintendent. Safety plans will expire at the end of each school year, but can be reimplemented at the request of the administration or family.

### **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Support**

Any caregiver wishing to share a concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs>. Emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are available at the Superintendent's office.

## **Student Support**

### **Resources and Counseling**

Any student or staff member who has been a target, aggressor or bystander of bullying may access additional support at school. This may include but not be limited to counseling, individualized or small group support with our anti-bullying curriculum, or regular meetings with counseling, nursing, or administrative staff.

Students who need additional social-emotional support can receive counseling and guidance from school psychologists, counselors, and special educators. IEP and 504 Teams may explore implementing an evidence-based social skills curriculum and additional time in social skills groups for students who are especially vulnerable to bullying and harassment due to race, disability, or gender orientation.

In addition, some students and families may need to be referred to outside services. School psychologists, guidance counselors, and/or special educators will help students and families find the outside services they need in a timely way. A community resource that is accessible to Gateway students is the School Based Health Center through the Hilltown Community Health Center.

### **Requirements for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities may need additional support at school as they develop social skills. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The IEP or 504 team can recommend pragmatic language and /or counseling services to supplement a school's social skills curriculum. The social skills curriculum may require reinforcement, repetition, or modification to reach a student with identified social skills deficits. This is often provided by small group instruction but may be provided through individualized instruction. A school counselor, school adjustment counselor, or psychologist can monitor a student's social skills development and respond to socially challenging circumstances in the school environment.

If a student with an identified disability is involved in a bullying, harassment, or retaliation incident, either as a target or aggressor, there should be careful consideration of the student's disability. The district employs a bullying protocol in the form of a checklist that was developed in accordance with our legal expectations. This form is reviewed, completed and signed by all Team members at the conclusion of every Annual and Triennial Review for every student on an IEP. Based upon the findings of the Team, the IEP is modified to ensure that for all students who have a disability that affects social skill development, or a disability that may make a student vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing; the IEP must include a plan to address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid or respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

## **Bullying Prevention: Staff Trainings**

### **Annual Required Staff Training**

Annual training for all school staff on the contents of this plan will occur each year before school begins as part of the mandated training. The training will include:

- The contents of this plan including the definitions of bullying and the process for prompt reporting including technical aspects
- The professional responsibilities of staff for preventing bullying to create a safe and supportive classroom and hallway environment

The principal or designee is responsible for collecting evidence that staff completed this training. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in the mandated training within two weeks of their start date.

### **Ongoing Professional Development**

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of schoolwide and district wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

As recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development may include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

### **Written Notice to Staff**

The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it in the school or district employee handbook. Published information will include sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff.

## **Bullying Prevention: Student Engagement**

### **Anti-Bullying Curriculum**

Bullying prevention curricula will be selected based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's recommendation. Currently, the District is using Second Step published by the Committee for Children. Additionally, students and families can opt in to the peer leadership anti-bullying training through the Anti-Defamation League starting in middle school.

In Kindergarten through Grade 5, students have Second Step lessons. In Second Step students will learn pro-social values and skills such as empathy, emotional management, and problem solving. Students will also have lessons that include ethical values. As part of social skills training, students will learn about alternatives to discipline like restorative justice, making amends, and community service.

In grades 6 through 12, middle and high school faculty and staff embed lessons on anti-bullying in the health classes. The guidance department also engages in teaching around appropriate social skills on an as-needed basis and can be referred by anyone for additional social emotional support.

The District will be reviewing the effectiveness of Second Step in the summer of 2023. To evaluate this curriculum, the review committee will be looking for a robust anti-bullying curriculum to include:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students or school staff engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Students will learn about the District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in health classes each year.

## **Best Practices to Support Bullying Prevention**

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These strategies are required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

## **Bully Prevention Survey**

At least once every four years, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. The school district may survey students more frequently to use the data to improve school safety and culture. Student participation in the survey is optional but encouraged.

### **Definitions**

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

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

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

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 an electronic medium, a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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

Cyber-harassment is willful and repeated harm inflicted through but not limited to, Web pages, social networking sites, email, instant messaging or text messaging using computers, cell phone, or electronic network, when the target is an individual or individuals who are members of a protected group, either real or perceived.

Harassment is unwelcome, intentional, discriminatory behavior toward an individual or group motivated by real or perceived membership in a protected category including but not limited to race, ethnicity/national origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or age.

Sexual Harassment is a sexual advance, request for sexual favor, or behavior of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to or rejection of such advance, request, or behavior is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, or as a basis for employment decisions, or decisions regarding student evaluation, or participation in school programs or activities, OR
2. sexual advance, request, or behavior that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may occur student to student, adult to student, student to adult, adult to adult, male to female, female to male, male to male, and/or female to female.

Hazing is any behavior or method of initiation into a student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully endangers the physical or mental health of any individual. Such behavior includes beating, whipping, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the health and safety of an individual or which subjects an individual to extreme mental stress, including sleep deprivation, or extended isolation. Hazing is a form of bullying.

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

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

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

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

### **Relationship to Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in this Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, M.G.L. c. 71, §§41 and 42, M.G.L.c 76 § 5, or other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this Plan covers the behavior.

### **DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS**

#### **NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION**

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- a) the disciplinary offense;
- b) the basis for the charge;
- c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- f) the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- g) The right to appeal to the superintendent (long-term suspensions only).

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO SUSPENSION UNDER M.G.L. CHAPTER 71, §37H¾**

A student may not be suspended under M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾, unless one or more of the following apply:

- A. Alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents.
- B. There are documented specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive.
- C. The situation is such that the student’s continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

**SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION**

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

Principal Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student’s conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of his/her/their determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send his/her/their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

**LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION**

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
- iv. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- v. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her/their designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send his/her/their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

#### **APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue his/her/their written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final. The superintendent will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student and the parent upon request. It is the superintendent's responsibility to inform all parties before the hearing that an audio copy is being made of the hearing.

#### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL**

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. A Principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency, removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

#### **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10**

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year. **The use of internal suspension is an alternative to short-term suspension.**

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

#### **SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½**

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

##### **Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff**

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said

hearing, a principal may, in his/her/their discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her/their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

#### **Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint**

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

#### **Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency**

The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her/their request for an appeal the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

#### **STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

The District shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding in-school suspensions, short-term and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

The principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the principal shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The principal shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, or in-school or out-of-school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

**MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 71, SECTIONS 37H**

By State Law, the following procedure is followed in certain cases of serious student misconduct as specified below:

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her/their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

- (d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her/their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- (e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS,  
CHAPTER 71, SECTIONS 37H1/2**

- (1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her/their right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his/her/their request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her/their behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the regional school district with regard to the suspension.

- (2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her/their right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his/her/their request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her/their behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student.

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Gateway Regional School District recognizes physical restraint as an emergency procedure of last resort, which will only be used after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. When necessary to protect a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm, Gateway will administer physical restraint in accordance with the Massachusetts regulations at 603 CMR 46.00. Complete copies of the District's physical restraint policies and procedures are available at Central Office and in each principal's office.

Copies of this law also are available at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html>.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES**

The storage on one's person, in one's belongings or on/in school property, of contraband such as, but not limited to illegal substances or articles or any item prohibited by district policy or building rules, is strictly forbidden. Violations will result in confiscation of such materials. The student in violation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Lockers, desks, computers, books, and other items issued to students by the district for their temporary use, remain the property of the school. As such, students should have no expectation of privacy as it relates to their use. School property may also be searched when an administrator or designee has reason to believe that contraband, as described above, may be stored within.

When an administrator or designee has reason to believe that contraband as described above is being stored on one's person or in one's possession, he/she may conduct a personal search appropriate to the nature of the potential violation.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights and is consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide a safe atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION RELATIVE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER IDEA AND SECTION 504**

With respect to the removal of students with disabilities from public schools, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71B, Section 3 states:

“No School Committee shall refuse a school age child with special needs admission to or continued attendance in public school without the prior written approval of the Department (of Elementary and Secondary Education) and without complying with the Department’s regulations and procedures for disciplining students with special needs, where applicable.

No child who is so refused or removed shall be denied an alternative form of education approved by the Department, as provided for in section ten, through a tutoring program at home, through enrollment in an institution operated by a state agency, or through any other program which is approved for the child by the Department.”

There are exceptions for violations involving the possession of dangerous weapons or controlled substances.

## **PROCEDURES FOR THE SUSPENSION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS**

The following provisions shall apply whenever a school administrator proposes to suspend a student with special needs for more than ten (10) cumulative days in a school year:

### **General Requirements**

Each school shall ensure that:

1. It has the appropriate procedure to notify the Administrator of Special Education of the misconduct for which suspension of a student with a disability for more than ten (10) cumulative days is proposed, so that manifestation determination procedures can be implemented consistently.
2. The number and duration of suspensions of students with a disability is recorded and maintained by school administrators.
3. No student with a disability may be suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days in the school year as provided hereunder.

### **Manifestation Determination**

When it is known that the suspension(s) of a student with a disability will accumulate to ten (10) days in a school year, a review of the IEP will be conducted. In a meeting that includes district personnel, the parents and relevant members of the team, there will be a review of all relevant information to determine whether the student’s misconduct is a manifestation of the student’s disability, or results from an inappropriate special education program/placement or an IEP that was not fully implemented. Depending on the result of that determination, suspension may or may not be implemented. If the student has demonstrated repeated instances of dangerously assaultive or self-abusive behavior, an emergency evaluation and placement may be made with parental consent.

### **Circumstances under which the student may not be suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days:**

1. If the TEAM concludes that the student’s misconduct is related to the student’s disability or results from an inappropriate special education program or placement or an IEP that was not fully implemented, the student shall not be suspended. Instead, the student’s IEP shall be revised to reflect a new program or placement designed to meet the student’s needs more effectively, or, if the misconduct resulted from an appropriate IEP that was not fully implemented, all necessary steps shall be taken by the school to ensure that the IEP is fully implemented. If revision of the student’s IEP is required, development of an amended or new IEP shall occur.
2. If a new program or placement is designed for the student as a result of the review, the program or placement shall be implemented immediately following parental approval of the IEP. If the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) refuses consent to the IEP, the school or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may request a hearing to determine the appropriateness of the program. Alternatively, the parties may seek mediation to resolve the dispute. If a hearing is requested during the pendency of the hearing, the student shall remain in the last agreed upon educational placement (the placement in effect when the dispute arose), unless another placement is agreed upon by the school and the student’s parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or a court order permits the school to change the student’s placement based on a showing that the student’s continued presence in school presents a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

**Circumstances under which suspension may be imposed for more than ten (10) cumulative days:**

1. If the school wishes to impose a suspension which results in more than ten (10) cumulative days of suspension in the school year, and the TEAM concludes that: the student's misconduct is not a manifestation to the student's disability; is not the result of an inappropriate special education program/placement; and the current IEP was fully implemented, the school shall:
  - a. Proved an interim alternative plan for the delivery of special education services to the student during the period of the suspension, which shall be referred to as "the alternative plan";
  - b. Before the student is suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days, present the interim alternative plan to the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) along with the required written notice.
2. A copy of the interim alternative plan must be included in the student's file, which shall also include documentation which demonstrates that:
  - a. The school has complied with procedures required by Goss v. Lopez and by the school's Code of Conduct.
  - b. The school has considered less restrictive disciplinary measures, including modifying the student's IEP to set out specific methods of discipline.
  - c. The disciplinary action is for a stated and limited number of days.
  - d. The action is necessary in light of the needs of the student and other students in the school.
  - e. The school administrators have conferred with appropriate special education staff as to the disciplinary action and have followed all the procedures outlined herein including notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right of appeal.
3. If the child's parent disagrees with a determination that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of the child's disability or with any decision regarding placement, the parent may request a hearing. The State or local education agency shall arrange for an expedited hearing on any case described in this subsection requested by a parent.
4. Procedural Rights for students with the disabilities can be found in the *Parents' Rights Brochure of the Department of Education*.
5. The educational services are based on and provide in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students.
6. It is the principal's responsibility to notify the student and their parents of the opportunity to receive education services and arrange such services at the time that the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.
7. It is the responsibility of the school/district to facilitate and verify enrollment of the student in the service, upon selection of an educational service by the student and the parent/guardian.

**Students not yet determined to be eligible for special education or 504 services:** The law applies to general education students if the school system had knowledge prior to the misconduct that the student was disabled. Under the law, a school district is presumed to have "had knowledge" that a general education student was disabled if the student's:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) has "expressed concern in writing" to the school district that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- Parent/guardian(s) have requested a special education evaluation of the child, or
- District staff have "expressed concern" directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. If there was no knowledge, the parent/guardian(s) may request an expedited evaluation. During this period, the student may be suspended or expelled under normal School Committee policy. Students determined to have a disability must receive appropriate educational services.
- The exceptions to prior knowledges are if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student, the parents has refused special education services, or an evaluation of the students has result in a determination of ineligibility.

**Students identified as having a disability and provided with a Section 504 plan:** Students are expected to meet

the expectations for behavior identified in this Code of Conduct. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

1. Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan?
2. Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review. If the misconduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the disciplinary process can proceed. If the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student shall be reevaluated while he/she remains in the current placement.

**Court order necessary to authorize suspension:**

A school shall not suspend or exclude a student for more than ten (10) cumulative days during the pendency of a Bureau of Special Education Appeals Hearing or judicial proceeding brought to challenge a suspension, proposed suspension, or any determination, above, unless the school obtains a court order authorizing a temporary change of the child's educational placement based on a showing that the student's continued presence in school presents a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

**Please note the following situation requirements under federal law:**

Section 1415(k) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (hereinafter, "IDEA"), codified as 20 U.S.C. 1415(k), sets forth the following procedures with respect to the suspension of students with special needs (and protections for those children not yet eligible for special educational and related services):

*Placement in alternative education setting*

*(1) Authority of school personnel*

- (A) School personnel may order a change in the placement of a child with a disability—
  - (i) to an appropriate interim alternative setting, another setting or suspension, for not more than 10 school days (to the extent such alternatives would be applied to children without disabilities); and
  - (ii) to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 days if—
    - (I) the child carries a weapon to school or to a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or
    - (II) the child knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.
- (B) Either before but not later than 10 days after taking a disciplinary action described in subparagraph (A)—
  - (i) if the local educational agency did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child before the behavior that resulted in the suspension described in subparagraph (A), the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan to address that behavior, or
  - (ii) if the child already has a behavioral intervention plan, the IEP Team shall review the plan and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

*(2) Authority of a BSEA Hearing Officer*

A Hearing Officer under this section may order a change in the placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days if the Hearing Officer—

- (A) determines that the public agency has demonstrated by substantial evidence that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others;
- (B) considers the appropriateness of the child's current placement;
- (C) considers whether the public agency has made reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the child's current placement, including the use of supplementary aids and services; and
- (D) determines that the interim alternative educational setting meets the requirements of paragraph (3)(B).

(3) *Determination of setting*

- (A) The alternative educational setting described in paragraph (1)(A)(ii) shall be determined by the IEP Team.
- (B) *Additional requirements*: any interim alternative setting in which a child is placed under paragraph (1) or (2) shall—
  - (i) be selected so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described in the child's current IEP, that will enable the child to meet the goals set out in that IEP; and
  - (ii) include services and modifications designed to address the behavior described in paragraph (1) or paragraph (2) so that it does not recur.

## HAZING POLICY

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 strictly prohibits any type of hazing or initiation into any student organization, which will endanger a student physical or mentally. The law specifically states:

**Section 17:** Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term hazing as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this section.

**Section 18:** Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. A fine of not more than one thousand dollars shall punish whoever fails to report such crime.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### Policy

It is the policy of the Gateway Regional School District to maintain a learning and working environment free from sexual harassment. No employee or student will be subjected to sexual harassment (as defined by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and/or by Title IX of the 1972 Education Act).

It will be a violation of this policy for any student or staff member to harass another student or staff member through contact or communication as defined below.

### Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome advance, request, or conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's right to live and learn in an environment void of intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive behavior.

This definition applies to explicit or implicit sexual harassment occurring within the school environment between student to student, staff to student, student to staff, or staff to staff.

### **Identification of Behaviors and Activities as Defined**

- Repeated remarks or written comments with sexual or demeaning implications.
- Subtle or direct pressure for sexual activity.
- Unwelcome touching or physical contact.
- Suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's performance evaluation or grade as a student.
- Nonverbal sexual intimidation.

### **Complaint/Investigation Procedure**

This procedure applies to all Gateway faculty, employees and students.

Any student, employee or individual on school property who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should make a complaint to the building principal/designee or the Coordinator for Title IX.

All employees are charged with the responsibility of discouraging any sexually harassing behaviors within their areas of supervision or assignment. This includes discussing the incident with the individuals(s) involved and/or reporting the activity to the appropriate person.

Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. No person will suffer retaliation or intimidation as a result of using the internal complaint procedure.

### **Informal Process**

All reasonable efforts shall be made by the principal or designee(s) to reach a settlement between the parties. Should this process prove to be unsuccessful, a formal written complaint may be filed by the complainant.

### **Formal Process**

The complaint will state clearly and concisely the complainant's description of the incident, and he/she will also indicate any remedy sought. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. The principal's office will send the respondent a copy of the complaint within three working days after it is received. A separate file system shall be maintained as to all matters relating to the complaint. Confidentiality shall be respected to the extent possible.

The respondent will be given an opportunity within three working days to respond in writing. If a statement is given, it should contain full and specific references to each claim in the complaint admitting, denying or explaining the complainant's allegations. The respondent must sign his or her statement which will then be appended to the original complaint. Within three working days, the principal's or investigator's office will forward any and all statements to the complainant and the respondent.

There will be two modes of resolution for formal complaints. A complaint may be settled through (1) mediation or (2) a hearing.

**Mediation:** The principal or designee(s) shall act as the mediator at this session. If the complainant and respondent agree to pursue mediation, a date mutually acceptable to both parties will be set within five working days. If the mediation results in a mutually acceptable agreement, copies of the agreement will be forwarded to both parties. If the mediation does not result in an agreement or if mediation is not requested, the case will be scheduled for hearing before the Superintendent.

**Hearing:** When a hearing is requested by either the complainant or respondent, the principal or designee(s) will inform the Pupil Services Director and/or the school committee; and the case will be heard as soon as reasonably possible.

The Superintendent, Pupil Services Director, building principal or designee(s) will act as the presiding officer(s) of the hearing and may have counsel present for purposes of assisting in the orderly conduct of the hearing and the questioning of witnesses.

The purpose of the hearing will be to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated.

Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing which will be held in closed session. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and will not be bound by the procedure and rules of evidence of a court of law.

If a criminal complaint has been filed, this process will be held in abeyance until the conclusion of the criminal proceedings.

#### **Decision of the Superintendent, Pupil Services Director, Principal or Designee(s)**

After all evidence, testimony, and written arguments have been presented, the Superintendent will determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated.

If the Superintendent, Pupil Services Director, principal or designee(s) finds that the charge of violating the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been substantiated, he/she will prepare findings and will determine a penalty for the respondent and relief for the complainant.

The penalty should reflect the severity of the harassment. For students, the penalties may include, but will not be limited to, any one or combination of the following:

- verbal admonition
- written warning placed in the respondent's student file
- suspension or expulsion (per Serious Offenses Policy)

For staff, the penalties may include, but will not be limited to, any one or combination of the following:

- verbal admonition
- written warning placed in the respondent's personnel file
- probation
- suspension without pay
- demotion
- dismissal
- removal from administrative duties within a department
- professional counseling

Any penalty imposed upon an employee must be in accordance with State and Federal Law and/or any collective bargaining agreement.

The written decision will be forwarded to the complainant and the respondent no later than ten working days after completion of the hearing.

#### **The School Committee**

If the complainant has allegedly been sexually harassed by a School Committee member or the Superintendent of Schools, the School Committee will hear the case rather than the Superintendent. The School Committee member charged with the violation will not be a voting member of the School Committee or be part of the deliberations resulting in the determination from the School Committee.

In the event the hearing occurs before the School Committee, the requirements of the Education Reform Act of 1993 and the Open Meeting Law will be observed.

The Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Acts of 1973 is Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director who may be reached at 685-1019. The state and federal agencies primarily responsible for processing claims of sexual harassment are listed below. You may either call the agency or write to them.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Commission Against Discrimination  
436 Dwight Street, Suite 315  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 739-2145

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
1 Congress Street  
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 565-3200

## **TOBACCO FREE POLICY**

The Gateway Regional School District is committed to providing a healthy smoke-free environment for staff, students, and visitors. Recognizing the critical role that education plays in establishing life-long health habits, the school district has developed a comprehensive K-12 health curriculum emphasizing the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, and the use of drugs. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 Section 37H, the possession or use of any tobacco products within the school building, school facilities, on school grounds (including bus stops), on school buses or any school sponsored transportation, or at an off-campus school sponsored activity (field trips, dances, etc.) by any student is strictly prohibited. Students found in possession of or using tobacco or tobacco-like products\* in violation of this policy are subject to the disciplinary actions indicated on pg. 33 of this handbook.

*\*(Tobacco and tobacco-like products include: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarette or vapor products, hookahs, and any other device utilized to promote the use of tobacco or tobacco-like products.)*

## **SCHOOL BUS POLICY**

Transportation by school bus to and from school is a privilege for all students who qualify according to the Rules and Regulations of the School Committee and the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and it should be understood that the right of the pupil for transportation to and from school is a qualified right dependent on good behavior.

The School Committee has responsibility for students while being transported on school buses, and as such, the principals have the same duties and responsibilities toward the students on the buses as they have toward these same children in a classroom situation. Principals also have the responsibility of advising and assisting bus drivers of proper student behavior.

When misconduct on a school bus becomes serious enough to warrant loss of bus privileges as listed below, the bus driver, through the use of the Bus Conduct Report shall notify the school administration. The administration shall notify the parent by phone, to be followed by a letter and/or copy of the Bus Conduct Report, which shall indicate the nature of the offense and the number of days and dates for suspension of school bus privileges. Suspension of bus privileges shall include all routes that a child takes to and from school, including feeder routes. Said suspension will be according to the schedule below and shall be consecutive school days.

Permanent or long term suspension of bus privileges exceeding twenty days may only be made after the parent and student have had an opportunity for a hearing with the Business Manager and a recommendation is made by the Business Manager to the superintendent.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the following actions may be taken. Students who display any of the following types of behavior patterns may, at the discretion of the administration, have their bus riding privileges revoked.

**Category A**

Eating or drinking beverages on bus  
Not staying in seat  
Not sitting face forward  
Not crossing in front of the bus  
Unnecessary noise, shouting  
Playing radio

**Disciplinary Action**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense - Warning  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - Five days bus suspension  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense - Ten days bus suspension  
4<sup>th</sup> Offense - Hearing  
5<sup>th</sup> Offense - Fourteen days bus suspension  
6<sup>th</sup> Offense - Hearing

**Category B**

Fighting, rough-housing  
Smoking/playing with fire  
Insubordination, swearing, obscene gestures  
Damage to other students' property  
Throwing objects in or out of the bus  
Damage to the bus

**Disciplinary Action**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense - Warning  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - Ten days bus suspension  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense - Twenty days bus suspension  
4<sup>th</sup> Offense - Hearing

Possession, consumption, or sale of drugs or alcohol, and/or possession of or use of any explosive devices on a school bus shall be subject to an immediate suspension pending a hearing.

Bus Cards issued at the end of the school year, at the discretion of the administration, may be continued in September of the following school year. Drivers will be required to keep appropriate records and forward them to the administration for their use.

**DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The Gateway Regional School District reaffirms that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, gender identity, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or military or exercise of civil rights in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs or activities.

The Gateway Regional School District also affirms its commitment to maintain a school and work environment free of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and disability; including, but not limited to, threatening language or behavior, assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, continuing comments, gestures, or written communications of a suggestive or derogatory nature. (Including sexual harassment, See File ACAB: Sexual Harassment). Discriminatory actions include physical or verbal conduct that is derogatory. For example, jokes, gestures, unsolicited remarks, or other behavior that creates an intimidating or offensive working/learning environment. To file a complaint see COMPLAINT/INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE under File ACAB: SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY.

All students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness, have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district.

The district's Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is Kurt Garivaltis, the Pupil Services Director, who may be reached at 685-1019. Inquiries regarding the application of the Gateway Regional School District's nondiscrimination policy may be referred to Gateway Regional School District's Coordinator as named above, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 8 th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109.

**Reference Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 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 person 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 on account of race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Any harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or exercise of civil rights will not be tolerated. If you should have a complaint or concern that there has been discrimination, you may also utilize the following procedure:

1. Report the violation to the building principal. The building principal will meet with you and other persons who might have information about the issue promptly and will attempt to resolve the issue. Any additional investigation will be commenced within a reasonable period of time. The building principal will issue his/her/their decision in writing to you within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the investigation.
2. If the complaint is not resolved, it can then be appealed to the district's Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator. This appeal must be in writing, describe the circumstances, and the relief you seek. This appeal should be taken within one week after receipt of the principal's decision.
3. The Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator will meet with you within a reasonable time. Following a review of the materials presented to the principal and any additional investigation, which will be conducted promptly, the Coordinator will make a final determination on whether there has been a violation of the district's policy within ten (10) days after the conclusion of any additional investigation. If there has been a violation, the Coordinator will indicate the steps to be taken to correct it. Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack POCH, Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557

## **EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT**

Parents of students in schools that receive Title I funds may request, and the district will provide parents on request, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including the following: Whether the teacher has met state licensing criteria for the grade level(s) and subject area(s) taught; whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status through which state licensing criteria have been waived; the undergraduate degree major of the teacher, and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, including the field of discipline of the certification or degree; if the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, their qualifications. This information may be obtained by making this request, in writing, to the Title I Director (Director of Pupil Services).

In schools that receive Title I funds, timely notice will be provided to parents of any child who has been assigned to or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. Parents will be informed of violence and drug prevention efforts in the district. If a parent objects in writing to safe and drug-free school programs or activities, the district will withdraw the student from the program or activity. Parents of secondary school students have a right to request that their child's name, address and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior written consent. We request that parents of students in grades 9-12 complete the following form indicating whether they grant permission for their child's name, address, and telephone number to be released to military recruiters. In the event that the parent does not complete and return this form to the child's school, all requests for this information by the military will be honored.

If your family becomes homeless you have certain rights under the Every Student Succeeds Act. For information contact the Director of Pupil Services of the District.

The district will notify parents of the following: activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information; administration of survey that contain requests for certain types of sensitive information; non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school, scheduled in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students.

The district certifies that schools do not prevent or otherwise deny students their right to participate in:

1. Constitutionally protected prayer.
2. Parent/guardian will be notified if their child will be monitored and or surveyed by researchers. Notification will include the dates of planned research activities. In the event of research activities, opportunities will be provided for excluding individual students.
3. The following health and physical screenings will be provided for students:
  - a. Hearing: Grade 10
  - b. Vision: Grade 10
  - c. Postural Screening: Grade 9
  - d. Height, Weight, & Blood Pressure: Grade 10

In the event that you do not wish your child to participate in the health/physical screening, you may opt out by sending a letter to the building principal.

Parents/guardians have the right to review all curriculum materials, survey instruments, and procedures prior to them being used with their child. Please contact the school principal regarding this right.

School districts prohibit district and school personnel from divulging students' names and addresses to business or organizations that plan to use the information for commercial or other purposes unless:

- (1) the purpose has been approved by the district, and,
- (2) parents have given their express permission, in writing, for this information to be divulged.

# **GRSD ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES, NETWORK & INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs) network system, acceptable use of the Internet, and use of Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs).

## **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

In making decisions regarding student access to the school ECD network system and to the Internet, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district ECD network system and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the ECD network system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

Increased use of school and personal electronic communication devices (ECDs) has both positive and negative consequences. ECDs facilitate student free speech, and schools have incorporated them in teaching and learning with much success. However, student ECD use on and off campus can be abused in a way that negatively affects students, teachers, and the school environment. This policy is intended to support the benefits of ECD use while curtailing possible abuses.

The school committee recognizes that all students enrolled in the public school system have the right to attend classes on school campuses that are safe, secure, and peaceful. Acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and sexting are distracting and potentially forms of mistreatment that disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

The school district, through its school administrators and their designees, has the authority to impose regulations on the possession or use of any ECD while students are on campus, while attending school-sponsored activities, or while under the control or supervision of school district personnel.

Massachusetts sets forth student discipline rules incorporating these policy provisions, defines specific terms such as bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment, and describes the circumstances when they are grounds for discipline. (Refer to GRSD bullying policy and bullying plan)

## **III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

The school district is providing students and employees with access to school-owned ECDs and the school district's ECD network system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is not merely to provide students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high quality, self-discovery activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school policies. Uses, which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system, may not be acceptable on this limited purpose network.

During personal time (i.e., during lunchtime, before and after school) in which staff or students have no specific responsibilities to the district, the Internet may be accessed through the District's ECD network for non-professional and personal interests provided that they fall within the realm of the district's "Internet Acceptable Use Policy."

## **IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE**

The use of school-owned ECDs, the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of school-owned ECDs, school district systems or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences:

suspension or cancellation of use of access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws. Law Enforcement may be contacted when school officials reasonably believe a student's communication constitutes a threat to the safety and welfare of members of the school community or where such action may hold the individual criminally liable.

**V. BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING**

- a. Bullying is prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or **through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.** Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs. The School Committee expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to students and staff that bullying in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school-sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students, and termination for employees.
- b. **Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.** The District will take appropriate steps to protect from retaliation persons who take action consistent with the bullying plan, or who report, file a complaint of, or cooperate in an investigation of a violation of the bullying plan. Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action up to and including expulsion.
- c. The Gateway Regional School District will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying.

**VI. DEFINITIONS**

- a. "Bullying", the repeated use by one or more school community members 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 of 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. Bullying is based upon unequal physical, psychological or social power or perceived power. Bullying may occur in a dating relationship. Bullying generally involves a pattern of conduct that is directed at another person, rather than a single, isolated incident. Bullying may include elements of bias (as defined below under Harassment).
- b. "Cyber-bullying", bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

- c. “Cyber-harassment” is defined as any willful and repeated harm inflicted through, but not limited to, Web pages, social networking sites, email, instant messaging or text messaging using computers, cell phones and other electronic devices which is motivated by the target individual or individuals membership in a protected group, whether real or perceived.
- d. “Hostile environment” is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education. A hostile environment is created and the victim’s rights infringed upon creating a disruption of the education process if, following an incident covered in this paragraph, said intimidation, bullying or harassment, by either the perpetrator(s) or anyone acting on their behalf, whether through written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, continues within the confines of the school building, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, function, program.
- e. “Harassment”, is defined as unwelcome, intentional, unprovoked discriminatory behavior, toward an individual or individuals, motivated by membership (real or perceived) in a protected category including: race, color, religion, ethnicity/national origin, disability, gender, gender identify, sexual orientation and age. Harassment included cyber-harassment (see prior definition).
- f. “Retaliation” is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a school community member directed against another school community member for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation under this plan, or for taking action consistent with this plan.
- g. “School Community Member” is defined as any student, district or school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, school volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a student, or a visitor on school premises or at a school-related or school sponsored function or activity.
- h. “Sexting” refers to taking, possessing, viewing, sharing, or sending pictures, graphic images, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexually explicit nature on an ECD.
- i. “Electronic Communication Devices” (ECDs) may be school-owned or student-owned. Both types may include, but are not limited to, telephones, computers, pagers, cellular telephones, text-messaging devices, personal data assistance device, iPods, iPads, graphing calculators, portable game units or other similar electronic devices.
- j. “Material Disruption” can be any of the following:
  - i. The necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities.
  - ii. An inability of students or educational staff to have access to classroom and out-of-classroom activities.
  - iii. The institution of severe or repetitive disciplinary measures in the classroom or during educational and recreational activities to maintain order and protect students, school personnel, and the property of students and school personnel from harm.
- k. “Substantial Disruption” means any of the following:
  - i. Interference with the ability of students to participate and learn in a safe schooling environment free of intimidation sufficient to cause psychological trauma, physical harm, or threats of physical harm.
  - ii. Interference with teaching and administrative responsibilities of school personnel through intimidation sufficient to cause psychological trauma, physical harm, or threats of physical harm.
  - iii. Damage, or reasonable fear of damage, to school property or the property of students and school personnel.

**VII. SCHOOL’S AUTHORITY OVER SCHOOL-OWNED ECDs ON and OFF CAMPUS**

- a. Cyber-bullying using school-owned ECDs can begin both on and off campus. Both types have the potential to instantaneously reach a large number of students and public school employees and cause material and substantial disruptions in the schools.
- b. Conditions of using school-owned ECDs are set forth in this Policy, violations of which may be subject to disciplinary action by the District.

## **VIII. SCHOOL'S AUTHORITY OVER STUDENT-OWNED ECDs ON CAMPUS**

- a. Students have the right to exercise freedom of speech in the classroom and on school grounds. While schools possess broad authority to regulate student-owned ECDs, nothing in this policy permits school officials to infringe upon students' constitutionally protected right of free speech.
- b. The schools may regulate students' possession and use of student-owned ECDs while students are on campus, while attending school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of school district employees.
- c. School personnel possess the discretion to ban ECDs during classroom instruction hours and school-sponsored activities.
- d. School personnel may confiscate student-owned ECDs when they have reasonable cause to believe that ECDs have been used to bully or harass other students or employees of the school district, or the use of ECDs will materially and substantially disrupt school activities.
- e. School personnel may conduct searches of student-owned ECDs only when they reasonably believe the search will reveal evidence of misuse. The search must not exceed the scope of the alleged misconduct-giving rise to the school official's belief in the necessity of the search.
- f. GRSD Policy and Regulations broadly authorizes the school to punish students who use ECDs inappropriately or to bully or harass while attending school or participating in school activities. Students who are on school grounds, going to or coming from school and are on or off campus during school-sponsored activities are considered involved in school activities.

## **IX. SCHOOL'S AUTHORITY OVER STUDENT-OWNED ECDs OFF CAMPUS**

- a. School Authority is not limited to the geographical boundaries of the school grounds.
- b. School officials may regulate students' off-campus use of student-owned ECDs when they can prove there is a strong possibility that the off-campus activity will result in a material disruption of the school environment or a substantial interference with the rights of others.
- c. School officials may discipline students for their off-campus use of student-owned ECDs when:
  - i. The student knew or should have known that the off-campus ECD communication and/or its effects would appear on campus, meaning that the on-campus consequences were reasonably foreseeable; and
  - ii. School officials can demonstrate a causal nexus between the students' off-campus activity and a material disruption of the school environment; or
  - iii. Evidence exists that the off-campus communication caused a substantial interference with the rights of others, including the rights of both students and employees to be free from trauma and psychological harm.

## **X. UNACCEPTABLE USES**

- a. The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:
  - i. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.
  - ii. Users will not use the school district system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language.
  - iii. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting or disruptive to the educational process and will not post information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption.
  - iv. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
  - v. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - vi. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
  - vii. Users will not use the school district system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system

performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the school district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school district system's security, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.

- viii. Users will not use the school district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
  - ix. Users will not use the school district system, or district email, to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
  - x. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school district system or any other system through the school district system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user.
  - xi. Users will not use the school district system to violate copyright laws, or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
  - xii. Users will not use the school district system for the conduct of a business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district. Users will not use the school district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services, check private email accounts or complete other personal business during the hours that staff is professionally contracted to the district but may use the system, within the guidelines of this AUP, during time that is personal (lunchtime or before/after school).
- b. Any use of the system that appears to be inappropriate should be immediately reported to the technology department. If said use is deemed to be inappropriate, the incident will be reported to the building administrator for appropriate discipline. Each building administrator shall maintain a log of all incidents of inappropriate use and log all disciplinary action against the student into the Student Information System.
  - c. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. A user may also, in certain rare instances, access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher. Examples of such projects may include hate literature, art, or other topics, which would generally be removed by standard filtration software.

## **XI. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

Use of ECDs, the school district ECD network system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school district policies and the mission of the school district.

## **XII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

- a. By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect that the school may at any time, and without prior notice, review the content of personal files on the school district system.
- b. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law.
- c. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time. Inquiries should be made to the network administrator by appointment.
- d. School district employees and students should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system might be subject to review, disclosure or discovery.
- e. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities and activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.

### **XIII. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

- a. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district.
- b. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- c. The Internet Use Agreement form must be read and signed by the user and the parent or guardian. The form must then be filed at the school office.

### **XIV. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY**

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or mis-deliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or the Internet.

### **XV. USER NOTIFICATION**

- a. All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.
  - i. This notification shall include the following:
    - 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
    - 2. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
      - a. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
      - b. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks or online resources.
      - c. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks or online resources.
      - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
  - ii. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
- b. Notification that, even though the school district may use technical means to limit Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.
- c. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the student or the student's parents.
- d. Notification that should the user violate the school district's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
- e. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

### **XVI. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE**

- a. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other potentially offensive media. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or a remote location.
- b. Parents will be notified that their students will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:
  - i. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
  - ii. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
  - iii. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and a supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
  - iv. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

### **XVII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW**

- a. The school district administration may develop appropriate guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy. Such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- b. The administration shall revise the student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.

- c. The school district's Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, staff, and members of the community.
- d. Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the school committee shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

**Cross References:**

GRSD Network Responsibility Contract (IJNDB – E)

GRSD Student Use of Electronic Communication Devices (IJNDBB)

GRSD Student Use of Electronic Communication Devices Guidelines & Permission (IJNDBB-E)

GRSD Electronic Communication Devices – Staff Policy, Procedures and Information (IJNDBB – E-1)

## STUDENT USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

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### Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set forth guidelines for the use of student Electronic Communications Devices (ECDs) in the Gateway Regional School District (GRSD).

### General Statement of Policy

Increased use of school and personal electronic communication devices (ECDs) has both positive and negative consequences. ECDs facilitate student free speech, and schools have incorporated them in teaching and learning with much success. However, student ECD use on and off campus can be abused in a way that negatively affects students, teachers, and the school environment. This policy is intended to support the benefits of ECD use while curtailing possible abuses.

- I. The school committee recognizes that all students enrolled in the public school system have the right to attend classes on school campuses that are safe, secure, and peaceful. Acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and sexting are distracting and are potentially forms of mistreatment that disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.
- II. The school district, through its school administrators and their designees, has the authority to impose regulations on the possession or use of any ECD while students are on campus, while attending school-sponsored activities, or while under the control or supervision of school district personnel.
- III. Massachusetts sets forth student discipline rules incorporating these policy provisions, defines specific terms such as bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment, and describes the circumstances when they are grounds for discipline. (Refer to GRSD policy and plan on bullying)

### Definitions

- I. "Bullying," the repeated use by one or more school community members 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 of 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. Bullying is based upon unequal physical, psychological or social power or perceived power. Bullying may occur in a dating relationship. Bullying generally involves a pattern of conduct that is directed at another person, rather than a single, isolated incident. Bullying may include elements of bias (as defined below under Harassment).
- II. "Cyber-bullying", bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.
- III. "Cyber-harassment" is defined as any willful and repeated harm inflicted through, but not limited to, Web pages, social networking sites, email, instant messaging or text messaging using computers, cell phones and other electronic devices which is motivated by the target individual or individuals membership in a protected group, whether real or perceived.
- IV. "Hostile environment" is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education. A hostile environment is created and the victim's rights infringed upon creating a disruption of the education process if, following an incident covered in this paragraph, said intimidation, bullying or harassment, by either the perpetrator(s) or anyone acting on their behalf,

- whether through written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, continues within the confines of the school building, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, function, program.
- V. “Harassment”, is defined as unwelcome, intentional, unprovoked discriminatory behavior, toward an individual or individuals, motivated by membership (real or perceived) in a protected category including: race, color, religion, ethnicity/national origin, disability, gender, gender identify, sexual orientation and age. Harassment includes cyber-harassment (see prior definition).
  - VI. “Retaliation” is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a school community member directed against another school community member for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation under this plan, or for taking action consistent with this plan.
  - VII. “School Community Member” is defined as any student, district or school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, school volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a student, or a visitor on school premises or at a school-related or school sponsored function or activity.
  - VIII. “Sexting” refers to taking, possessing, viewing, sharing, or sending pictures, graphic images, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexually explicit nature on an ECD.
  - IX. “Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs) may be school-owned or student-owned. Both types may include, but are not limited to, telephones, computers, pagers, cellular telephones, text-messaging devices, personal data assistance device, iPods, iPads, graphing calculators, portable game units or other similar electronic devices.
  - X. “Material Disruption” can be any of the following:
    - a. The necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities.
    - b. An inability of students or educational staff to have access to classroom and out-of-classroom activities.
    - c. The institution of severe or repetitive disciplinary measures in the classroom or during educational and recreational activities to maintain order and protect students, school personnel, and the property of students and school personnel from harm.
  - XI. “Substantial Disruption” means any of the following:
    - a. Interference with the ability of students to participate and learn in a safe schooling environment free of intimidation sufficient to cause psychological trauma, physical harm, or threats of physical harm.
    - b. Interference with teaching and administrative responsibilities of school personnel through intimidation sufficient to cause psychological trauma, physical harm, or threats of physical harm.
    - c. Damage, or reasonable fear of damage, to school property or the property of students and school personnel.

#### **School’s Authority Over School-Owned ECDs On and Off Campus**

- I. Cyber-bullying through the use of school-owned ECDs may occur both on and off campus. Both types have the potential to instantaneously reach a large number of students and public school employees and cause material and substantial disruptions in the schools.
- II. Conditions of using school-owned ECDs are set forth in the school district’s Acceptable Use Policy and Acceptable Posting Policy, violations of which may subject the violator to disciplinary action by the District.

#### **School’s Authority Over Student-Owned ECDs On Campus**

- I. Students have the right to exercise freedom of speech in the classroom and on school grounds. While schools possess broad authority to regulate student-owned ECDs, nothing in this policy permits school officials to infringe upon students’ constitutionally protected right of free speech.
- II. Schools may regulate students’ possession and use of student-owned ECDs while students are on campus, while attending school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of school district employees.
- III. School personnel possess the discretion to ban ECDs during classroom instruction hours and school-sponsored activities.
- IV. School personnel may confiscate student-owned ECDs when they have reasonable cause to believe that ECDs have been used to bully or harass other students or employees of the school district, or the use of ECDs will materially and substantially disrupt school activities.

- V. School administration may conduct searches of student-owned ECDs only when they reasonably believe the search will reveal evidence of misuse. The search must not exceed the scope of the alleged misconduct giving rise to the school official's belief in the necessity of the search.
- VI. GRSD Policy and Regulations broadly authorizes the school to punish students who use ECDs inappropriately or to bully or harass while attending school or participating in school activities. Students who are on school grounds, going to or coming from school and are on or off campus during school-sponsored activities are considered to be involved in school activities.

#### **School's Authority Over Student-Owned ECDs Off Campus**

- I. School Authority is not limited to the geographical boundaries of the school grounds.
- II. School officials may regulate students' off-campus use of student-owned ECDs when they can prove there is a strong possibility that the off-campus activity has resulted in a material disruption of the school environment or a substantial interference with the rights of others.
- III. School officials may discipline students for their off-campus use of student-owned ECDs when:
  - a. The student knew or should have known that the off-campus ECD communication and/or its effects would appear on campus, meaning that the on-campus consequences were reasonably foreseeable; and
  - b. School officials can demonstrate a causal nexus between the students' off-campus activity and a material disruption of the school environment; or
  - c. Evidence exists that the off-campus communication caused a substantial interference with the rights of others, including the rights of both students and employees to be free from trauma and psychological harm.

#### **Dissemination of Policy**

- I. The policy shall be referenced in the student handbook. The school may distribute a copy of the policy to all students, parents, faculty, and staff.
- II. All parents and students of the school district must sign the Acceptable Use Policy, the Acceptable Posting Policy, and the Student ECD Policy.
- III. The school will provide training opportunities for school personnel relative to use and misuse of school-owned and student-owned ECDs on and off-campus.
- IV. The school may provide informational programs or other activities designed to promote parent and community understanding of this policy.

#### **Enforcement**

- I. The District may take disciplinary action for misuse of ECDs, consistent with the rules implementing this Policy, the District's Acceptable Use Policy, and District disciplinary procedures. Law enforcement may be contacted when school officials reasonably believe that a student's communication through an ECD constitutes a threat to the safety and welfare of members of the school community.

**Bell Schedule 2025-2026**

Grades 9-12 (Daily Schedule)		Grade 6 (Daily Schedule)		Grade 7 (Daily Schedule)		Grade 8 (Daily Schedule)	
7:20-8:10	Period 1	7:20-8:10	Science (50 minutes)	7:20-8:17	Core (57 Minutes)	7:20-8:10	Period 1 (Core)
8:13-9:03	Period 2	8:13-9:03	Specials	8:19-9:16	Core (57 Minutes)	8:13-9:03	Period 2 (Core)
9:06-9:56	Period 3	9:06-10:03	Core (57 Minutes)	9:18-10:15	Core (57 Minutes)	9:06-9:56	Period 3 (Core)
9:59-10:23	Advisory	10:05-11:02	Core (57 Minutes)	10:17-11:14	Core (57 Minutes)	9:59-10:23	Advisory
10:26-11:16	Period 4	11:04-11:42	Ac. Sup/Int(38 Minutes) *Split	11:16-11:42	Int/Ac. Sup(26 minutes)	10:26-11:16	Period 4 (Specials)
11:18-11:42	Lunch	11:44-12:08	Lunch	11:44-12:08	Lunch	11:19-12:09	Period 5 (Core)
11:44-12:34	Period 5	12:10-12:29	Core (19 Minutes) *Split	12:10-12:34	Int/Ac. Sup(24 minutes)	12:11-12:35	Lunch
12:37-1:27	Period 6	12:31-1:27	Core (56 Minutes)	12:37-1:27	Block 6 (Specials)	12:37-1:27	Period 6 (Int/Ac.Sup)
1:30-2:20	Period 7	1:30-2:20	Exploratory	1:30-2:20	Block 7 (Exploratory)	1:30-2:20	Period 7 (Exploratory)

# GRS Grading & Testing Schedule 2025-2026

**Gateway Regional School District**  
2025-2026 School Calendar Approved 3/12/25

- No school     Half day of school
- Other events

**DROP OFF & PICK UP TIMES**  
Secondary school: 7:05 - 2:20  
Elementary schools: 8:25 - 3:35  
**DISMISSAL TIMES ON HALF**  
Secondary School: 10:50 a.m.  
Elementary schools: 12:05 p.m.

If inclement weather requires a delay, the Professional Development (PD) half day will turn into a full day of school and students will come in on the delayed schedule start time. If inclement weather requires a delay or cancellation, the PD half day will be rescheduled to the following week. For example, March 17 would move to March 24.

August 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					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						

August	
25-27	Opening days for teachers
28	First day of school for students
5 Teacher days 2 Student days	

September 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	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				

September	
1	Labor Day - no school
16	PD half day for students
21 Teacher days 21 Student days	

October 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			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	

October	
13	Columbus Day - no school
2	Open house evening - elementary schools
9	Open house evening - secondary school
22 Teacher days 22 Student days	

November 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						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						

November	
4	Full PD no school for students
11	Veterans Day (observed) - no school
12 & 13	PARENT CONFERENCES - half days for students
26	Half day of school
27-28	Thanksgiving break - no school
17 Teacher days 16 Student days	

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	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			

December	
23	Half day of school
24 - 31	Holiday break - no school
17 Teacher days 17 Student days	

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				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	
1	New Year's Day - no school
2	No School
19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - no school
19 Teacher days 19 Student days	

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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

February	
16-20	Winter break - no school
15 Teacher days 15 Student days	

March 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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				

March	
17	PD half day for students
22 Teacher days 22 Student days	

April 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			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		

April	
3	Good Friday - no school
20	Patriots' Day - no school
21 - 24	Spring Break - no school
16 Teacher days 16 Student days	

May 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					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						

May	
25	Memorial Day - no school
12	PD half day for students
29	Graduation
20 Teacher days 20 Student days	

June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	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				

June	
12	180th day of school (Last day) if we have no snow days**
19	Juneteenth - no school
26	Last possible day of school
10 Teacher days 10 Student days	

\*\*The last 3 days of school are 1/2 days for the Gateway Regional School. The last 2 days of school are 1/2 days for Elementary. If more than 10 snow days are used, Spring Break will be shortened beginning on April 24.

180 student instructional days / 184 Teacher days