CHESTER

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

25–26



Gateway Regional School District
Elementary Family Handbook
Policies and Procedures

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Principal Welcome

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to a new school year at Chester Elementary School! Whether you are returning or joining us for the first time, we are excited to have you as part of our school community. Chester Elementary is a place where every student is known, valued, and encouraged to grow both academically and personally.

Our dedicated staff works hard to create a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where curiosity is encouraged, kindness is expected, and learning is an adventure. We believe in the power of collaboration between school and home, and we know that by working together we can help every child reach their full potential.

This handbook is designed to help you understand our school's expectations, resources, and opportunities. We encourage you to review it carefully and keep it handy throughout the year. It serves as a guide for how we can all contribute to a respectful, responsible, and supportive learning environment.

I am truly honored to serve as your principal, and I look forward to the year ahead filled with learning, growth, and shared successes. Together, let's make this a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,

Todd Gazda
Interim Principal
Chester Elementary School

District Calendar

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

180 student instructional days / 184 Teacher 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.

District Information

Gateway Regional School District CONTACT INFORMATION
Melissa Matarazzo, Gateway Regional Superintendent, 685-1011, mmatarazzo@grsd.org
James Hayes, Administrative Assistant, 685-1011, jhayes@grsd.org
Melissa McCaul, Littleville Elementary Principal, 685-1300, mmccaul@grsd.org
Martha Gendron, Littleville Elementary Assistant Principal, 685-1300, mgendron@grsd.org
Todd Gazda, Chester Elementary Principal, 685-4228, tgazda@grsd.org
Amy Mason, Business Administrator, 685-1025, amason@grsd.org
Kurt Garivaltis, Director of Pupil Services, 685-1019, kgarivaltis@grsd.org
Joan Tuttle, Director of Accountability and Grants, 685-1025, jtuttle@grsd.org
Chris Parker, Technology Director, 685-1022, cparker@grsd.org
Amber Boutilier, Food Service Director, 685-1005, thartley@grsd.org
Edward Quinn, Facilities Director, 685-1006, equinn@grsd.org
Deb Burkott, Transportation Coordinator, 685-1016, dburkott@grsd.org
Stephanie Conway, Preschool Coordinator, 685-1017, sconway@grsd.org
Kelly Sudnick, Nurse Leader, 667-3048, ksudnick@grsd.org
Lisa Lynch, School Based Health Center Program Manager, 667-0142, llynch@grsd.org

Chester Elementary School - Staff Directory

Administrative Team	Specialized Instruction & Intervention
Todd Gazda, Interim Principal	Jenna Kakimoto, Special Education Teacher
Melissa McKellick, Secretary	Heather Cabral, Math Interventionist
Madeleine Scott, School Counselor	TBD - Reading Interventionist
Amanda Dean, School Nurse	**Specialist Teachers**
Preschool	Rebecca Nicholson, STEAM
Lynn Thomson	Denae Dostal, Wellness: Health & P.E.
Kate Martinico	Jonas Cain, Music & Band
Kindergarten	**Student Services**
Ashley Therrien	TBD- Occupational Therapy
Grade 1	Chris Bell, Physical Therapy
Madelyn Pond	Mary-Gayle Ahearn, Occupational Therapy
Grade 2	Sarah Girouard, Speech Pathologist
Julie Gagnon Marybeth Oleksak, Long-term sub Aug-Oct	Stefanie Cellilli, Behaviorist
Grade 3	David Bjorklund, SBHC Therapist
Elizabeth Hamaoui	Nancy Bigos, School Psychologist
Grade 4	**Paraprofessionals**
Mikayla Menin	Ramona Thieme (Library aid and Preschool)
Grade 5	Joyce Boyden (Preschool)
Ann Marie MacDonald	Ashleigh Hourihan (Kindergarten)
Cafeteria	Cheryl Boylan
Jessica Hart– Cafeteria Manager	Cindy Harrison
Shay Main- Kitchen Staff	Cindy Taylor
Head Custodian	
Luke Cannizzaro	

School and Caregiver Compact

Gateway Regional School District

A child's education is a process which requires the active participation of the student, their family and the school community. A Home-School Learning Compact is a written agreement between the school, parents and students which defines each of our responsibilities and the actions we will take to help our children succeed at school. Compacts are required for schools receiving Title IA funds.



District/School/Teacher: The Gateway Regional School District's Elementary Schools are committed to helping your child reach their potential by:

- ★ Providing a safe, positive and healthy learning environment
- ★ Creating an environment of inclusion by fostering emotional and social growth
- ★ Teach necessary concepts and grade level curriculum to your child.
- ★ Be aware of and support the needs of your child.
- ★ Help your child follow school and classroom rules through modeling and practice.
- ★ Regularly communicate with you on your child's progress.
- ★ Attend school functions and be available for parent conferences



Caregiver: I realize that my child's school years are very important. I also understand that my participation in my child's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- ★ Give my child a quiet place to study.
- ★ Encourage my child to complete his/her homework and check that it is done.
- ★ Make sure my child is at school and arrives on time.
- ★ Make sure my child reads on a daily basis.
- ★ Attend school and classroom functions and parent conferences
- ★ Volunteer my time to assist with School or Classroom Activities to the best of my ability.



Student: I know my education is important to me. It will help me become a better person. I know my family/guardians want to help me, but I am the one who has to do the work. Therefore, I agree to do the following:

- ★ Return completed classwork and homework on time.
- ★ Be at school on time unless I am sick.
- ★ Take responsibility for my own behavior.
- ★ Read on a daily basis.
- ★ Follow school and classroom rules.

Registration Procedure
New Students

New pupils to the Gateway Regional School District may register at any time at their respective elementary school. Families who arrive into the community during the summer months may register their children as follows: Blandford, Middlefield and Chester (Kindergarten - 5) students may register at Chester Elementary School and Russell, Huntington and Montgomery (Kindergarten - 5) at Littleville Elementary School. Students may also register at our Central Office(12 Littleville Road Huntington, MA).

Kindergarten Registration

Incoming Kindergarten registration and screening for children already living in the district will usually be held during the months of April or May. Kindergarten registration and screening are well publicized and families of kindergarten age children will receive mailings with more information. A child must be five years of age on or before September 1 of the school year in which the student is to enter, in order to be admitted to Kindergarten.

Students Transferring Within the District

If a parent desires to send their child to a district elementary school other than to their assigned school, the following process is required:

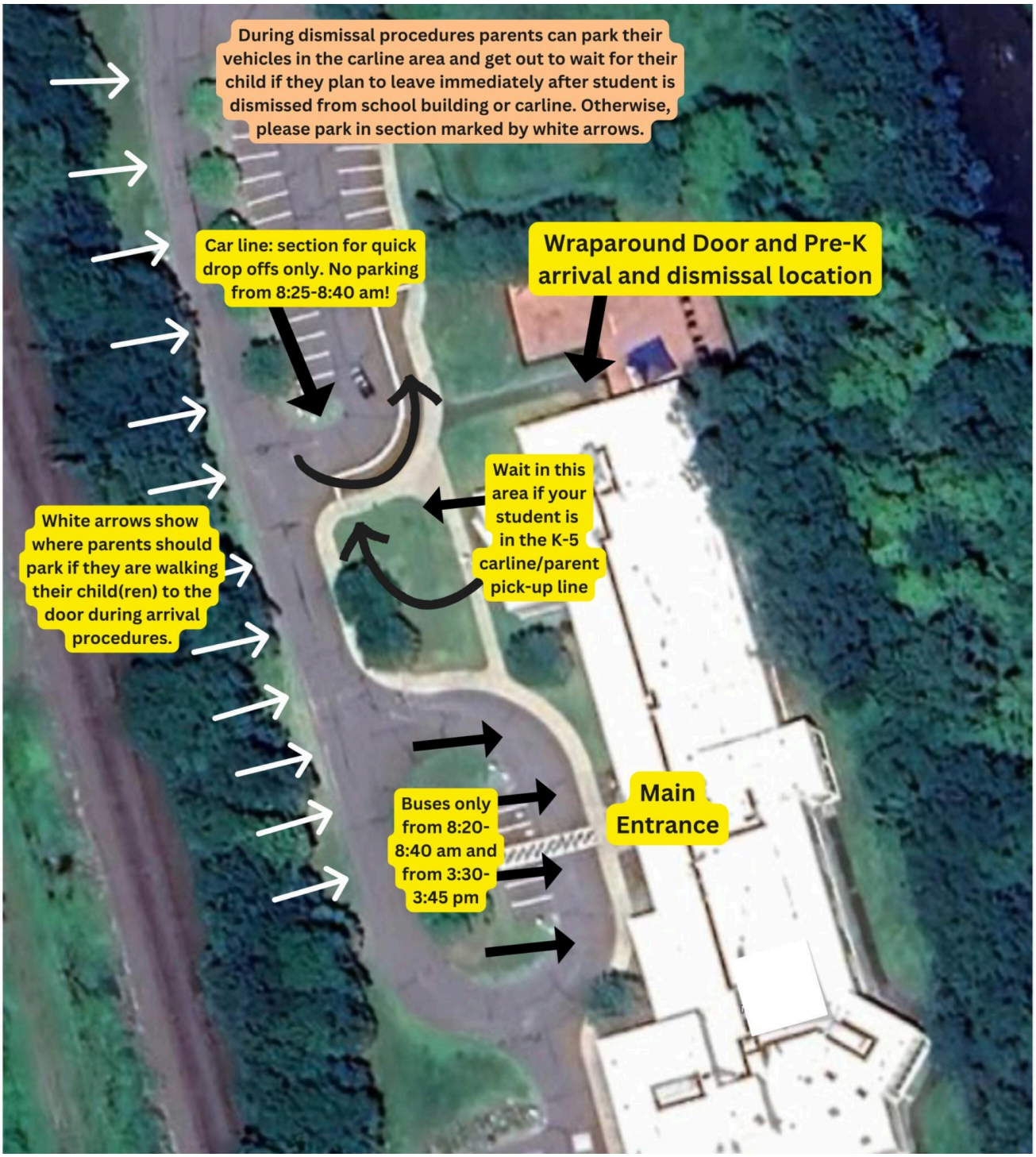
1. The parent notifies the principal of the school to which their child has been assigned that a request for transfer is being sought. The parent will try to resolve the issue with the principal prior to requesting a move.
2. The parent puts the request, in writing, to the principal of the school to which they desire a transfer, stating the reason for requesting the transfer.
3. The principal of the intended receiving school will consult with the principal of the school in which the student is presently assigned.
4. The receiving principal responds, in writing, to the parent regarding the decision. Should the transfer be allowed, the principal's letter will state the district's policy as to:
    - Parents must provide transportation
    - The decision will be reviewed on a yearly basis in case class size should change
    - Only one move a year will be allowed

If the class size becomes an issue, the student can complete that school year, but may not be allowed to return in the fall.

Arrival and Dismissal Times and Procedures

Arrival and Dismissal Times

Preschool: 4 year olds: 8:25 am-3: 30 pm, Mon-Fri, 3 year olds: 8:25 am-11:30 am, Mon- Thur
Grades K-5: Monday through Friday, 8:25am-3:35pm



Daily Life: Recess, Meals, Celebrations

Recess

All students in grades K-5 will have a recess. Therefore, please be certain your child wears the appropriate garments. During winter months, children should bring shoes or sneakers to wear in the classroom, so they are able to learn comfortably. Children are sent outside for recess when the temperature is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and the wind chill is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and playground conditions permit safe play.

Breakfast and Lunch

Great news! The state of Massachusetts has extended Universal FREE meals! One breakfast & one lunch will be provided FREE per day for all students. Any extra servings or milk only for meals brought from home will be charged to student accounts and will need to be paid for: an extra(double) lunch is $3.25, an extra serving of the main entree only is $2.00, and to purchase a milk only is $.50.

Invitations

No party invitations may be handed out in school UNLESS every child in the class is being invited. Schools can provide a list of students' first names only. Parents can opt out of having their child's name included on this list. Please be aware if a parent opts out of having their child's first name included on a class list, cards such as Valentine's Day Cards and Birthday Party Invitation will not be given out to their student. Please email the building principal to opt your child out of being included on this list or with any additional questions.

School Parties and Celebrations

Schools have an extraordinary influence on the development of lifelong eating habits and other healthy lifestyle patterns. The occasions when students can practice making healthy food choices at school serves as opportunities to reinforce the nutrition knowledge learned in the classroom. Additionally, school parties are an opportunity to put food in its proper place as a complement to the fun and not as the main event.

Non-food ways to celebrate include:

- Donating a book to the school library or classroom in honor of the child's birthday with a personalized gift acknowledgement plate inside
- Donating playground/physical activity equipment (jump ropes, balls, etc.)
- Celebrating with active games chosen by the students
- Having a dance party
- Engaging students in a special art project

Snacks must be store bought and we encourage parents to choose small treats or healthy snacks if they are sending in food to complement a school or student celebration.

Below are a few snack ideas:

- Fresh fruit trays (whole, wedges or slices dipped in orange juice to retain color)
- Fresh vegetable tray (baby carrots, grape tomatoes, celery sticks, cucumber spears, red and green bell pepper strips, cauliflower and broccoli florets) with reduced fat ranch or yogurt-based dip
- String cheese, cheese cubes or slices with whole grain crackers
- Low fat pudding cups, low fat yogurt squeeze packs or cups
- Pretzels, low fat popcorn, trail mix, pirate booty, goldfish
- Animal crackers, graham crackers, oatmeal raisin cookies
- Mini muffins, Mini cupcakes or angel cake, very lightly frosted, sprinkles or plain

Student Lockers

Each student in Grades 1-5 will be assigned a hall locker. They are for the individual use of students and should not be shared. All students must realize the importance of proper locker security. 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. Students should also plan their day so as to avoid delay at their lockers between classes.

Health Services in the Elementary School

A school nurse maintains a nursing station at our elementary school where care is provided to students with illness or minor injuries such as abrasions, scratches, etc. The nurse keeps student health records up to date and the principal informed of health activities and issues at the elementary level. Please contact the nurse whenever health information regarding your child needs to be updated.

Hearing and vision tests are conducted yearly for all elementary children as are scoliosis screenings for 5th grade. Dental screenings are performed in various grades by ***Gator Grins***, a dental program offered through the Hilltown Health Centers.

Every effort will be made for nursing coverage, but in the rare situation where this is not possible, all parents of students with special health care needs will be notified of the situation.

In order to provide adequate health services, both parents and students should comply with the following procedures:

1. 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.
2. Parents are requested to keep ill children home until they are capable of functioning in the school setting and free from spreading illness to others. Any student with symptoms of illness and a temperature of 100 degrees, or above, will be excused from school.
3. Any student who has been absent from school due to a contagious illness, accident, or hospitalization is required 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.
4. Students whose physical education must be curtailed or omitted are required to present a physician's certificate stating such restrictions.
5. The nurse should be notified of any children with physical handicaps, allergies and medical or emotional issues.

Dispensing of Medication in School

Our school district requires that medication order forms must be on file in your child's health records BEFORE we begin to give any medicine at school. Medication order forms include two parts:

1. Signed Consent Form. Consent forms are available in all school offices. Please complete the form and return it to the school office. These are signed by the parent or the guardian and give permission to give medication at school.
2. Signed Medication Order. The written medication order form should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (your child's physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) for completion and returned to the school office. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.

You, or a responsible adult whom you designate, must deliver medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. 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.

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

When your child needs a medicine to be administered during the school day, please act quickly and proactively by following these policies as soon as possible, which will prevent delays in our school nurse's ability to give your child any necessary medicine at school.

Communicable Diseases

Students who are absent from school because of the following communicable diseases must be kept home a certain number of days.

Influenza or Febrile illness	Child must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications
Strep Infection	24 hours after antibiotic medication has been started
Conjunctivitis	24 hours after treatment (Pink Eye)
Head Lice	May return when nit free. The nurse will periodically check the student until the child is nit free.

Parents are asked to contact the school should their child become ill with any of the above. It is important that school personnel be aware when students contract communicable diseases in order to provide information as needed to parents and to implement preventive measures. All personal medical information will be kept confidential.

Parental Information – Asbestos

The district wide Bond Issue in 1989–90 dealt in part with the removal of Friable Asbestos Containing Building Materials (ACBM's) in all Gateway Schools. As part of the requirements of our local management plan, notification is hereby given that all current information is on file at each building and in the superintendent's office and is available for public review.

Any parent desiring information should contact the principal of the respective building to review this information.

This Management Plan is available for inspection by workers, teachers, parents, EPA and state representatives, and the public without cost or restriction. In the elementary schools, all asbestos materials were removed during the Building Project and Renovation Programs.

Attendance, Dismissal and Weather Related Changes

Gateway Regional Attendance Policy

Whenever a student is absent from school on a particular day, it is the parent/guardians' responsibility to inform the School Office **(Chester 685-1360, Littleville 685-1300)** prior to 9:05 AM 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.

Instances that will be considered "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 absence is due to religious observances, court appointment, and attendance at a funeral of a family member or close acquaintance.
3. The student has been excused/sent home by the school nurse.
4. 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 school office no later than 10 school days from the date of the absences.

To ensure that families are aware of their students' absence from school, schools will send an automated call to families of students who are recorded as absent during the homeroom or first period.

Students are required to bring a written note from parents indicating dates and reasons for all absences from school. When a student reaches excessive levels of unexcused absences, parents/guardians can expect more frequent communication from the school, through both phone calls and mailings. 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. Excessive (5 or more per trimester) absences could result in legal action or a student not being promoted to the next grade level.

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."

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.

Arrival at School

Students who are being dropped off or walking to school should arrive **no earlier than 8:25**. This arrival time will allow us to provide adequate supervision to ensure the safety of all students as well as allow time for arriving staff members to prepare for the day.

Early Dismissal – Parent's Request

Students should bring a written request, signed by a parent to be dismissed early. The request must be sent to the office for approval.

1. Parents will sign their child(ren)out in the office whenever they are dismissed before the normal end of the school day.
2. Parents of children who usually ride the bus, but are picking up their child(ren) at the normal dismissal time, will pick their child up at the dismissal area.
3. Parents requesting that children be released to someone other than the parents themselves must put their request in writing.

School Cancellation – Weather and/or Emergency Related

In the event school must be canceled due to weather conditions, electrical failure, heating system difficulties, etc., the cancellation of school will be announced over radio stations WHYN, WNNS, WSPR, WAQY, WMAS and WHMP between 5:30 a.m. - 7:00 a.m. School closings will also be announced over TV Channel 40 (WGGB) and TV Channel 22 (WWLP). Closings will be posted on the District website, www.grsd.org, or you can call Gateway's Weather Line at 685-1001.

In the event school must be canceled after the school session has begun, for reasons other than weather, every effort will be made to contact parents via radio announcements and by phone prior to the children's release. We ask that you not call the school, as we will be trying to contact parents.

In the event that a child's parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, the child will remain at school under supervision of the principal or their designee until such time as the child's parent or emergency contact is reached. For this reason, it is absolutely necessary that at least one of the contacts listed on the child's emergency card be an in-town contact. Please be sure to update this information, as changes occur, by calling the school office.

Early Dismissals – Weather and/or Emergency Related

On days that the high school and middle school release early due to inclement weather, the elementary schools will release 1 hour later. The release will be a standard 12:00 or 12:30 for the high school and middle school under usual circumstances and 1:00 or 1:30 for the elementary schools.

Two-hour delayed opening – Weather Related

On occasion it may be wiser to have a two-hour delayed opening of school because of inclement weather and/or hazardous traveling conditions instead of closing for the full day. When the decision is to have a delayed opening of school, hours will be effective as follows:

School	Regular Arrival Time	Delayed Opening Arrival Time
Elementary Schools	8:25 am	10:25 am

There will be no 3 year old preschool programming on delayed start days.

The decision to close school for the day or to have a two-hour delayed opening will be made by the school administration on the basis of information received from weather station reports and town highway departments.

Announcements to close school for the day or to have a two-hour delayed opening will be made through the radio stations: WMAS (95 FM/1450 AM), WHMP (99.3 FM/1400 AM), WHYN (93 FM/56 AM), ROCK 102 (102 FM), WNNZ (640 AM), WPKX (97.9 FM). Also television stations Channel 40 (WGGB) and Channel 22 (WWLP) will be notified. Closings will be posted on the District website, www.grsd.org, or you can call **Gateway's Weather Line at 685-1001.**

REGARDLESS OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION, PARENTS MUST MAKE THE FINAL DECISION CONCERNING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BECAUSE THEY KNOW THE DEGREE OF HAZARD IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD. IF THEY FEEL CONDITIONS ARE UNSAFE, THEY SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO KEEP THEIR CHILD HOME.

Vacations

We sincerely hope that you do not schedule family vacations that require students to miss school. These days will have to be documented as "unexcused absences." It is not possible for teachers to send home the type of activities that your child will be missing during an extended absence; "catching up," once a student returns, is rarely successful.

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School Visitation/Safety

Visitors/Volunteers

The following excerpt from the Gateway Regional School Committee's Policy Book provides guidelines for visitors to the elementary schools.

"It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage parents and other citizens of the district to visit classrooms at any time to observe the work of the schools. The elementary schools maintain an open door policy and encourage parents to visit at any time. It is important to safeguard the integrity of the learning environment for all children. **Therefore, parents are required to sign in at the office and to provide the teacher the courtesy of advance notice.** The Committee believes that there is no better way for the public to learn what the schools are actually doing."

In order to assure that no unauthorized person enters buildings with wrongful intent, **all visitors to schools shall report to the school office and sign in with the secretary. Visitors may be required to produce identification upon request.**

Visitors/Volunteers will sign a "Visitor's Log" stating the purpose of their visit and take a visitors badge. ***All visitors MUST sign out and return the badge before leaving.*** If you are registering your child to attend one of the schools in the Gateway District, you will be required to complete ***all*** registration materials before being able to tour the buildings. These tours will take place outside of school hours.

Some inconvenience is inevitable in implementing these additional steps. It is our hope that you will recognize that they are designed for reasons of safety. Thank you for your cooperation.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings and from loitering on grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Expectations for Learning and Behavior

Homework

Homework is a learning activity that should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student and aid in his/her development. The care with which a homework assignment is given, the quality of the responses of students, and the nature of the follow-up activities in the classroom are of greater importance than the quantity of work involved in a homework assignment. Meaningful homework assignments should be made with the purpose of the assignment being clearly understood by both the teacher and the pupil. Assignments should further be consistent in terms of the amount given each week and the time required for assignments so that the teacher and the student can establish a pattern of meaningful homework.

Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the pupil has had instruction in the use of them. Since students within the same class differ in their abilities, interests, and educational needs, teachers are encouraged to develop several different homework assignments for the same class.
Suggested time allotments are:

Grades	Frequency	Total Maximum Daily Amount
K-2	1 to 2 times/week & read daily	20 minutes
3-5	2 to 4 times/week & read daily	30 minutes

Report Cards

School Committee Policy states and the staff of the elementary schools feel it is essential for parents to be kept fully informed of their children's progress in school. Each child's growth needs to be measured in terms of his/her own uniqueness.

Report cards are sent home for students in grades one through five, three times yearly (December, March, June). Additionally, teachers will hold conferences and share multiple forms of assessment. Report cards are sent home two times yearly for kindergarten and Pre-K students (January and June). Report cards will be given to students on their last regularly scheduled school day in June.

Conferences and two way communication with school staff provide parents with ideas on how to help their child in school and help teachers to better understand each child. Additional conferences and meetings may be requested either by parent or teacher.

Promotion and Retention Requirements

School staff is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff places students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, teachers make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal directs and aids teachers in their evaluations and reviews grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students 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 or students have excessive, unexcused absences (defined as any absence not covered by a doctor's note, hospital stay, external suspension, religious observance, court appointment, funeral of a family member or close acquaintance, school approved trips/visitations or the student being sent home by the school nurse). Any student with 18 or more absences for the school year will be considered for retention. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

Retention Policy

Proper management of public records ensures that the government and other authorized personnel have immediate access to information for the full period of time it is needed to conduct daily business, financial transactions, litigation, maintenance of public property, and development and implementation of public policy. Electronic records pose unique problems of recognition, retention, storage and retrieval. The purpose of this policy is to assist School District personnel in recognizing electronic records and understanding the requirements of retaining, storing and retrieving records in accordance with the law and School District needs.

It is the intent of this policy that all electronic correspondence be retained as per the content of the communication. The Public Records Law of Massachusetts issues a schedule of records maintenance, retention, exemptions, and disposal based on content. Refer to Public Records Law G.L.c.4, §7(26) for the explanation of "public records," see 950 C.M.R. 32.00; G.L.c.66 §1 for Public Records Access, and §10 for Public inspection and copies of records.

Classroom Discipline

The district's goal is for school staff to work with parents in providing the best learning environment possible for all students. Consistent with this goal, it is our intent to help students learn in a positive environment that uses consistent and clear (school-wide) disciplinary expectations, supports, responses, and programs.

In most instances the classroom teacher is the best person to handle classroom disciplinary problems, as s(he) has direct contact with the situation and a rapport with the student(s) involved. Effective student discipline is built on mutual respect. It is maintained through the creation of clearly stated classroom rules, positive interactions, fair and appropriate consequences and consistency. We utilize a school-wide support system, in addition to research based curriculum and protocols, to teach, reinforce, and elevate positive and productive behavior throughout our school.

Bus Transportation Expectations
School Bus Discipline

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 in the maintenance of proper student behavior. Bus drivers who find it necessary to write a bus warning due to a child's behavior shall forward it to the appropriate principal for further action.

General Bus Rules and Regulations

When misconduct on a school bus becomes serious enough to warrant loss of bus privileges as listed below, the school administration shall be notified by the bus driver through the use of a **Bus Conduct Report**.

Permanent or long term suspension of bus privileges exceeding twenty (20) days may only be made by the Superintendent 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.

Specific Rules Governing Student Bus Conduct

Students who display any of the following types of behavior patterns may, at the discretion of the administration, have their bus riding privileges suspended and/or be suspended from school.

Category A	Category B
Eating or drinking beverages	Fighting or roughhousing
Not staying in seat	Smoking/playing with fire
Not sitting face forward	Insubordination, swearing, obscene gestures
Not crossing in front of the bus	Damage to other student's property
Unnecessary noise, shouting	Throwing objects in or out of the bus
Playing radio	Damage to bus

*Such other school disciplinary conduct rules and regulations as may apply.

Bus Cards

Depending on the seriousness of the situation the following actions will be appropriate, based on the principal's discretion:

	Category A		Category B	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
1st Offense	Warning	Warning	Warning	Warning
2nd Offense	Warning	Five (5) Days	Warning	Ten (10) Days
3rd Offense	Warning	Ten (10) Days	Warning	Twenty (20) Days
4th Offense	Three (3) Days	Hearing	Seven (7) Days	Hearing
5th Offense	Seven (7) Days		Fourteen (14) Days	
6th Offense	Hearing		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 the same to the administration for their use.

Appropriate Bus Behavior

1. Students shall enter the bus quietly and in an orderly manner, proceeding directly to their seats.
2. Pupils are not to change seats while the bus is in motion. Conditions requiring specific seating arrangements remain within the jurisdiction of the driver and/or building principal only.
3. Talking in a conversational voice and tone is permissible. Shouting or excessively loud talking is prohibited. Undesirable remarks, directed to the driver or other students that are potentially capable of precipitating adverse behavior or reaction are not allowed.
4. Smoking, eating, and/or drinking are not allowed on the school bus.
5. Students will not be permitted to throw any object or article while riding the bus.
6. Pupils are to remain seated until the school bus has come to a complete stop. Their progress to/from their seat is to be free of any action or movement not in accord with this objective.
7. Students are not to yell, motion or discharge any objects that will distract and/or prove offensive to other motorists.

8. Pupils should be waiting at their designated bus stop in an orderly fashion, receptive to the flow of traffic and aware of the approaching bus. They are not to play in the road, trespass on private property or engage in behavior/play that proves dangerous to those at the bus stop.
9. Departure from the bus necessitating the crossing of a street/road must be in front of the bus and in full view of the driver.
10. The driver, like the classroom teacher, bears responsibility for maintaining a bus atmosphere conducive to maximum safety. Rules and regulations known by the pupil to be in effect in school also apply on the school bus.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum Overview

Gateway Regional School District is committed to achieving excellence together, which includes providing rigorous, culturally responsive curriculum to all students. We follow all Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in accordance with guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district supports the use of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) as a vehicle to teach the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and these HQIM include **Illustrative Mathematics** in grades K-5, **Amplify CKLA** for literacy in K-3, **Wit & Wisdom** for literacy in grades 4-5 and **Mystery Science** for science instruction K-5.

Instructional Approach

Instructional staff are expected to use lessons that are centered around a mastery objective/learning target that is directly connected to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The mastery objective/learning target should be referenced throughout the lesson, and formative assessment should also be tied to it. Criteria for success should be readily available for students to use when completing independent tasks within a lesson, or for group tasks. Instruction should be a balance of whole group instruction, small group instruction, and independent/small group work, such that students have the opportunity to make their own meaning.

Instruction will be differentiated to meet the needs of all students, in an inclusive environment. All students will receive grade level instruction in their classrooms, with access to additional support in the classroom when they need it. If additional instructional support is needed beyond the classroom, instruction may be supplemented during additional blocks of time.

Health Curriculum Statement

Our district has an elementary school comprehensive health education curriculum. This program has been developed by our professional staff under the guidance of the community health education advisory council. The overall goal of the course is to continue efforts begun at home that promote the health and well-being of our students, and to help them make wise and informed decisions during their early school years and beyond.

Sex education is part of the health education curriculum in the early grades, including topics such as prevention of AIDS and other diseases, prevention of sexual abuse, and "good touch/bad touch". The instructional materials we use for the course include a curriculum package and a video. If you would like to review these materials at the school, you are welcome to do so. Please call me to arrange a convenient time.

During the course, students will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be put on the spot to ask or answer questions or reveal personal information.

Under Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption, simply send me a letter requesting an exemption for your child. No student who is exempted from this portion of the curriculum will be penalized. We may provide an alternative assignment to students who are exempted.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions about sex education or any other matter concerning your child's education, please call your child's school.

Assessment and Academic Support

Gateway Regional School District uses i-Ready as the universal screening assessment in grades K-12. This assessment is given at the beginning, middle and end of each school year for students in grades K-2. Students in grades 3-5 take the i-Ready assessment at the beginning and middle of the year only since they engage in MCAS testing in the spring. The i-Ready assessment data is used to make instructional decisions related to tailored intervention and enrichment instruction. Our school also uses DIBELS(Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) to assess foundational reading skills, and several other diagnostic assessments and screeners recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition to these assessments, our Math and English Language Arts curriculum's high quality instructional materials also have assessments throughout and at the end of each unit/module that teachers are expected to use with students. Having common assessments is a strong practice in education and is encouraged at our school and across our district.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), is a multi-tiered framework designed to maximize achievement for all students. It is a continuum of system wide, data based problem solving practices that ensure and support timely response to the academic, social emotional, and behavioral needs for all students. It focuses on outcomes through the structures we have in place to gather and use data systematically to guide educational decisions. Within MTSS, instruction and intervention is delivered across multiple tiers depending on individual student needs, which is identified by student outcome data. MTSS is an educational process which benefits all students'; it ensures all

students have the tools and tiered support needed to make growth in critical areas of development needed for life-long success.

Tier 1 Core Instruction (Universal Practices and Core Instruction):

Tier 1 Core Instruction involves the continuum of scientifically-based instructional interventions, strategies, and resources that meet the academic, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. It impacts all students and can affect any student who is not meeting grade level standards. Teachers using and ensuring all students' can access high-quality core curriculum materials, through the use of UDL(universal design for learning) principles, is the foundation of our MTSS instructional model. This is the first level where at-risk learners are identified and supported with tools, strategies, and supports that are implemented in all classrooms in order to support all instruction and the growth and success of all learners at Chester Elementary School

Tier 2- Strategic Support:

Tier 2 supports are typically delivered to small groups of students with similar needs in one of the following areas: academic, behavioral, or social emotional skills. Tier 2 instructional support builds on the foundational core instruction of Tier 1. Students receiving tier 2 and 3 support do not miss tier 1 instruction; instead, they are provided with additional support in addition to core instruction(vs. in place of). . Tier 2 intervention targets a specific skill deficit that has been identified through assessment. Instruction and intervention target this specific skill or a small subset of skills. Educators develop a support plan to address the targeted skill(s) with intervention tools that address the need and monitor growth on that specific skill with a normed progress monitoring tool. Ongoing progress monitoring of Tier 2 interventions helps teachers identify if students are improving and responding to the intervention. If students make progress and achieve Tier 2 intervention plan goals, the students' learning gap has been addressed, and they can continue with Tier 1 core instruction without the additional targeted support. A key difference between Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 intervention is the focus on targeted skills (Branchingminds.com)

Tier 3- Intensive Support

Tier 3 practices are built on our school's strong foundation of Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports. Students who have not demonstrated progress with targeted tier 2 group interventions require more time in more intensive interventions. Tier 3 interventions are distinguished from Tier 2 interventions because they are individualized, based on more frequent data collected, and occur with smaller student-teacher ratios. Typically tier 3 support is delivered 1-on-1 at our school, however, it can be and has been provided to groups of 2-3 students (Branchingminds.com).

Title I

In 1965 the Federal government set up Title I programs for children who were performing below grade level in school. The program is designed to help children who are having difficulties academically. In this school district, the Title I program's emphasis is in the area of reading.

Social Emotional Learning and School Climate

School Counselor

The primary role of the school counselor is to make school an enjoyable experience for all children. This presents more of a problem with some students than others. In these instances, the counselor's role is to help the students, parents and school personnel work through school related problems. The counselor is skilled in helping students change situations by providing personalized support and encouragement in helping these students deal with the problems that affect their learning at school.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) is a school-wide approach that is implemented by all staff and in all settings throughout our school. The approach is based on building proactive multi-level behavioral supports that include defining, teaching, modeling, practicing, and most of all, acknowledging appropriate student behavior in order to create a positive school culture.

It is the expectation that we create a positive school climate where students can be successful both socially and academically by having a supportive environment where expectations are clear and behaviors are managed in a positive and proactive way.

Social and behavioral skills need to be taught explicitly to all children just as academics need to be taught. The expectations we chose for Chester form the foundation for the school-wide positive behavior interventions & support plan at our school: Be Respectful, responsible, safe, and kind!

We celebrate with monthly school-wide assemblies, and students are recognized for meeting expectations. PBIS tickets and Character Counts awards and capes are forms of acknowledgements used to reinforce and celebrate students who are following our school-wide expectations. The tickets paired with verbal feedback are used as an instant reinforcement and recognition for showing the desired behavior. Students earn tickets to purchase prizes and participate in our weekly Fun Ticket Friday Raffle!

Restorative Practices

Our job, as educators, is to teach, not punish. In an effort to build a positive school community, dramatically reduce discipline referrals and suspensions, and to keep all of our students engaged in school and in the learning happening inside their classrooms, our school is committed to using Restorative Practices. “Restorative practices allow individuals who may have committed harm to take full responsibility for their behavior by addressing the individual(s) affected by the behavior. Taking responsibility requires understanding how the behavior affected others, acknowledging that

the behavior was harmful to others, taking action to repair the harm, and making changes necessary to avoid such behavior in the future. Restorative practices also represent a mindset that can help guide adult and youth behavior and relationship management in schools, not another program. They are not intended to replace current initiatives and evidence- based programs like Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) or social and emotional learning models that assist in building a foundation and culture of caring. Programs and initiatives like PBIS complement restorative practices. Restorative practices work because they are implemented school wide and integrated into the fabric of our school community (https://schottfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/restorative-practices-guide.pdf)."

Steps to Respect (Grades 3-5)

Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention Program is an effective tool that our school counselor uses with all students in grades 3-5 in order to decrease bullying at our school and help students build more supportive relationships with each other (Frey et al., 2005). The program's dual focus on bullying and friendship is based on research showing that friendship protects children from the harmful effects of bullying (Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, and Bukowski, 1999). Students learn a variety of relationship skills, including strategies for making and keeping friends and steps for joining a group activity. The *Steps to Respect* program also teaches children skills for coping with bullying, including recognizing bullying, using assertive behaviors to respond to bullying, and reporting bullying to adults. Because many children become involved as bystanders to bullying (in both helpful and harmful ways), the *Steps to Respect* program emphasizes that all members of a school community must take responsibility for decreasing bullying.

Second Step (Kindergarten-Grade 5)

Second Step Early Elementary, for grades Kindergarten–Grade 5, is a universal, classroom-based program designed to increase students' school success and decrease problem behaviors by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation. Our School Counselor goes into all K-5 classrooms to teach Second Step on a weekly basis. The curriculum consists of 22–25 lessons divided into four units. It offers direct instruction and teaches skills that strengthen students' ability to learn, have empathy, manage emotions, and solve problems. It provides developmentally appropriate explicit skills instruction, with curriculum kits differentiated by grade level, offering content and media that is age-appropriate and engages students in developing skills to enhance their emotion management, situational awareness, and academic achievement.

Strong Start

Strong Start is a set of morning/arrival rituals and routines that get students ready to learn by fostering a sense of safety, belonging, community, and self-efficacy. The routines begin as students enter the classroom and continue through a morning meeting. The following are some key components of our strong start morning routine: Welcome Greetings, Breakfast in the Classroom, Independent work, Purposeful Partnering, Community Building, and Goal Setting. Starting each day with a predictable routine helps students feel safe & connected to school, as well as creating time for explicitly teaching social-emotional skills. For more information refer to these training slides.

Pupil Service and Special Education

FEDERAL PUBLIC LAW 94-1427 and STATE LAW CHAPTER 766 ensure that children with special needs, ages 3 through 21, get the education, training, and assistance that's right for them. Chapter 766 requires local school systems to find and evaluate children with special learning needs and problems, develop individual programs for each child who needs extra help and provide the required services. Because every child has a right to learn, parents may refer their child for a TEAM Evaluation. For further information, contact your elementary principal or the Pupil Services office.

Special Education Teachers

The Gateway Regional School District has several special education teachers at the elementary level. These teachers operate as part of a team to provide services to children with academic and/or behavioral needs.

For each child who is referred by a parent, school, or outside agency under Chapter 766, an educational plan is developed based upon determination of a special need. The special education teacher's expertise is called upon to observe and evaluate a child's performance. In addition, special education teachers work closely with other professional staff in interpreting a child's performance and assisting in the development of an individualized plan, based on each child's area of strength or weakness of learning. Instruction and/or remediation may include one or more of the following areas: perceptual, physical, motor, emotional, social, and/or educational. The special education teacher's special training may be utilized on a consultant basis to the staff or as a direct service to a child in or out of the classroom. Specialized materials and techniques may also be provided.

Early Childhood
Preschool

The preschool programs provide innovative services to children through a high quality integrated program in a developmentally appropriate educational setting that fosters the growth of each child by supporting social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language development. The preschool program joins children ages 3 and 4 who have special education with peer partners. The purpose of this collaboration is to support children with developmental delays as they learn new skills from their peer partners to be inclusive of those with differing abilities. The goals of the program are to help all the children develop independence, to use language to share ideas, express feeling and solve problems, to develop gross motor muscles through active play, to express themselves creatively through art, music, and movement, and to acquire the pre-academic readiness skills needed for kindergarten.

Preschool screening takes place in the spring or as needed throughout the year. If a parent has a concern about their child’s development they can call Pupil Services at 685-1017 to set up a screening.

You can find the Preschool Handbook here.

Parent and Family Rights

Parent Rights

If notified of a pending or actual divorce or separation between parents of a school-age child, the following policy and procedure shall apply:

1. A natural parent who is separated or divorced from the parent with legal custody of their child shall have the same rights as custodial parents in the following areas, unless these rights have been limited by court action:
   a. Access to their child's records according to M.G.L. Ch.71,Sec.34H (see below);
   b. Visitation to observe their child, in accordance with the school's visiting policy;
   c. Conference with teachers to discuss their child's educational progress.

   Custodial parents who seek to limit the above rights must provide the school with a copy of the relevant court document.
2. To save children, parents and the school from embarrassment and anguish, the following areas should be clarified and agreed to by both parties, and if not clarified by a legal document, should be spelled out in writing by the custodial parent.
   a. Opportunity for the non-custodial parent to meet privately with a child in school;
   b. Opportunity for the non-custodial parent to take a child away from school.
3. Prior to the awarding of legal custody by the court, the school will assume that both parents retain equal rights in all the above areas, unless a legal temporary restraining order is presented to the school.

PLEASE NOTE: This guideline was developed in consultation with the Legal Office of the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Rights of Non-Custodial parents

As of 1998 Massachusetts law (General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H) specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the school principal.

The principal can then provide a copy of this memorandum to any person who inquires about the law.

At any time that the school receives a request for student records from a parent who does not have physical custody of the child and who has not yet provided the school with necessary information as required by Section 34H of General Laws Chapter 71, the school should inform the non-custodial parent of the requirements of the law. This may be done by providing the parent either with a copy

of this memorandum or a letter from the school that sets forth the procedures the parent must follow in order to get access to the records.

Student Records

Any student, fourteen years or older, desiring information from their school records, may obtain it by making an appointment with the Guidance Department.

If a student is under the age of fourteen, these rights shall belong to the student's parents. The parent should contact the building principal for further information.

Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity

Equal Employment/Educational Opportunities - Title IX

Notice Of Non-Discrimination

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 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 harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or exercise of civil rights. 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 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

The district's Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator is Kurt Garivaltis, Director of Pupil Services. He has been designated to respond to any questions about the district's policy, and is part of the review process for complaints or concerns about discrimination. Kurt Garivaltis can be reached at 12 Littleville Rd. Huntington and at 413-685-1017.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Gateway Regional School District is committed to complying with the requirements in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are responsible for providing you access to parent-teacher conferences and other

Chapter 622

The Gateway Regional School District does not discriminate against nor shall any student be denied admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of color, sex, religion, national origin, physical handicap or sexual preference. The compliance Officer for Chapter 622 and Title IX shall be the Pupil Service Director.

MGL, C76 S5

Every person shall have the 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 public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

Sexual Harassment Policy/Complaint Procedure For Students

Purpose

To create for all Gateway Regional School District students a study environment free of sexual harassment.

The Gateway Regional School District is committed to safeguarding the right of all persons associated with the Gateway Regional School District, including students, employees, school committee members and volunteers to work in an educational environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, the Gateway Regional School District condemns and prohibits all sexual harassment on its premises.

All individuals associated with the District, but not necessarily limited to the School Committee, the administration, the staff, students and members of the public while on campus, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community or while on school property will be in violation of this policy.

Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken in any instance where an employee violates this policy. Sexual harassment by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Sexual harassment by others will result in their being excluded from School premises or if it is required that they enter the premises, they will be accompanied by a School District representative at all times.

If the sexual harassment is criminal in nature, the offense shall be reported to the police department as well as the Title IX Coordinator. If the sexual harassment requires the intervention of State social service or protective agencies, the proper authorities will be contacted. In these circumstances, the School's attorney will be immediately contacted to give advice and guidance on how to process these actions with the appropriate authorities.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should make a complaint to any administrator, the Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent, so that appropriate action may be taken at once.

Management representatives are charged with the responsibility of discouraging any sexually harassing behaviors within or outside of their areas of supervision. This includes directly confronting the harasser when a management representative observes harassing behavior, and immediately reporting the activity to the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator will investigate complaints 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.

A copy of this policy and its accompanying regulations are posted in appropriate places, and made available to individuals upon request.

The Title IX Coordinator for the Gateway Regional School District is:
Kurt Garivaltis
Gateway Regional School District
12 Littleville Road
Huntington, MA 01050
(413) 685-1017

Legal References: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act 1964 as amended 45 Federal

Regulations 746776 issued by Chapter 622/EEOC Title IX of 1972 Education Amendments

Sexual Harassment Definition

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

1. Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's education; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for education decisions affecting such student; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, comments, gestures, or written communications of a suggestive or derogatory nature.
2. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome. (Reciprocal attraction between peers is not considered sexual harassment.)
3. Implying or actually withholding grades earned or deserved, suggesting that a poor performance evaluation will be prepared, or suggesting that a scholarship recommendation or college application will be denied.
4. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence or affect the educational opportunities, grades and/or the learning environment of a student.
5. Offering or granting favors or educational benefits,

such as grades or recommendations, in exchange for sexual favors.

Other sexual harassing behavior directed towards students, whether committed by management, staff, or students, is also prohibited. Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions;
2. Sexually explicit language or gestures;
3. Touching that an individual interprets as sexual in nature;
4. Any unwelcome physical contact;
5. The presence of sexually provocative photographs, pictures or other material and the telling of sexual stories or jokes;
6. Verbal or non-verbal behavior about an individual's body that is interpreted as sexual in nature.

Complaint Procedure

Informal Process For Students

In determining whether an alleged incident constitutes sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure outlined below, unless the Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint.

1. Any student of the District who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment is to report the incident(s) to any administrator, Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent. The administrator and/or Superintendent are to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator. A written record of the complaint will be made by the party receiving the complaint. A separate file system will be maintained, apart from the student's personal record, regarding these complaints and as to all matters relating to the complaints.
2. If the alleged harassment involves the Title IX Coordinator, the Superintendent of Schools will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
3. If the alleged harassment involves the Superintendent of Schools, the Secretary of the School Committee will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
4. The Superintendent and the Title IX Coordinator will look at the totality of the circumstances and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. They will attempt to resolve the problem by conferring with both parties in order to obtain a clear understanding of the facts. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.
5. Students may be accompanied, at any phase of this process or subsequent hearing before the Committee, by a parent, guardian or representative of their choosing. Parents will be immediately notified by the Title IX Coordinator of the existence of a student's report of sexual harassment.
6. The Title IX Coordinator will explain each phase of the Informal and Formal Complaint Process to a student who wishes to file a complaint and will assist the student in the processing of the complaint. In addition, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the student of additional forums for resolution of the complaint such as the Office of Civil Rights (O.C.R.) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.).
7. Under normal circumstances, the Title IX Coordinator's investigation will be completed within five working days of the initial complaint. Upon completion of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator shall issue his/her findings in writing to the student and the alleged harasser.

Formal Process For Students

1. A complainant may file a formal complaint immediately or may do so after the Superintendent and the Title IX Coordinator's efforts to reach a settlement under the informal process have proven unsuccessful.

2. The complaint will state clearly and concisely the complainant's description of the incident and it will also indicate any remedy sought. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. The Superintendent's office will send the respondent a copy of the complaint within five working days after it is received. A separate file system shall be maintained as to all matters relating to the complaint. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent possible.
3. The respondent will have ten working days to respond in writing. This statement will 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 Superintendent's office will forward both statements to the complainant and the respondent.
4. There will be two modes of resolution for formal complaints. A complaint may be settled through mediation or through a hearing. If the complainant and respondent agree to pursue mediation, a date mutually acceptable to both parties will be set within ten 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, the case will be forwarded to the Superintendent for a hearing unless the Superintendent is the alleged harasser in which case the hearing will be before the Gateway Regional School District School Committee.
5. When a hearing is requested, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the Superintendent or the School Committee, as the case may be, and the case will be heard at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the School Committee pursuant to the provisions of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law and/or before the Superintendent pursuant to M.G.L., c. 71, § 42.

Formal Hearing

1. The purpose of the Superintendent or School Committee Hearing is to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated, and, if so, to determine the appropriate consequences for the violation.
2. Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and the Superintendent or School Committee is not bound by the procedures and rules of evidence of a court of law. In most instances, complainants and respondents will be expected to speak for themselves, although, if desired, each party may be accompanied by counsel or an advocate.
3. The presiding officer of the hearing may have counsel present for purposes of assisting in the orderly conduct of the hearing and the questioning of witnesses. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to clarify the issues and to define the areas of disagreement. To encourage a fair and focused hearing, at the start of the proceedings the points of agreement and disagreement will be reviewed. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will hear testimony and consider whether the School

Committee Policy on Sexual Harassment has been violated, and, if so, will recommend appropriate consequences.

4. The presiding officer will:
    a. ensure an orderly presentation of all evidence;
    b. ensure that the proceedings are accurately recorded by means of a tape or stenographic recording; and
    c. see that a decision is issued no later than ten working days after the conclusion of the hearing
    d. or, when written arguments are submitted, ten working days after their submission.
5. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will:
    a. conduct a fair and impartial hearing which ensures the rights of all parties involved;
    b. define issues of contention;
    c. receive and consider all relevant evidence which reasonable people customarily rely upon in the conduct of serious business;
    d. ask relevant questions of the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses if needed to elicit information which may be of assistance in making a decision; and
    e. ensure that the complainant and respondent have full opportunity to present their claims orally or in writing, and to present witnesses and evidence which may establish their claims.

Decision Of The Superintendent Or The Committee

1. After all the evidence, testimony, and written arguments have been presented, the committee will convene for deliberations to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated. If the Committee finds after a roll call vote that the policy has not been violated, that fact will be registered in the records of the hearing, and the written decision will be forwarded to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after completion of the hearing. In hearings before the Superintendent, if the Superintendent finds that the policy has not been violated, the Superintendent will issue a written decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing.

2. If the Committee finds after a roll call vote that the charge of violating the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been substantiated, the hearing Committee will prepare findings and will determine a penalty for the respondent and relief for the complainant. The Committee will issue such a decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing. In hearings before the Superintendent, if the Superintendent finds that the charge of violating the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been substantiated, the Superintendent will prepare findings and will determine a penalty for the respondent and relief for

the complainant. The Superintendent will issue such a decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing. The findings of fact as well as the penalty and relief will be based solely on the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing.

3. The penalty should reflect the severity of the harassment. 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 or student record, probation, suspension without pay, dismissal, demotion, or removal from administrative duties within a department; students may be subject to suspension or expulsion proceedings following a finding that the policy has been violated. The Committee or Superintendent may also make appropriate recommendations, such as professional counseling, and may recommend relief for the complainant which reinstates and restores, as much as possible, the aggrieved party.

Physical Restraint Policy

The Gateway Regional School District complies with the Department of Education (D.O.E.) restraint regulations, 603 C.M.R. 46.00 et seq., as required by law. These regulations apply not only while attending school, but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. Copies of this law are available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html, and in the office of the principal.

In Gateway Regional School District schools, we use non-violent restraint such as redirection, escorts to quiet areas, talking to students and other such methods. Physical restraint is only used as a last resort.

Confidentiality

In general, the Gateway Regional School District works to preserve the rights and privacy of students, staff and families with regard to sensitive and personal issues. In keeping with that philosophy, we have developed the following policies regarding confidentiality.

The communications between any student and any licensed counselor is confidential. In general, this is discussed between the client and counselor in the beginning of their work together. In certain instances there are exceptions to this rule:

1. We may disclose information if given written permission to do so by a student or staff person over the age of 18 or written consent from a parent or guardian of a student under the age of 18.
2. We may disclose information to protect you if present "clear and present danger" to yourself or to others.
3. There are situations in which we are legally required to take action to protect others from harm, even though that may require revealing some information about you.
4. Should such a situation occur, we will make reasonable effort to discuss the situation with you before we take any action.

5. If we believe that a child, an elderly person or disabled person is being abused, we must, by law, file a report with the appropriate state agency.
6. If we believe that you are threatening serious bodily harm to someone, we are required to take protective actions, which may include notifying the potential victim, notifying the police and any other appropriate state agency.
7. If you volunteer in our school, we expect that you will respect the importance of confidentiality. You are trusted, as our partners, to protect others' right to privacy in the same manner as you expect to be treated.

Dissemination Of Information Using Gateway Regional Staff And Students

The Gateway Regional School District is a community of learners primarily funded by public funds. As such, maintenance of the public's trust is as important as the district's fiduciary responsibility to protect its tangible and intangible assets that are a direct result of that trust.

The Gateway Regional School District school community potentially represents a "captive" economic market. We are required to ensure that access is both equitable and at the same time consistent with our educational mission. Therefore, it is the position of the Gateway Regional School District that the direct distribution of informational materials and/or solicitation to students and the household in which they reside will be restricted to certain organizations that **EXCLUSIVELY** benefit the students of the Gateway Regional School District as defined by at least one of the following criteria:

1. A Town Department that is funded directly by one of the six member towns of the Gateway Regional School District (i.e., the Recreation Department).
2. An entity whose existence is solely dependent of the existence of the Gateway Regional School District (i.e., PTO, Booster Clubs).
3. An independent entity that meets **both** of the following criteria:
   a. Provides proof of recognition by the Internal Revenue Service as a nonprofit organization (i.e., 501(c)3)
   b. Provides proof that the Gateway Regional School District or its students is the exclusive benefactor of its activities (i.e., mission statement, bylaws,corporate articles), and/or maintains at least one unpaid, non-voting or voting seat on its corporate board for a representative of the District that has been approved by the Superintendent of Schools (i.e., independent Booster Clubs, GYAA).

In addition to meeting at least one of the above criteria, the informational materials and/or solicitation must be deemed by the Superintendent of Schools to be in the interest of the Gateway Regional School District educational community. The decision by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee is final. There is no appeal process following the school's decision.

Other materials deemed by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee to be in the interest of the Gateway Regional School District educational community may be left at Central Office to be posted on the Gateway Regional School District's website in a webpage labeled "Outside Flyer/Event Information". All such postings shall be clearly labeled with the following: "The school committee

does not support, condone or in any way adopt the philosophical or ideological beliefs of the group as an official policy." The decision for posting such materials by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee is final. There is no appeal process following the school's decision.

APPENDIX A

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;

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 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 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 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 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 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.

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.

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 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 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 request to 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.

APPENDIX B
Student Discipline – Serious Misconduct

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 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 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) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

APPENDIX C

Student Discipline – Criminal Complaint

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 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 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 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 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 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 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.

APPENDIX D

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, either physical or mental, a student's person. 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. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

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 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.

The district's Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator is Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director. He has been designated to respond to any questions about the district's policy, and is part of the review process for complaints or concerns about discrimination. Kurt Garivaltis can be reached at 12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050 and at 413-685-1017.

Student Discipline (Special Education)

DISCIPLINARY ACTION RELATIVE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: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 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 PURSUANT TO FEDERAL AND MASSACHUSETTS REGULATIONS

Disciplining Students with Special Needs: Procedures applicable when Suspension(s) will accumulate to more than ten(10) Days the School Year. 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 an 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 suspensions(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. Participants in the meeting shall include, but are not limited to, individuals who are trained in the area of the student's disability. At that review, the review TEAM will 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 f 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) refuse 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. Provide 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 disabilities can be found in the *Parents' Rights Brochure of the Department of Education*
5. A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services under this part and who has engaged in behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct of the local educational agency, may assert any of the protections provided for if the local educational agency had knowledge (as determined in accordance with this paragraph) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. A local educational agency shall be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if:
    A. The parent of the child has expressed concern in writing (unless the parent is illiterate or has a disability that prevents compliance with the requirements contained in this clause) to personnel of the appropriate educational agency that the child is in need of special education and related services.
    B. The behavior or performance of the child demonstrates the need for such services.
    C. The parent of the child has requested an evaluation of the child.

<u>Students not yet determined to be eligible for special education or 504 services:</u>

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

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 procedure with respect to the suspension of to 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 that 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 a 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 school function under

the jurisdiction of a state or local educational agency.

(B) Either before or not later than 10 days after taking 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.

<u>Due Process</u>

ALL STUDENTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER TO DISCIPLINE CHARGES REPORTED TO THE ADMINISTRATION. AFTER A MATTER HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED, WITH BOTH SIDES HEARD, THE APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE WILL BE ADMINISTERED. SHORT TERM DISCIPLINE MAY <u>NOT</u> BE APPEALED.

SHOULD SERIOUS AND/OR LEGAL DISCIPLINE TAKE PLACE (I.E. DISCIPLINE IMPOSED BASED ON MGL CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37 H, AND MGL CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37 H1/2) THE FOLLOWING DUE PROCESS /APPEAL PROCESS IS AFFORDED.

(Reference Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 37H)

(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 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) above shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).

(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 expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is being made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Reference Massachusetts General Laws, Chap 71, Section 37H ½);

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or upon the issuance of 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 effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reason for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her 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 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 parents 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 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. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regards 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 the school in that 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 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 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 parents or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student.

Bullying

Guiding Principle:

The Gateway Regional School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. The Gateway School Committee believes that preventing bullying and/or harassment is critical for creating and maintaining a safe, secure and positive school climate and culture, which in turn supports academic achievement, increases school

engagement, respects the rights of all individuals and groups, and purposefully builds community.

Goals:

The Gateway Regional School District will not tolerate bullying or harassment of/by any individual participating in any sanctioned school activity.

The School Committee expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to school community members 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.

Definitions:

Aggressor: means perpetrator of bullying or retaliation as defined in M.G.L. c. 71,§37O.

Perpetrator: a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying or retaliation.

Bullying: the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a 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 and may constitute a crime. Bullying can be verbal, physical, direct (face-to-face) and/or indirect (e.g., through another person, in writing, etc.). Bullying may occur in dating relationships. 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 (harassment).

Bullying can take many forms and occur in virtually any setting. It can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that will affect attending school, walking in corridors, eating in cafeterias, playing in the school yard or recreation areas, participating in or attending special and extracurricular activities, or riding on the bus to and from school each day.

Cyber-bullying: bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which

shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfers of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

1. Wire
2. Radio
3. Electromagnetic signal
4. Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messaging or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of the 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.

Harassment: 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 identity, sexual orientation and age. Harassment includes cyber-harassment.

Retaliation: 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 policy, or for taking action consistent with this policy.

School Community Member: any student, school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, paraprofessional, 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.

<u>Policy Scope</u>:
Any form of bullying, harassment, cyber-bullying, and/or cyber-harassment is prohibited, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, traveling to or from school, or at school-sponsored events, whether or not held on school premises. “Traveling to or from school” includes on a school bus or other school related vehicle, at official school bus stops, and walking to and from school within a reasonable time before or after school hours.

Bullying or harassment, including cyber-bullying and/or cyber-harassment, that is not conducted at locations noted above are covered by this policy if the incident results in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more individuals and/or the orderly day to day operations of the school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan:

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders and consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The plan will include district procedures, reporting and investigation processes and timelines, definitions, consequences, training and professional development, bullying/ harassment interventions and prevention programs, safety plans and target assistance resources.

The Principal and/or his/her designee are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school. Each member of the school community is responsible for reporting any observations of bullying and harassment, or credible information that such an act has taken place.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment, including bullying. The Principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment, including bullying unless he/she is involved in the complaint.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BoardofEducation 603 CMR 26:00
MGL 71:37O MGL 265:43, 43A MGL
268:13B MGL 269:14A

REFS.: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying and Prevention and Intervention Plan
CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
JICFA, Hazing Adopted

APPENDIX E

Immunization Exemptions and Vaccine Preventable Disease Exclusion Guidelines in School Settings

There are two situations in which children who are not appropriately immunized may be admitted to school:

1. A **medical** exemption is allowed if a physician submits documentation that an immunization is medically contraindicated; and
2. A **religious** exemption is allowed if a parent or guardian submits a written statement that immunizations conflict with their sincere religious beliefs.

Philosophical exemptions are not allowed by law in Massachusetts, even if signed by a physician. Only medical and religious exemptions are acceptable. These exemptions must be kept in the students' filed at school (105 CMR 220.000 and M.G.L. c.76,ss,15 and 15C).

In situations when one or more cases of disease are present in a school, all susceptible, including those with medical or religious exemptions, are subject to exclusion as described in the Reportable Diseases and Isolation and Quarantine Requirements (105 CMR 300.000).

Retention Of Records

Proper management of public records ensures that the government and other authorized personnel have immediate access to information for the full period of time it is needed to conduct daily business, financial transactions, litigation, maintenance of public property, and development and implementation of public policy. Electronic records pose unique problems of recognition, retention, storage and retrieval. The purpose of this policy is to assist School District personnel in recognizing electronic records and understanding the requirements of retaining, storing and retrieving records in accordance with the law and School District needs. It is the intent of this policy that all electronic correspondence be retained as per the content of the communication. The Public Records Law of Massachusetts issues a schedule of records maintenance, retention, exemptions, and disposal based on content. Refer to Public Records Law G.L.c.4, §7(26) for the explanation of "public records," see 950 C.M.R. 32.00; G.L.c.66 §1 for Public Records Access, and §10 for Public inspection and copies of records.

LEGAL REF.: Public Records Law G.L.c.4, §7(26
950 C.M.R. 32.00; G.L.c.66 §1

APPENDIX F

Implementation Of Every Student Succeeds Act

1. 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 the state licensing criteria have been waived; the undergraduate degree major of the teacher, and any graduate 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).
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The district will notify parents of the following: activities involving the collection, disclosure or use of personal student information for the purposes of marketing or selling that information; administration of surveys that contain requests for certain types of sensitive information; non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as condition of attendance, administered by the school, scheduled in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students.
6. The district certifies that the schools do not prevent or otherwise deny students their right to participate in constitutionally protected prayer.
7. Parents 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.
8. The following health and physical screening will be provided for elementary school students:
   Vision & Hearing: Grades K-5, 8 & 10
   Height and Weight: Grades 1 & 4
   Postural Screening: Grades 5-9
   *If you do not want your child screened, please send a written request to your child's principal.
9. Parents have the right to review all curriculum materials and survey instruments and procedures prior to them being used with their child. Please contact the school principal

regarding this right.

10. 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.
11. 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.

APPENDIX G

Electronic Communication Devices, Network & Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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).

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 potential 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)

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."

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.

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.

The Gateway Regional School District will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Unacceptable Uses

The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

a. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.

b. 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.

c. 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.

d. 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.

e. 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.

f. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.

g. 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.

h. 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.

i. 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.

j. 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.

k. 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.

l. 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).

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.

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.

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.

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 email 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.

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.

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 misdeliveries or nondeliveries 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.

User Notification

All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.

1. This notification shall include the following:
    a. 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.
3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
    a. 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.
    b. 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.
    c. 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.
    d. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

Parent Responsibility; Notification Of Student Internet Use

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.

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:

1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
3. 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.
4. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

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.

Dissemination Of Policy

a. 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.
b. All parents and students of the school district must sign the Acceptable Use Policy, the Acceptable Posting Policy, and the Student ECD Policy.
c. 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.
d. The school may provide informational programs or other activities designed to promote parent and community understanding of this policy.

Enforcement

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.

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)