

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
Wednesday, July 29th, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
2 Dudley Oxford Rd.
Dudley, MA 01570

Minutes

I. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31pm

In attendance:

Jeanne Costello, Chair
Anthony Aube
Cathleen Carmignani
Kelly Szela

Kristin Martin
Maureen Chickering
Caitlynn Panczyk

A. Chair declaration: In accordance with Mass. General Law Charter 30(A), Sec 20 and in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 I announce this meeting is being recorded by the (Dudley Charlton Regional School District) and I ask if there is anyone else present that is recording today's meeting? Please let the minutes reflect.

No one else was recording the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Consent Agenda Items

A. Approval of the Warrant

B. Approval of Minutes Regular Meeting - 6.17.2026

A motion by C. Carmignani, seconded by A. Aube to approve the consent agenda items passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

V. Communications

- Superintendent Lamarche received a communication regarding the Mass School Building Authority specific to Heritage School. MSBA is planning a visit to HES for a future project consideration. They will meet Wednesday, September 16, 2026 at 1:30pm at HES. School Committee representation will be needed at this meeting. Town leaders will attend this meeting as well.
- C. Carmignani has been hearing from parents that they are appreciative of the school meals.
- A. Aube has gotten good feedback from Middle School parents on the supply lists going out early in the summer this year.

VI. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment

VII. New Business

A. Director of Finance & Operations Joe DeSantis:

1. Capital Plan: Issuance of Debt and Districtwide Election Date

For capital projects that are not MSBA eligible, the next step is for School Committee to vote to authorize the issuance of debt to fund the non-MSBA eligible capital projects. Mr. David Eisenthal of Unibank attended the June 2026 School Committee meeting and explained the debt authorization process. This School Committee vote will trigger the need for a special Districtwide election for final approval.

The special Districtwide election also needs to be scheduled. After initial discussions with Dudley and Charlton municipal departments, Tuesday, September 29th, 2026 is the suggested date from both towns. The District is responsible for the expenditures related to the special Districtwide election.

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by M. Chickering to authorize the issuance of debt to fund the non-MSBA eligible capital projects passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by M. Chickering to schedule a special District-wide election for debt approval passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

B. Request for Participation in an International Exchange Program - SHRHS

Principal Elwell answered some questions from School Committee members. School Committee members had other questions that could not be answered by Principal Elwell so this will be put back on the agenda for the next meeting so Mr. Damelio and Ms. Racicot could be present to answer all questions that SC members have before voting.

C. Carmignani rescinded her motion and J. Costello rescinded her second to approve the International Exchange Program.

A. Aube made a motion and J. Costello seconded the motion to table the International Exchange Program vote until the next meeting.

C. Student Handbook Changes

Assistant Superintendent True presented and discussed the Elementary School Handbook changes.

Principal Gregg Desto and Principal Bogosh presented and discussed the Middle School Handbook changes and answered all questions from School Committee members.

Principal Elwell presented and discussed the High School Handbook changes.

D. Policies for Distribution (see Policy BG)

1. JIC Student Discipline (Update)
2. ECAF Security Cameras in Schools (New)
3. ECAFB Security Cameras in School Buses (New)
4. DCRSD BPIP Bullying Prevention Intervention Plan (Update)

Superintendent Lamarche discussed all policies and answered all questions from School Committee members.

E. Policies for Action (see Policy BG)

1. Superintendent of Schools
2. Director of Pupil Services
3. Director of Finance and Operations
4. Assistant Superintendent of Schools
5. Assistant Director of Pupil Services

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by C. Panczyk to approve the Job Descriptions passed 6-1.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - No

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

6. JKA Restraint of Students in Public Schools (Update)

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by K. Martin to approve Policy JKA passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

7. IJNDBB Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools (New)

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by M. Chickering to approve Policy IJNDBB passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

8. IJNDBA Student Technology Responsible Use Policy (Update)

A motion by C. Carmignani, seconded by A. Aube to approve Policy IJNDBA passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

9. IJNDB Staff Technology Responsible Use Policy (Update)

A motion by A. Aube, seconded by K. Martin to approve Policy IJNDB passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

VIII. School Committee Workshop

There was a recess at 8:24 PM before the SC Workshop started

IX. Adjourn

A motion by J. Costello, seconded by K. Martin to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM was passed unanimously.

J. Costello - Yes

A. Aube - Yes

C. Carmignani - Yes

K. Szela - Yes

K. Martin - Yes

M. Chickering - Yes

C. Panczyk - Yes

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

Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee Goals 2025–2026

Governance and Leadership Capacity:

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee will strengthen its governance practices and leadership capacity by building consistent systems, fostering effective communication, and deepening collaboration with students, families, and community partners.

Educational Excellence and Student Experience:

The School Committee will ensure all students have equitable access to high-quality instruction, effective educators, and enriching experiences that promote learning, engagement, and well-being.

Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Stewardship:

The School Committee will strategically align fiscal planning and resource allocation with the District's 10-Year Capital Plan to ensure financial sustainability and equitable student outcomes.

Next Meeting Dates:

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 6:30 PM @CMS

Policy Review Subcommittee: Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 4:00 PM @District Office

Curriculum for Teaching and Learning: TBD - Video Conference

Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: TBD - Video Conference

Budget and Finance Subcommittee: TBD - Video Conference

Executive Sessions Minutes Review: TBD

Future Agenda Items:

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
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Shepherd Hill Regional High School
2 Dudley Oxford Rd.
Dudley, MA 01570

Agenda

- I. Call Meeting to Order**
 - A. Chair declaration: In accordance with Mass. General Law Charter 30(A), Sec 20 and in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 I announce this meeting is being recorded by the (Dudley Charlton Regional School District) and I ask if there is anyone else present that is recording today's meeting? Please let the minutes reflect.
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- III. Moment of Silence**
- IV. Consent Agenda Items**
 - A. Approval of the Warrant
 - B. Approval of Minutes Regular Meeting - 6.17.2026
- V. Communications**
- VI. Public Comment**
- VII. New Business**
 - A. Director of Finance & Operations Joe DeSantis:
 - 1. Capital Plan: Issuance of Debt and District-Wide Election Date
 - B. Request for Participation in an International Exchange Program - SHRHS
 - C. Student Handbook Changes
 - D. Policies for Distribution (see Policy BG)
 - 1. JIC Student Discipline (Update)
 - 2. ECAF Security Cameras in Schools (New)
 - 3. ECAF Security Cameras in School Buses (New)
 - 4. DCRSD BPIP Bullying Prevention Intervention Plan (Update)
 - E. Policies for Action (see Policy BG)
 - 1. Superintendent of Schools
 - 2. Director of Pupil Services
 - 3. Director of Finance and Operations
 - 4. Assistant Superintendent of Schools
 - 5. Assistant Director of Pupil Services
 - 6. JKA Restraint of Students in Public Schools (Update)
 - 7. IJNDBB Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools (New)
 - 8. IJNDBA Student Technology Responsible Use Policy (Update)
 - 9. IJNDB Staff Technology Responsible Use Policy (Update)
- VIII. School Committee Workshop**
- IX. Adjourn**

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

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<i>DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT</i>

TO: School Committee

FROM: Joseph DeSantis - Director of Finance & Operations

DATE: July 29th, 2026

SUBJECT: Finance Director Update

The District has been reviewing its capital needs for several years. The Facilities Condition Assessment from Habib & Associates detailed the specific deficiencies of each DCRSD building. As a result, an updated Capital Plan was created. DCRSD entered Statements of Interest with Massachusetts School Building Authority several months ago for both Shepherd Hill Regional High School and Heritage School, intended to address capital projects that are MSBA eligible.

For capital projects that are not MSBA eligible, the next step is for School Committee to vote to authorize the issuance of debt to fund the non-MSBA eligible capital projects. Mr. David Eisenthal of Unibank attended the June 2026 School Committee meeting to explain the debt authorization process, and to answer any questions School Committee may have. This School Committee vote will trigger the need for a special Districtwide election for final approval.

The special Districtwide election also needs to be scheduled. After initial discussions with Dudley and Charlton municipal departments, Tuesday, September 29th, 2026 is the suggested date from both towns. The District is responsible for the expenditures related to the special Districtwide election.

The legal language for the ballot was prepared by Richard Manly of Locke and Lord. His memo is attached, and the School Committee should use the language included for this vote. Before taking the final vote for issuance, the date of the special election needs to be decided.

This is an exciting opportunity to address facility needs, resulting in safer buildings for students and staff, clearer operational costs in budgeting, and a more future-ready infrastructure.

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Purposes to be Financed

UniBank Fiscal Advisory Services, Inc.

4/29/2026

Purpose	Town	School	Total	2027	2028	2029	Term
1.8 Site Lighting	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$62,400	\$ 62,400	\$ -	\$ -	5
3.7 Inadequate Guardrail Height	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$78,975	\$ 78,975	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.3 Exterior Doors Weather Stripping	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$26,810	\$ 26,810	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.4 Window glazing	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$32,500	\$ 32,500	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.5 Window and Door Perimeter Sealants	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$107,250	\$ 107,250	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Charlton	Heritage	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.7 Exterior Doors Weather Stripping	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$102,050	\$ 102,050	\$ -	\$ -	5
3.8 Inadequate Guardrail Design	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$252,720	\$ 252,720	\$ -	\$ -	5
4.8 Lab Waste Neutralization	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$109,200	\$ 109,200	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.11 Window and Door Perimeter Sealants	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$91,650	\$ 91,650	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
2.2 Staining and Efflorescence	Dudley	Mason Road	\$136,500	\$136,500	\$0	\$0	5
2.5 Window and Door Perimeter Sealants	Dudley	Mason Road	\$37,050	\$37,050	\$0	\$0	5
3.8 Inadequate Guardrail Design	Dudley	Mason Road	\$37,440	\$37,440	\$0	\$0	5
3M Window Safety Film	Dudley	Mason Road	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$0	\$0	5
2.7 Exterior Doors Weather Stripping	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$102,050	\$ 102,050	\$ -	\$ -	5
3.8 Inadequate Guardrail Design	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$252,720	\$ 252,720	\$ -	\$ -	5
4.8 Lab Waste Neutralization	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$109,200	\$ 109,200	\$ -	\$ -	5
3M Window Safety Film	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	5
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$52,000	\$ 52,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
3.4 Worn Carpet	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$166,608	\$ 166,608	\$ -	\$ -	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$44,750	\$ 750	\$ 43,250	\$ 750	10
3.9 Interior Doors	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$56,550	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 56,550	10
5.3 Standby Generator	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$195,000	\$ 195,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$52,000	\$ 52,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
3.3 Worn Carpet	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$634,959	\$ 634,959	\$ -	\$ -	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$27,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 17,000	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Charlton	Heritage	\$52,000	\$ 52,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Charlton	Heritage	\$29,250	\$ 1,750	\$ 13,750	\$ 13,750	10
5.1 Standby Generator	Charlton	Heritage	\$195,000	\$ 195,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$30,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 18,000	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$52,000	\$ 52,000	\$ -	\$ -	10
3.4 Worn Carpet	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$238,290	\$ 238,290	\$ -	\$ -	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$46,800	\$ 2,000	\$ 42,800	\$ 2,000	10

Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$52,000	\$	52,000	\$	-	\$	-	10
3.4 Worn Carpet	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$386,100	\$	386,100	\$	-	\$	-	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$30,750	\$	2,250	\$	14,250	\$	14,250	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Dudley	Mason Road	\$52,000		\$52,000		\$0		\$0	10
3.5 Worn Carpet	Dudley	Mason Road	\$62,400		\$62,400		\$0		\$0	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Dudley	Mason Road	\$34,550		\$750		\$33,050		\$750	10
Re-Key facility for Master Key & ADA hardware upgrades	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$65,000	\$	65,000	\$	-	\$	-	10
7.1 IT Network Infrastructure	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$30,000	\$	6,000	\$	6,000	\$	18,000	10
5.5 Phone System	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$60,000	\$	60,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.1 Drives and Walks	Charlton	Charlton Elementary	\$481,195	\$	481,195	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.1 Phone System	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$70,000	\$	70,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
3.4 VCT Flooring	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$63,134	\$	63,134	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.1 Drives and Walks	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$2,187,900	\$	2,187,900	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.3 Bituminous Curbing	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$384,800	\$	384,800	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.4 Bituminous Sidewalks	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$110,500	\$	110,500	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.5 Concrete Sidewalks	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$35,100	\$	35,100	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.6 Catch Basin / Manhole	Charlton	Charlton Middle	\$32,500	\$	32,500	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.5 Phone System	Charlton	Heritage	\$70,000	\$	70,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.3 Phone System	Charlton	Shepherd Hill HS	\$78,000	\$	78,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.2 Phone System	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$60,000	\$	60,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.1 Drives and Walks	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$623,623	\$	623,623	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.2 Bituminous Curbing	Dudley	Dudley Elementary	\$39,000	\$	39,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.1 Phone System	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$42,250	\$	42,250	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.1 Drives and Walks	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$1,358,500	\$	1,358,500	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.3 Bituminous Curbing	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$210,600	\$	210,600	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.4 Bituminous sidewalks	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$104,000	\$	104,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.5 Concrete walks	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$87,750	\$	87,750	\$	-	\$	-	15
1.6 Catch Basin / Manhole	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$110,500	\$	110,500	\$	-	\$	-	15
3.5 VCT Flooring	Dudley	Dudley Middle	\$31,200	\$	31,200	\$	-	\$	-	15
5.2 Phone System	Dudley	Mason Road	\$60,000		\$60,000		\$0		\$0	15
1.5 Catch Basin / Manhole	Dudley	Mason Road	\$32,500		\$32,500		\$0		\$0	15
1.9 Fuel Oil Tank	Dudley	Mason Road	\$32,500		\$32,500		\$0		\$0	15
1.10 Fencing	Dudley	Mason Road	\$36,660		\$36,660		\$0		\$0	15
Water Filtration System	Dudley	Mason Road	\$75,000		\$75,000		\$0		\$0	15
5.3 Phone System	Dudley	Shepherd Hill HS	\$78,000	\$	78,000	\$	-	\$	-	15
Totals			\$11,183,734		\$10,878,584		\$164,100		\$141,050	

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District
Vote of the Regional District School Committee

VOTED: That the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District (the "District") hereby appropriates the amount of \$11,183,734 to pay costs of various capital improvements throughout the District, including, but not limited to, drainage and water filtration improvements, phone system replacement, purchase of information technology equipment, re-keying building locks, window and door improvements, carpet replacement, paving and walkway improvements, and backup generator purchase and installation, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, said amount to be expended under the direction of the Regional District School Committee. To meet this appropriation the District Treasurer, with the approval of the Regional District School Committee, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 16(n), and the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority; provided, however, that the amount to be borrowed shall be reduced by any grants or gifts received by the District on account of the various projects to be undertaken pursuant to this vote.

FURTHER VOTED: The debt authorized by this vote of the Committee shall be submitted to the registered voters of the District's member communities for approval at a District-wide election to be held on [September 29], 2026 in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 71, §16(n) and the District Agreement.

(508) 943-6700

**Fax
(508) 943-5956**

www.dcrsd.org

Shepherd Hill Regional High School

**68 Dudley-Oxford Road
Dudley, Massachusetts 01571**

Darren C. Elwell
Principal

**Andrew J. Leach,
Jr.**
Assistant Principal

Michael D. Resener
Assistant Principal

Stacey A. Prosko
*Special Education
Coordinator*

Proposal for International Exchange Program (Intercambio): Dudley, MA to Sevilla, Spain

Quick Facts

School	Shepherd Hill Regional High School
Principal	Mr. Darren Elwell
Event Title	International Student Exchange (Intercambio) - Sevilla, Spain
Group	15 students in 11th or 12th grade selected for advanced Spanish-language ability
Event Dates	Inbound Students (Sevilla to Dudley): Wednesday, October 28 to Friday, November 6, 2026 Outbound Students (Dudley to Sevilla): Friday, February 12 to Sunday, February 21, 2027
Destination of Event	Partner School: IES Luca de Tena, C. Pirineos, 17, 41018 Sevilla, Spain Student Accommodations: Homestays with vetted host families in Sevilla, Spain
Number of Chaperones	2 - Frank Damelio, Ashley Racicot
Total Projected Cost	\$25,500
Per Student Cost	\$1,500 (not including personal spending money)
Funding Source	Family-funded
Additional Funding Source	We are researching potential grants, corporate sponsorships and fundraising opportunities
Substitute Required?	Yes - 1 day (Friday before February vacation)

Proposal for Independent International Exchange Program (Intercambio): Dudley, MA to Sevilla, Spain

Project Description

This proposal seeks formal authorization to establish an independent, reciprocal educational exchange program between our school in Dudley, MA, and IES Luca de Tena secondary school in Sevilla, Spain. This program would be coordinated directly by faculty leaders at both institutions, bypassing third-party commercial travel vendors to minimize financial burdens on student families and maximize curriculum customization.

The program will operate on a strictly balanced, 15-student reciprocal framework. This setup eliminates commercial hotel costs and gives students a deep look into local culture.

- **Inbound Phase (October 28 – November 6, 2026):** 15 students from Sevilla, accompanied by 2 Spanish faculty chaperones, will reside in Dudley, MA. They will live with the families of our 15 participating Dudley students, shadow them in daily classes, and participate in regional cultural excursions.
- **Outbound Phase (February 12 - February 21, 2027):** The same 15 Dudley students will travel to Sevilla, Spain, accompanied by 2 DCRSD faculty chaperones. Our students will live with the families of the exact Spanish students they hosted, attend classes at the partner school, and execute an intensive cultural itinerary.

This exchange will directly align with the School Committee Policy IJOA. The program will support the World Language curriculum standards, as well as providing opportunities for students to enhance cross-cultural knowledge that can be applied in other subject areas.

Skills and Benchmarks

- **Target Language Proficiency** - Students will advance their practical Spanish communication skills via 24/7 linguistic immersion inside Spanish classrooms and homestay environments.
- **Socio-Historical Comprehension** - Students will analyze the complex historical footprint of Sevilla, evaluating Moorish, Jewish, and Christian influences by interacting directly with historical monuments.
- **Global Citizenship** - Students will develop cross-cultural empathy, navigating real-world global systems, independent international travel, and comparative educational structures.

Culminating Projects and Activities

Following the exchange, participating students will complete the following academic deliverables:

- **Cap Stone Presentation:** Students will deliver a bilingual presentation to the school community detailing their linguistic growth and cultural insights.
- **Community Panel:** Participation in a panel discussion during a subsequent School Committee meeting, open house and/or parent information night to share program outcomes.

Projected Itinerary (Outbound DCRSD Students in February, 2027)

Projected Day	Academic and Cultural Planned Activities
Day 1: Departure Friday, February 12	Group assembly at school Bus transit to Boston Logan International Airport (BOS) Overnight transatlantic flight to Sevilla (SVQ).
Day 2: Arrival Saturday, February 13	Arrival in Spain Welcome reception at partner school Students join host families
Day 3: City Tour Sunday, February 14	Guided tours in families and small groups of major historical and cultural parts of the city
Days 4-8: School Immersion Monday, February 15 through Friday, February 19	Official welcome by administration Attendance in core academic curriculum classes with Spanish peers
Day 9: Transfer to Madrid Saturday, February 20	Train to Madrid in the morning Cultural day of excursion with chaperones in Spain's capital
Day 10: Return Sunday, February 21	Transit to airport for return flight to Boston (BOS) from Madrid (MAD) Arrival in Dudley, MA; student dismissal to parents/caregivers

Safety, Liability, and Risk Management Protocols

It is understood that operating an independent trip requires careful attention to safety and risk management. The following protocols will be enforced:

- Host Family Vetting (Inbound & Outbound):** All Dudley adult household members hosting a Spanish student must clear an official CORI/SORI background check organized through the building office staff. Reciprocally, the administration of the Sevilla partner school will formally certify that all Spanish host families have cleared an equivalent local/national background check.
- Travel and Health Insurance:** All DCRSD participants will be required to purchase comprehensive international travel insurance that explicitly includes emergency medical coverage, foreign hospitalization access, and emergency medical evacuation. We have sent out requests for quotes to two vetted companies: Blue Cross Blue Shield and International SOS. Per our research, these insurance rates tend to run about \$30-\$60/student. This price has been factored into the total price listed above.
- Chaperone Availability & Communication:** DCRSD faculty chaperones will remain in Sevilla for the duration of the trip, carrying mobile devices with international data activated. A clear chain of communication will connect host families, DCRSD chaperones, Dudley building administrators, and parents/caregivers in the US.
- Behavior and Safety Accords:** Students and parents must sign a behavioral code of conduct before joining the program. Any reported violation of school rules, local laws, or safety regulations will result in the student being sent home immediately at the family's expense.

Student Selection and Equity Process

To ensure fair access and high behavioral standards, the selection process for students will follow these guidelines:

- **Eligibility:** Open to 11th and 12th grade students who have completed a minimum of Spanish 3 with an academic record free of severe disciplinary infractions. Priority will be given to 12th grade students with more advanced Spanish skills.
- **Application Components:** Evaluation will be based on a written essay of interest (in Spanish) and teacher recommendations.
- **Financial Equity:** The independent nature of the trip keeps costs low. Additionally, we will continue to seek out funding opportunities, including local grants, corporate sponsorships and fundraising.

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Student Discipline Procedures — Compliance Amendment

Elementary Schools Handbook, 2025–2026 (Amended July 2026)

Insert into the Elementary Schools Handbook immediately following the existing “Suspension and Expulsion” section (currently pp. 32–35).

Prepared in response to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Program Progress Monitoring finding regarding student discipline procedures.

PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT

This amendment adds the discipline procedures identified as missing from the Elementary Schools Handbook in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) 2026 Program Progress Monitoring finding. It should be inserted into the Handbook as a continuation of the existing "Suspension and Expulsion" section, replacing none of the existing text but supplementing it with the four elements below:

- In-school suspension procedures (CR 10C / 603 CMR 53.10);
- Alternatives to suspension, re-engagement procedures, and a list of remedies (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H¾; 603 CMR 53.05);
- Due process protections for students not yet determined eligible for special education (34 CFR 300.534); and
- Parent notification and procedural safeguards requirements for students with disabilities facing disciplinary removal (34 CFR 300.530(h)).

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (Policy JK / 603 CMR 53.10)

In-school suspension (ISS) allows a student to be removed from the regular classroom setting for disciplinary reasons while remaining in school and continuing to receive instruction and support. The Principal or designee may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term out-of-school suspension for disciplinary offenses.

A. Notice

Before placing a student in in-school suspension, the Principal or designee shall verbally inform the student of the disciplinary offense and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to respond. If the in-school suspension will last longer than (a) ten (10) consecutive school days, or (b) more than ten (10) cumulative school days in a school year where a pattern of removal has been demonstrated, the school shall afford the student the same procedural protections given for a short-term or long-term out-of-school suspension, as applicable.

B. Notification to Parents/Caregivers

The Principal or designee shall attempt to notify the parent/caregiver, on the day of the in-school suspension, by telephone or in person of the disciplinary offense, the reason for the suspension, and its length. The Principal or designee shall also send written notice to the parent/caregiver, in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, within twenty-four (24) hours of the start of the in-school suspension.

C. Duration

In-school suspension shall not exceed ten (10) school days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

D. Academic Progress During In-School Suspension

A student serving an in-school suspension shall:

- Receive all assigned classwork and homework for completion during the suspension;
- Have the opportunity to make academic progress, meet with teachers as needed, and complete tests or quizzes missed during the suspension period; and
- Have the in-school suspension excluded from the count of the student's cumulative absences from class, provided the student completes the assigned academic work.

E. Location and Supervision

Students serving an in-school suspension shall complete their school day in a supervised setting designated by the Principal, separate from the regular classroom environment, with adult supervision at all times.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION, RE-ENGAGEMENT, AND REMEDIES (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H^{3/4}; 603 CMR 53.05)

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal or designee shall first consider ways to re-engage the student in learning, and shall not use suspension from school as a consequence until alternative remedies have been employed and documented, except where:

- The Principal documents specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive for the particular student and incident; or
- The student's continued presence in school poses a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm to another person while in school.

A. List of Alternative Remedies

Depending on the nature of the offense and the individual needs of the student, the school shall consider one or more of the following alternative remedies before imposing a suspension:

- Verbal warning and re-teaching of the expected behavior;
- Loss of specific privileges (e.g., recess, classroom responsibilities) tied to the misbehavior;
- Mediation and guided conflict resolution between students, facilitated by a counselor, school psychologist, or trained staff member;
- Restorative justice conferencing, including restorative conversations and behavior contracts;
- Collaborative problem solving between the student, family, and school staff;
- Referral to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team for a Tier 2 or Tier 3 behavioral intervention;
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies already in place building-wide;
- Trauma-sensitive, social-emotional learning-based approaches (e.g., RULER-aligned strategies) delivered by the classroom teacher, counselor, or school psychologist;
- Short-term separation from the classroom to a supervised, alternative location within the school ("calm down" or reset space), followed by a re-entry conversation; and
- Parent/caregiver conference to jointly develop a behavior support or safety plan.

B. Procedures Ensuring Students Are Re-Engaged in Learning

Whenever a student is removed from the classroom or from school for any period of time, whether through in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or another disciplinary consequence, the school shall take the following steps to re-engage the student upon return:

1. Prior to or upon the student's return, a staff member (classroom teacher, counselor, school psychologist, or administrator) shall meet briefly with the student to review expectations and reconnect the student with the classroom community.
2. The classroom teacher, in coordination with the school counselor or MTSS team as appropriate, shall ensure the student has access to any instruction, assignments, or academic support missed during the removal.

3. For students with repeated removals, the building principal shall convene the MTSS/student support team to review the student's behavioral data and determine whether a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or additional supports are warranted.
4. The school shall communicate with the parent/caregiver about the plan for the student's successful return to the classroom, including any agreed-upon supports.
5. The Principal or designee shall implement school-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process, including but not limited to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and trauma-sensitive learning approaches.

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS NOT YET DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (34 CFR 300.534)

A student who has not been determined eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and who has engaged in behavior that violates a rule or code of conduct may assert the protections available under IDEA discipline procedures if the district is deemed to have had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

A. Basis of Knowledge

The district shall be deemed to have had knowledge that a student was a student with a disability if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent/caregiver of the student expressed concern in writing (or orally if the parent does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement) to supervisory or administrative personnel of the school, or to a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent/caregiver of the student requested an evaluation of the student pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300 through 300.311; or
- The teacher of the student, or other district personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services or to other supervisory personnel of the district.

B. Exception

The district shall not be deemed to have had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability if the parent/caregiver of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the student, has refused special education services, or the student has been evaluated and it was determined that the student was not a student with a disability.

C. Conditions If No Basis of Knowledge

If the district does not have a basis of knowledge that a student was a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors.

- If a request is made for an evaluation of the student during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner.
- Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.
- If the student is determined to be a student with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation and information provided by the parents/caregivers, the district shall provide special education and related services in accordance with IDEA, including the discipline procedures described in the following section.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES — DISCIPLINE CONSIDERATIONS AND PARENT NOTIFICATION

This section supplements and clarifies the “Discipline of Students with Disabilities” provisions already contained in this Handbook.

A. Manifestation Determination Review

Students identified as eligible for special education under IDEA retain procedural protections, including a manifestation determination review (MDR) before any disciplinary change of placement exceeding ten (10) school days in a school year.

B. Parent Notification and Procedural Safeguards Notice

No later than the date on which the district makes a decision to impose a disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement for a student with a disability, the district shall:

- Notify the parent/caregiver of that decision; and
- Provide the parent/caregiver with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice described in 34 CFR 300.504.

This notification and the accompanying Procedural Safeguards Notice shall be provided in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall not be delayed until the manifestation determination meeting itself.

C. Section 504

The district shall not discriminatorily apply discipline to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Before imposing a suspension or exclusion of more than ten (10) days, or a series of removals constituting a pattern, on a student with a 504 Plan, the district shall conduct a review to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, and shall provide the parent/caregiver with notice of their rights under Section 504 at that time.

Legal references: 20 U.S.C. §1415(k); 34 CFR §§300.530–300.536; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; M.G.L. c. 71, §37H¾; 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.; CR 10C.

**Dudley-Charlton Regional School District
68 Dudley-Oxford Road
Dudley, Massachusetts 01571**



**DCRSD Elementary School Student Handbook
2026-2027**

“...to advance the knowledge and well-being of our children and our community.”

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Steven M. Lamarche

68 Dudley-Oxford Road

Dudley, MA 01571

(508) 943-6888

Fax (508) 943-1077

District Website: www.dcrsd.org

CHARLTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(Preschool - Grade 1)

Mr. Michael Thibodeau, Principal

9 Burlingame Road

Charlton, MA 01507

(508) 248-7774

Fax (508) 248-7003

mthibodeau@dcrsd.org

HERITAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(Grades 2 - 4)

Mr. Peter Olson, Principal

34 Oxford Road

Charlton, MA 01507

(508) 248-4884

Fax (508) 248-1109

polson@dcrsd.org

MASON ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(Preschool - Grade 1)

Mrs. Jennifer Desto, Principal

20 Mason Road

Dudley, MA 01571

(508) 943-4312

Fax (508) 949-1005

jdesto@dcrsd.org

DUDLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(Grades 2 - 4)

Mr. Christopher Audette, Principal

16 School Street

Dudley, MA 01571

(508) 943-3351

Fax (508) 949-3305

caudette@dcrsd.org

“...to advance the knowledge and well-being of our children and our community.”

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to the elementary schools of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District!

This handbook has been designed to give you a clear overview of our schools, including important information about daily operations, policies, and general expectations. We hope it serves as a helpful guide throughout the school year.

At the heart of our elementary program is a commitment to helping each child grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Our curriculum is designed to foster the development of essential skills—critical thinking, communication, and social responsibility—within a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Our dedicated team of educators works hard every day to ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential. We believe that strong partnerships between home and school are essential to student success, and we value the vital role families play in the educational journey.

We are excited to partner with you during these important elementary years and look forward to a positive and productive school experience for your child.

Sincerely,

The Elementary Leadership Team

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District

“...to advance the knowledge and well-being of our children and our community.”

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Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

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

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies:

Mr. Steven Lamarche, Superintendent of Schools
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
68 Dudley-Oxford Road
Dudley, MA 01571
508-943-6700

Asbestos Notification

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act).

Asbestos management plans have been developed for the following list of educational facilities grades K-12, which have asbestos containing materials present. These plans are available and accessible to the public at each individual facility as well as at the LEA administrative office.

<i>Educational Facility Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
1. Shepherd Hill Regional High School	68 Dudley-Oxford Road Dudley, MA 01571
2. Dudley Elementary School (No Asbestos Present)	16 School Street Dudley, MA 01571
3. Mason Road School (No Asbestos Present)	20 Mason Road Dudley, MA 01571
4. Charlton Elementary School	9 Burlingame Road Charlton, MA 01507
5. Heritage School (No Asbestos Present)	34 Oxford Road Charlton, MA 01507
6. Dudley Middle School (No Asbestos Present)	70 Dudley-Oxford Road Dudley, MA 01571
7. Charlton Middle School (No Asbestos Present)	2 Oxford Road Charlton, MA 01507

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DISTRICT RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

In accordance to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, School Attendance, Section 5, Place of attendance and DCRSD Policy “School/Admission Residency” #5118:

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.

Students must be full time residents of Dudley or Charlton in order to attend the schools in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Any person who is not a resident and attempts to deceive the schools, or anyone who assists in that deception may be required to pay a fee to the town of Dudley or Charlton. If there is a question of residency, a residency check will be conducted by the school attendance officer, who is a police officer for the Dudley or Charlton Police Departments.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRANCE (DCRSD Policy JEB)

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY

Requirements for Entrance

JEB

Kindergarten

To be admitted into Kindergarten, a child must be 5 years of age by September 1st of the new school year without exception.

First Grade

To be admitted into first grade, a child must be 6 years of age by September 1st of the new school year without exception.

Transfer of Students

When students enter the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District for the first time, the building principal will assign grade placement after careful review of the student’s school records. In most cases grade placement will correspond with the student’s grade assignment in his/her previous school.

Adopted August 10, 1972

Amended July 16, 1980

Amended June 24, 1999 - Effective September 1, 2000

Amended May 12, 2004 - Effective September 1, 2004

Amended March 12, 2008

Proposed for Amendment

First Reading March 27, 2019

Second Reading and
Amendment April 10, 2019

HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

A child's success in school thrives on strong collaboration between home and school. By working together, we can provide your child with the highest quality education and support.

Throughout the year, you'll find two scheduled parent-teacher conference windows on the school calendar. We encourage you to make every effort to attend, as these meetings offer valuable insights into your child's progress. In addition, please feel welcome to reach out at any time—whether by note, phone call, or email—to discuss questions or share observations.

Our goal is to ensure a rewarding and successful school year for every student. When parents, caregivers, and educators all contribute, our children flourish. Let's partner to make this year exceptional!

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Strong communication between home and school is essential to each student's success and plays a vital role in both academic achievement and social development. Consistent, open communication fosters collaboration, strengthens relationships, and supports the overall success of our school community.

To help keep families informed and engaged, the following communication opportunities are available throughout the school year:

- **Parent/Caregiver-Teacher Conferences**

Formal conferences are scheduled in both the fall and spring. However, additional conferences may be arranged at any time throughout the year, as needed. Either the teacher or the parent/caregiver may initiate a meeting to discuss a child's progress or any concerns.

- **Progress Reports**

Student progress reports are distributed three times a year—in November, March, and June—providing updates on academic growth and development.

- **Ongoing Communication**

We are committed to maintaining clear and consistent communication with families through a variety of channels. These may include school and classroom newsletters, the district and school websites (www.dcrsd.org), teacher emails or phone calls, blogs, classroom websites, and narrative reports. Together, we can ensure that each student is supported on their educational journey. We value and appreciate your partnership.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOLS WITH CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern about your child's education, please begin by reaching out to your child's teacher. Most concerns can be resolved through direct communication with the teacher, who works closely with your child each day.

If the issue is not resolved after speaking with the teacher, you may then contact the school principal for further support. Both the teacher and principal are dedicated to supporting each child's success and well-being.

Please note: If your concern is related to a before- or after-school program, such as Champions, you should contact the program staff directly. These programs are run separately from the school and have their own procedures for addressing questions and concerns.

SCHOOL VISITS

For student safety, all visitors must report to the Main Office upon entering the building. It is important to call ahead to arrange a visiting time. **Conferences may be arranged by calling the school. CORI checks are required for all volunteers.**

OPERATING PROCEDURES

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and consistent attendance is essential to learning and to improving the achievement of all students. The goal of the student attendance policy is to promote consistent, daily school and class attendance. The expectation is that all students will have, at a minimum, at least ninety five percent (95%) attendance in school and in each class during each school day.

In supporting student achievement, punctuality and attendance at school are recognized as the primary responsibility of the student and the parent/caregiver. However, the school, through its attendance policy, intends to monitor and ensure regular attendance.

State law requires the Dudley-Charlton RSD to investigate cases of excessive school absence. For this purpose, the Committee defines excessive absence as more than ten (10) unexcused absences per school year. All absences (even those authorized by parents/caregivers) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- For observance of major religious holidays
- Legal (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)

- Other - a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school principal. Additionally, high school seniors may be excused for up to four (4) days for college visits. Appropriate documentation from a college visit or college fair attendance will be required in order to receive credit for the days.

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee.

Additionally, principals or designee must ensure that notification is provided to the parent or caregiver of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences within a school year. School principals, or a designee, must make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or caregiver of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop a plan that includes the specific action steps necessary to address the student's poor attendance. The plan, including the action steps, shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or caregiver, and may include suggestions from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

In a case where parents or caregivers are unresponsive to the school administration's efforts to develop a plan and implement action steps designed to address poor attendance, or in the case where a plan is in place and poor attendance continues, excessive unexcused absences will require unilateral assessment and intervention by the school administration. Interventions may include involvement of a School Resource Officer and the Dudley or Charlton Police Department, case management services, and service referrals. In situations in which attendance does not improve despite additional intervention by the school administration, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- A Failure To Send, Criminal Complaint, against the parent/caregiver will be sought at the District Court
- A 51A for parental neglect will be filed with the Department of Children and Families
- A Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) application may be submitted to the Trial Court of Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department.

Reference DCRSD Policy JE

ABSENCE BEING CHECKED

The elementary schools in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District have implemented **Project ABC (Absence Being Checked)**. The purpose of this project is to:

- Confirm with parents/caregivers the absence of the child from school.
- Attempt to ensure the safety of elementary students.

- Continue to develop, extend, and enhance the lines of communication between the home and the school.

In the event of student absence from school, we ask for your cooperation. **PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO REPORT YOUR CHILD’S ABSENCE prior to 9:00 A.M.** Between 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. a call from the school will be made to the home of any student whose absence has not been reported.

In addition:

- During school hours if you are going to pick up your child for any reason, you must come to the office and sign him/her out.
- Students should not arrive or be dropped off at school prior to 8:30 A.M.

ABSENTEEISM DUE TO FAMILY VACATION

Absenteeism due to family vacations are considered unexcused absences and are counted towards accumulated absences. The following procedures should be followed if a vacation time is planned during scheduled school days:

- A vacation notification form should be completed prior to departure.
- Class work that the student misses during this time period will be saved and given to the student upon their return from school.

CAFETERIA

The Dudley-Charlton School District serves hot lunches at all elementary schools. The lunches are nutritionally balanced and follow the state guidelines for Plan A lunch menus. All elementary schools provide a monthly menu which advertises daily meals. Menus can also be found on individual school websites. Milk can be purchased separately by students who bring their own lunches.

The School Lunch Program is partially subsidized by state, local and federal funds as well as the federal commodity surplus program.

Free or reduced charge, school lunches are available to families whose income and size are within certain federal guidelines. Application forms (which indicate the guidelines) are provided to all families. Eligible families should return the application to the principal, who will review it and notify the family of the result.

It is recommended that families choose the **prepay option** [www.mylunchmoney.com] for lunches by paying cash, check or charge card in any amount to the individual schools.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

Parents/Caregivers, teachers and community members may wish to participate in the following ongoing committees and organizations:

1. Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The elementary schools have an active PTO which is involved in projects that enhance the school program. This organization has a slate of officers and meets monthly. Getting involved with the school's PTO is a good way to be of service to the school, and ultimately, to your child.

2. School Council

The School Council is elected yearly and consists of administration, teachers, parents, and a community representative. School Councils provide a great opportunity for parents/caregivers, teachers, principals, and community partners to come together both to share ideas and resources and to shape the direction their schools will take to strengthen teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the School Council to develop and implement a yearly School Improvement Plan.

3. Special Education – Parent Advisory Council

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District strives to provide the best possible services for children with special needs in the least restrictive environment. This Council acts as a support group to both parents and the administrator of special education. The SEPAC meets regularly throughout the school year, alternating evening meeting sites between Dudley and Charlton. Please contact the school administrator for information about the next meeting.

4. School Committee

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee meets regularly on a schedule which is posted in the schools and town offices and also in the local newspapers.

Each town has three elected representatives and the town with the greater population is entitled to an additional representative to serve on the committee.

For further information on any of these organizations, please contact the school or the district website [www.dcrsd.org].

EMERGENCY CLOSING

In the event of an emergency situation caused by the weather or other condition, the Superintendent of Schools or his designee, in consultation with the local police chief, may decide to close school before the regular dismissal time.

Although school is very seldom dismissed early, we feel it necessary to be prepared to meet the needs of our students and return them home as safely and as efficiently as possible.

“...to advance the knowledge and well-being of our children and our community.”

When it is necessary for school to close early, announcements will be made at the following locations: WTAG-580 AM, WORC- 1310 AM, WESO-970 AM, WBZ-1030 AM, WSRS-96.1 FM, WXLO-104.5 FM, WORC-98.9 FM, Channels 4, 5, 6, 7 News-TV, the Web Site www.dcrsd.org , and cancellations.com. The District also utilizes the One Call notification system. In the event of inclement weather conditions, particularly throughout winter months, we advise parents to stay tuned to one of these stations for school closing advisories. Please avoid calling the schools to inquire about early dismissal.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

School cancellations/delayed openings are announced at approximately 6:00 A.M. at the following locations:

WTAG-580 AM, WORC- 1310 AM, WESO-970 AM, WBZ-1030 AM, WSRS-96.1 FM, WXLO-104.5 FM, WORC-98.9 FM, Channels 4, 5, 6, 7 News-TV, the Web Site www.dcrsd.org, and cancellations.com. The District also utilizes the One Call Now notification system.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

CURRICULUM PROGRAMS

The primary goal of our curriculum program in grades preschool through four is to provide educational excellence for all students. In the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, this process follows the three guiding principles, identified by the Massachusetts Board of Education, as critical to lifelong learning – thinking and communicating, gaining and applying knowledge, working and contributing.

As the curriculum program is developed, a wide range of resources are used. This includes the use of guidelines from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, national curriculum efforts, and research from experts in the field, recommendations from teachers and school councils, and ongoing professional development endeavors.

Through these collective efforts, the district is continually refining the high local standards of curriculum and instruction. The curriculum program thereby addresses expectations for all students reflected in the Common Core State Standards.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

“If students are to succeed in the 21st century and meet the challenges of the future:

- They must recognize the importance of education as a lifelong effort.
- They will need to communicate effectively with others through reading, writing, speaking, computing, the arts, and technology.
- They will need to respect and understand people of diverse backgrounds in our diverse society.
- They will need to understand environmental and other issues with worldwide implications.
- They will need to make informed decisions for themselves, their families, their communities and our country.

- They will need to contribute to our society.
- They will need to take responsibility for their own behavior.”

In establishing these high expectations for all students, the district must continually reassess its curriculum. Periodic reviews are conducted on a cycle suggested by the school councils and district administrators, focusing on student learning, across grade levels and across the district, consistent with the state and local standards and relevant to real world application.

The refinement and adjustment of curriculum “*to advance the knowledge and well being of our children and our community*” results in a program of excellence.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Each school has a site based Instructional Support Team to assist teachers in meeting children’s needs in the regular classroom. The Instructional Support Team has long been an essential component of our general education program. IST is intended to provide site based problem solving by and for teachers in order to meet the needs of any and all students. The primary focus of the IST is to provide peer support and consultations for classroom teachers by discussing, brainstorming and suggesting alternative measures to address or accommodate any academic and/or behavioral concerns. Parents/Guardians will be notified in the event that their child is referred to the IST. This team, consisting of classroom teachers, special education teachers and other support specialists, has been highly successful in providing consultation and intervention strategies that meet student needs. In many instances, this approach eliminates any need for a special education referral.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS/SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELORS

The primary role of a school psychologist is to conduct cognitive evaluations as part of the special education referral process.

Psychologists administer psychological assessments:

- prepare oral/written reports
- provide special education services to students per their Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- participate in crisis team as necessary

School Adjustment Counselors provide a full range of counseling services to students including:

- individual counseling
- group counseling
- classroom presentations on a variety of topics

School Adjustment Counselors deal with crisis situations:

- help children regain control and process any incidents with the child
- meet with parents/caregivers and teachers to discuss strategies
- develop behavior intervention plans

School adjustment counselors assist teachers in the development of behavior modification programs and assist parents/caregivers with effective discipline strategies.

School adjustment counselors facilitate communication among area agencies.

School adjustment counselors serve as a resource in the implementation of the DCRSD Elementary Level Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Both the school psychologists and school adjustment counselors serve as consultants to administrators, teachers, and parents/caregivers.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 766 and the Federal Public Law 94-142 mandate a variety of rights, services and procedures for students with special needs.

Although our school program is designed to meet a range of developmental needs within the regular classroom, some children may need special education services.

Determination of a child's needs is made through a systematic referral and evaluation process, which includes direct parental involvement. Written parental/caregiver consent is required before any child can be evaluated.

Special Education services include Educational Services, Psychological Services/Counseling, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Behavior Support and other specialized services as indicated.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education services or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

1. If, prior to the disability action, the district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
 - a. The parent/caregiver has expressed concern in writing; or
 - b. The parent/caregiver had requested an evaluation; or
 - c. School district staff expressed concern that the student had a disability.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

3. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides six key protections for eligible students with disabilities: a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Appropriate Evaluation, an Individualized Education Program (IEP), placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Parent Participation in educational decisions, and Procedural Safeguards for resolving disagreements. These protections ensure that students receive a customized education tailored to their needs and that parents are actively involved and have a voice in their child's education.

For more information contact:

Heather Harriman
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
68 Dudley Oxford Road
Dudley, Ma 01571
Phone: (508) 943-3980
Fax: (508) 943-1077

TITLE I

Title 1 is a federally funded support program for reading/language arts and mathematics. A school that has a free lunch and reduced lunch count percentage greater than the school district's average is eligible to receive Title 1 services. The program is intended to give added support to students who need reinforcement without missing the lessons being taught within their classroom. An eligibility list is constructed through teacher recommendation and observation of student needs, in conjunction with consideration of classroom performance. Students requiring the most assistance are entered into the program.

READING SPECIALIST

The Reading Specialist consults with both general and special education teachers in regard to the literacy needs of students [reading, writing, spelling].

GENERAL SCHOOL REGULATIONS

HOMEWORK

Homework at the elementary level is not mandatory and will only be given as an optional extra practice for students. There will be no penalty for students who do not complete home assignments. Optional homework includes review and practice materials, projects, and assigned reading. It is intended to be educationally meaningful and to meet the needs of students as individuals.

READING AT HOME

In an effort to strengthen the reading skills of all our elementary students, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District recommends reading with your child at home nightly. The pleasurable connections that children build with print when they make their own personal reading choices are as important as the academic gains associated with recreational reading.

Things to Consider:

- taking turns reading with your child
- reading to your child or having your child read to you
- rereading familiar favorites and talking about the story's events, characters or favorite parts
- reading from a variety of texts and sources (magazines, stories, non-fiction books, lists, cards, etc.)

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are offered as an extension and enrichment of the regular school curriculum. Written parental/caregiver permission is required in order for students to participate in field trip experiences. A predetermined number of chaperones accompany each class group in order to provide appropriate monitoring of students' safety and well-being. Students may be asked to pay nominal fees to cover admission and transportation costs on school sponsored field trips.

BUS SAFETY REGULATIONS

The district administrators and representatives from the bus company work cooperatively to enforce school bus regulations in order to ensure safety for all children.

School bus route assignments are made on the basis of providing the most efficient and safest route to school, while at the same time achieving an equalized number of students on each bus.

In order to respond to specific child care needs and, at the same time maintain a balance in numbers of children riding school buses, we will be considering requests for alternate bus assignments in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Any request for bus change will be on a space available basis.
- Bus changes must be on a consistent and regular schedule for the entire year.
- Bus changes will be granted for child care purposes only.

Frequently, we receive requests for students to ride a different bus in order to visit a friend's house. Parent(s)/Caregiver(s) should be aware that they do not have the option to elect to have children ride another bus for this purpose.

If someone other than a parent or legal caregiver will be picking up a student at the bus stop, the parent/caregiver must notify the school and/or the bus company in advance.

If no authorized adult is present to receive the student, the student will be returned to the school, and the parent/caregiver will be contacted.

BUS CONDUCT

Students are expected to exhibit behavior that demonstrates respect for the rights of other students and the bus property. Improper behavior includes: destruction of bus property; smoking; improper language; distracting the driver; roughhousing; insubordination; disorderly conduct or any other behavior which endangers student safety on the bus will not be tolerated.

The bus driver will make every effort to enforce proper behavior, including, if necessary, verbal notice to parents/caregivers of infractions.

When the driver determines that further action is warranted, he/she will complete the school district form entitled, NOTICE TO PARENT/CAREGIVER CONCERNING BUS BEHAVIOR, and submit it to the principal. The principal will forward the notice to the student's parent/caregiver.

Inappropriate bus behavior may result in either temporary suspension or permanent loss of bus transportation privileges.

HEALTH SERVICES

The health suite/office is available to all students on a daily basis. Health services available include:

Medication	BMI Calculation and Reporting
Emergency card information	Immunizations
First Aid	Vision and Hearing Tests
Attendance Monitoring	Emotional and Social Problems
Physical Examinations	Medical Adjustments to School Program

Some rules do exist regarding procedures; medical care is individual, so parental assistance and cooperation is very necessary:

Medication should not be carried by any student. Any prescription medication, for use during school hours, should be brought to the nurse's office in the original prescription bottle, by the parent/caregiver. The necessary medication will be kept at the nurse's office for dispensing. Tylenol is available and will be given with permission by the parent/caregiver on the emergency sheet.

- and will be given with permission by the parent/caregiver on the emergency sheet. Abuse of any medication will be reported to the parent or to the appropriate agencies.
- Every family is responsible for updating and returning a current **Student Emergency Information Sheet**, signed by the parent/caregiver. Information is confidential, but essential with active recess/physical education programs. A call to update information is required and appreciated.

- Any accident or illness should be reported to the nurse. All dismissals for illness shall be at the discretion of the nurse with the permission of a parent/caregiver or designated person on the emergency card only.
- All absentees requiring a physician's visit should return with a note from the physician describing the nature of the illness or injury, dates, any limitations, and signed by the physician.
- All Kindergarten, 3rd, 7th, and 10th grade students are required by MA State Law to have a physical exam. Notices will be given to all students well in advance of the date of examination. It is acceptable for parents/caregivers to use their own physician.
A written note from the parent to use a family physician should be received prior to the date of examination or the child will be scheduled for a school exam by the District appointed physician. With information on the questionnaire, blood pressure, height and weight, and the exam itself, the physician will determine the child's health. Any questions in that regard will be referred to the family physician. A nurse will be present during the examinations. **Any required physical may be done by a physician of your choice, but must be completed on the school forms by each deadline date, at the parent's/caregiver's expense.**
- All students become due for immunizations upon entry into school and during their school years. Notification will be done on an annual basis. If a student has any occasion to receive a booster, a record should be sent to the school at that time, signed by a physician or emergency room nurse. All students will receive forms on the year the immunizations are due, with additional information on where and how to proceed. These forms should be signed by a physician and returned. Failure to comply with this requirement must mean exclusion from school according to state regulations, but not without a letter from the nurse and/or principal.
- Notices of failure of vision and hearing tests will be given to the student whose responsibility it is to deliver to the parent. Physician's responses should be returned to the nurse's office to be kept on file.
- Counseling assistance is available through the guidance department, the school psychologist and community services will be provided as deemed necessary.
- The nurse will assist with any health related problems that may interrupt a regular academic schedule.

We encourage parents/caregivers to contact the nurse at any time during the school year for any health matters.

HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS AND FOOD ALLERGIES

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices.

To ensure the health of our youth, we would like to remind all families about supporting health classroom celebrations. We understand the importance of birthdays, holidays, and other special events, and include these celebrations within the school day. Due to the increased number of food allergies, diet restrictions and chronic diseases among our young population, we ask that all families refrain from using candy, baked goods, and snacks of minimal nutritional value as rewards for students. Instead we encourage adults to seek non-food alternatives in holiday and birthday parties in the classroom.

Our goal has always been to increase awareness of healthy lifestyle choices. We would like to make the celebration safe and special for children. We urge all families to check with the classroom teacher in advance to plan a way to celebrate.

We have had great success with this approach as fruits, vegetables, and popsicles were the choice of many birthday snacks. In addition, we found that the entire classroom could eat these foods and no one was left out.

Parents/Caregivers have been very supportive and creative with their ideas for alternative ways to recognize accomplishments, holidays, and birthdays. Due to the large number of students at risk for severe food reactions, we have implemented educational programs of food awareness in which students are informed of the dangers of sharing food and discouraged from this practice at school.

Most schools in Massachusetts have made changes in the availability and types of foods in public school. The Dudley-Charlton School Committee adopted a **Health and Wellness Policy #5145** in 2006 to address these concerns.

Regarding highly allergic students: although they do not look or act differently from others, there is one important difference, if they eat one bite of the trigger foods, their body may become very sick, requiring emergency medications and possible transport to the nearest hospital. We thank you in advance for your support of our healthy celebrations guidelines. Do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions or need any further information about our program.

USE OF STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Many times during the school year photographs are taken of students, during the school day and at special events, to share the good work that we do in our schools with the community. These photographs may be posted on the district website, displayed on bulletin boards, put in the school newsletter, utilized in social media, or published in the local newspapers. If a parent/caregiver does not want his/her child's photograph displayed publicly for any reason, they should notify the school office in writing. If notification is not received by a parent/caregiver, it is understood that the schools have permission to publish student photographs for the purpose of communicating educational practices only.

DRESS CODE

DCRSD respects individual rights of expression, however it is expected that students will dress appropriately in school with consideration for public sensibility. Clothing and personal appearance should reflect self-respect and respect for others.

The following dress code is not meant to be restrictive, but is intended to guide students and their parents/guardians in choosing clothing that is safe and appropriate to wear in school. Students may dress in a manner reflecting current style and fashion; however, manner of dress may not be distracting or disruptive of the educational process. Students will adhere to the following

- No bare midriffs, revealing clothes, or clothing that reveals undergarments;
- No displays of inappropriate or sexually suggestive subject matter;
- No accessories or footwear that may cause a safety concern or a disruption.
- Clothing should be appropriate for the type of weather. All outerwear and any clothing that may be taken off (coats, sweaters, etc.) should be labeled with an identifying mark.
- During winter months, students must wear boots and snow pants to play in the snow. An extra pair of shoes should be provided so the children can take off their boots after recess. In addition, please consider providing an extra pair of socks for your child.

The administration reserves the right to decide whether certain clothing is appropriate for school. Caregivers will be notified and students will be asked to change their clothing if deemed inappropriate. If a student refuses to change or a caregiver is unable to bring in appropriate clothing, a student may be asked to go to the nurse for appropriate clothing. Repeat offenses may result in a caregiver conference.

Dress Requirements for Health & Wellness (Physical Education): In order to participate in Health & Wellness, students should wear appropriate clothing for physical activity, including t-shirt or sweatshirt, shorts, sweatpants, or wind pants, and sneakers.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

A school is a place for learning. Each member of the school community, including children and adults, share the responsibility to ensure that the learning environment:

- is pleasant, safe, and orderly;
- is free from insulting, threatening, and/or abusive treatment from others;
- actively promotes cooperative social interactions.

The following are among the primary responsibilities of school community members:

- To participate fairly in and contribute to a productive learning atmosphere in the classroom as well as all other areas in the building.

- To respect all school property – thereby refraining from impairing the maintenance of school buildings and grounds.
- To respect the personal property and rights of other students and staff.
- To treat staff and other students with respect; to refrain from teasing, bullying, threatening, fighting or other activities which endanger students or staff or which disrupt the educational process.
- To use language that is free from vulgarity and profanity.
- To recognize the authority of the staff to ensure good order of the school and respond to the authority of staff within the building, on the grounds, and at any school related activities, regardless of location.
- To behave in a quiet, orderly, respectful manner in the cafeteria.
- To demonstrate self-control, cooperation, and responsiveness to playground regulations.
- To remain within the confines of the classroom, school building or grounds unless otherwise authorized.
- To refrain from selling or trading any articles at school or on school grounds.

SPECIFIC RULES OF CONDUCT (Code of Conduct)

In addition to the basic social responsibilities outlined above, the following specific rules of conduct shall also apply:

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

For comfort, health, safety and security reasons, outer clothing (coats, jackets, etc) worn to school will be stored in closets or book bags upon arrival and will not be worn during the day. Book bags, gym bags, etc., may not be carried throughout the school during the day.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may bring electronic devices (such as chromebooks, tablets, and phones) to school for educational and/or safety purposes. Should a parent/caregiver send their child into school with an electronic device, the parent/caregiver will send a written statement to the classroom teacher and building principal so that school knows it is okay with the parent/caregiver for the child to have the device at school.

Devices brought to school without parent/caregiver consent will be held in the office until the parent/caregiver gives direction as to what should be done with the device (e.g. held for adult pick-up, sent home with student).

Parents/caregivers choosing to send a device to school with a child accepts full responsibility for loss, theft or damage of the item. Students using devices from home must still follow the DCRSD acceptable technology use policy.

VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING

Video recording, audio recording, and body-worn cameras are strictly limited in order to protect privacy, maintain a safe and orderly school environment, and comply with applicable law.

Students are not permitted to wear or use body-worn cameras or other continuous recording devices at any time on school grounds, on school transportation, or at school-sponsored activities.

"The use of video or audio recording on personal electronic devices, including cell phones, smartwatches, and tablets, is generally prohibited during the school day and permitted only with prior approval from school administration. Students may not record other students, school staff, classrooms or instructional activities, hallways, offices, or other non-public school spaces. Recording is never permitted in restrooms, locker rooms, health offices, or any location where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Unauthorized audio recording is prohibited under Massachusetts law, which requires consent for the recording of oral communications. Unauthorized video recording may also implicate privacy rights. Any device used in violation of this section may be seized and held in the main office for retrieval by a parent or caregiver. Violations may result in disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

The administration may work with a student's parent or caregiver to establish a personal electronic device plan when misuse of recording technology becomes a concern."

HOSTILITY AND AGGRESSION

Behaviors involving demonstrations of hostility through physical aggression, threats or intimidation which endanger students or place them in fear, is disruptive to the educational process. The following is a listing of some examples of misbehavior which may result in external suspension from school:

- Intimidation (to force into or deter from action by inducing fear, usually by threat) disturbing school activities and/or the educational process.
- Fighting on school grounds, which can be the result of a spontaneous incident, an incident with evidence of prior motivation and/or ill feelings, an incident with clear evidence of provocation, or a prearranged fight.
- Violent acts (or threat of violent acts) towards other individuals.
- Throwing objects that pose immediate threat to other people in the school building or on school grounds.
- Vandalism – theft and possession of stolen property.

ACTIONS IN DEFIANCE OF THE ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF A TEACHER

Students are expected to show respect for all school staff and follow directions the first time they are given. Actions that go against a teacher's authority include:

- Repeatedly refusing to follow directions after being asked
- Disrupting the class on a regular basis and interfering with learning
- Talking back or responding disrespectfully to a teacher or staff member
- Ignoring or walking away from an adult when given an instruction
- Any behavior that shows a clear and ongoing refusal to cooperate with adults in charge

These behaviors are taken seriously because they affect not only the classroom environment but also the safety and learning of others. Continued defiance may result in disciplinary action and a plan to support improved behavior.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

(See School Committee Policy - page 25-28)

POSSESSION, SERVING, CONSUMPTION OR UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ANY ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE OR ILLICIT DRUG OR POSSESSION, DISTRIBUTION OR USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

(See School Committee Policy – pages 29-30)

POSSESSION OF DANGEROUS OR DEADLY WEAPONS

(See School Committee Policy – page 30-31)

PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

- Tampering with the fire alarm or fire extinguishers
- Setting off a false fire alarm
- Making a bomb threat
- Possession or use or distribution of fireworks, incendiary or explosive device (including ammunition)
- Arson

BULLYING, TEASING, AND THREATENING BEHAVIOR

All students deserve a safe environment in which to learn. Bullying, teasing, and/or threatening behavior are not acceptable in any situation. In our diversified population, understanding and respect of individuals is required by all students. Bullying, teasing, and threatening behaviors will not be tolerated and will result in consequences.

State law and district policy mandate that all schools expressly prohibit bullying, teasing, and threatening behavior. Any behavior deemed by an administrator to be bullying, teasing, and/or threatening behavior may result in one or more of the disciplinary procedures outlined in the section on General Disciplinary Procedures.

State law and Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Policy [1349] define "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 "the repeated use of a written, verbal or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another student that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property;
- placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school."

State law and District policy prohibit bullying:

- at school and at all school facilities;
- at school sponsored or school related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- on school buses and school bus stops;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by a school; and
- at non-school related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices, if the bullying affects the school environment.

For further information regarding the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District policy or the complete Massachusetts state law on bullying, including the legal definition of terms relative to bullying, please visit the following websites or contact your child's school directly:

- Dudley-Charlton Regional School District policy can be found at <http://www.dcrsd.org>
- Massachusetts General Law governing bullying can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/s1100092.htm>

The above listing of misbehavior is not all-inclusive, as that would be impossible to produce. The list is designed to provide parents/caregivers and students with an outline of specific rules of conduct which are derived from the listed social responsibilities. Actions outside of those listed will result in reasonable disciplinary measures commensurate with the misbehavior.

Consequences for the listed misbehaviors may include **notification of parents/caregivers, external suspension** for up to ten (10) days and, where applicable, possible **expulsion, Counselor/School Psychologist, police and/or court involvement.**

AC-R Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

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

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

Definitions

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

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

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

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

Retaliation means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any person by the District, a student, or an employee or other person authorized by the District to provide aid, benefit, or service under the District's

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

Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571
508.943.6888 x278

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

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

GENERAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The purpose of discipline is to help students meet their responsibilities at school. Most students are able to respond effectively to school rules and regulations. On some occasions, when students violate school rules, school authorities need to intervene with appropriate action.

Generally, students who violate school rules can expect the following kinds of responses:

1. Disciplinary action taken with students who violate the behavior code generally starts with **verbal reprimand** and **warning**.
2. In the case of more severe violations, or violations which are part of a repeated pattern, the action may include:
 - **loss of certain school privileges**, such as recess, use of the playground, or other consequences corresponding to the offense.
 - **involvement** of Guidance Counselor/School Psychologist.
 - **notification of the parent/caregiver**.
 - **meeting with parent/caregiver**.
 - **Lunch, recess and after school detentions** may be used after prior arrangement with the parent/caregiver. It is understood that the parent/caregiver will provide transportation home following the detention.
3. If violations disrupt the learning of other children, the child may be temporarily **separated from the classroom** into a designated area in the school.
4. In those rare instances when a child's actions may be detrimental to the health or welfare of other students and/or staff, the child may be **suspended from school** for a period of time determined by the principal.

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

Alcoholic Beverages (abridged)*

The possession, serving or communication of any alcoholic beverage on school property or at school functions is prohibited. Students attending school, or a school activity, who are in possession of alcoholic beverages, or have been drinking alcoholic beverages, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five (5) school days. Students selling or possessing with intent to sell any alcoholic beverages on school property, or at any school function, will be suspended for ten (10) school days. A report will be made to the local police authorities of all suspensions under this policy and the incidents relating to the suspension.

A satisfactory conference with the student and his/her parent or legal guardian should take place before the student is readmitted. Conditions must be established and made clear to the student before his/her readmission. Readmission will include evidence that steps have been or are being taken to seek solutions to the problems which were the basis of the suspension.

Drugs (abridged)*

Students attending school, or any school activity who are in possession of any illicit drug, or have been using any illicit drug, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five (5) school days. A satisfactory conference with the student and his/her parent or legal guardian must take place before the student is readmitted. Conditions will be established and made clear to the student before his/her readmission. Readmission conditions must include evidence that steps have been or are being taken to seek solutions to the problems which were the basis of the suspension. Proper notification will be made to the local police authorities.

Students selling, or possessing with intent to sell, an illicit drug on school property, or at any school function, will be suspended for ten (10) school days. A report will be made to the local police authorities of all suspensions under this policy and the incidents relating to the suspension.

In the event that there is a conviction for selling drugs at school, the student will be brought before the school committee for a hearing to determine if the student shall be excluded from the Dudley-Charlton Regional Schools.

Tobacco (abridged)*

The possession, use or distribution of any tobacco products by students on school property or at school functions is prohibited. Violations of this rule may result in suspension from school.

Sexual Harassment (abridged)*

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is committed to providing faculty, staff and students with an environment in which they may pursue their careers and studies without being sexually harassed. All persons associated with the school system including, but not limited to, the school committee, the administration, the staff and the students 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 will be in violation of this policy.

Sexual Harassment, as here defined, is a violation of title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and M.G.L. Ch. 151, sec. 4B. For the purposes of this policy, it is defined as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic work,
- 2) submission to or reject of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individuals, or
- 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment.

Any student or person who has reasonable cause to believe that they are a victim of sexual harassment should contact the school principal.

Weapons Policy

Weapons in School

Chapter 133, Sec. 430, the second paragraph of section 37H of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the first sentence the following:

In cases involving the possession, use of, or threatened use of weapons; the possession, use of, or threatened use of illegal substances; the illegal possession of alcoholic; or the use of, or threatened use of excessive force, provided that the violation occurs on school property, the principal or headmaster of every school system within each city, town or district shall have the authority to suspend a student, including an indefinite suspension, and no other disciplinary measure adopted as a rule or regulation may inhibit this authority to suspend. Where a student has been suspended by a principal or headmaster under the authority of the previous sentence, the school committee may review such suspension and alter the disciplinary measure after a hearing.

The School Committee intends to ensure that all students shall be able to attend school in a safe environment that is free of weapons and the violence associated with the use, or threatened use, of the weapon against another student or staff member.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 269, S. 10 (see Appendix A) the school committee prohibits firearms and other dangerous weapons in schools and adopts the statutory definitions of a firearm and other dangerous weapons. Other dangerous weapons that are not defined in the statutes are defined in Appendix A.

Possession, use of, and/or threatened use of any firearm, or other dangerous weapon on school grounds, in a school building, on a school bus or at any other school sponsored activity will not be tolerated. The school district supports the prosecution of all school related weapon assaults.

The school district will offer assistance and counseling to any student who is a victim of an assault.

Grades K-6 disciplinary Action Guidelines:

1. Any student found in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be:
 - a) suspended for up to ten (10) days.
 - b) reported to the police for possible prosecution.
 - c) reported to the School Committee for consideration of expulsion for up to 180 school days.
2. Any student threatening to obtain a weapon or making a verbal threat of a violent act by use of a weapon shall be:
 - a) temporarily separated from the classroom.
 - b) parents will be notified verbally and/or in writing.
 - c) involvement of Guidance Counselors/School Psychologist.
 - d) if warranted, a search of the student and/or his/her personal property will be conducted to ensure the safety of the school.

Any person wishing to receive a complete text of any of these policies should contact the principal.

Restraint of Students

The Public School complies with the provisions of 603 CMR sect. 46.00 dealing with restraint of students in the public schools. To that end, the policy developed pursuant to those regulations is available upon request from the Principal, the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services and the Superintendent's office.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension

A student guilty of misconduct may be suspended from school by the principal or designee when other means of correction have failed or when keeping the student in school would be detrimental to the general welfare of the school and its students.

- Before suspending or expelling a student under § 37H3/4, the school **will first try alternative remedies** (like mediation, restorative practices, conflict-resolution, etc.) to re-engage the student in learning. Suspension or expulsion should be a last resort, unless there is a documented reason why alternatives won't work — or if the student poses a serious danger to others.
- If the school proposes a suspension or expulsion, it will give **notice** (written and oral) to the student *and* the parent/guardian, explaining the charges, the possible consequences, the time/date/location of a hearing, and both parties' rights (e.g. to present evidence, have a hearing, etc.). Schools must also attempt to notify parents in their home language if not English.
- Students (or their parents/guardians) have the right to **appeal** any suspension or expulsion of more than 10 school days — they must request the appeal in writing within days of the suspension/expulsion. The appeal hearing must happen promptly, and the student has rights like presenting testimony, cross-examining witnesses, and being represented by counsel.
- Also: under § 37H3/4, a student cannot be suspended/expelled for more than 90 school days in total for a single infraction.

Parents/caregivers shall always be notified of their child's direct involvement in an incident that results in the suspension of another student. A concerted effort will be made to notify parents/caregivers of the incident as soon as possible after the incident.

In accordance with Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Massachusetts General Laws,

- 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 Ch. 94-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 be represented, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

In cases involving the possession or use of weapons, the possession or use of illegal substances, the illegal possession of alcohol, or the use of excessive force, provided that the violation occurs on school property, the principal or headmaster of every school system within each city, town or district shall have the authority to suspend a student, including an indefinite suspension and no other disciplinary measure adopted as a rule or regulation may inhibit his/her authority to suspend.

Where a student has been suspended by a principal or headmaster under the authority of the previous sentence, the school committee may review such suspension and alter the disciplinary measure after a hearing.

In cases of extreme misbehavior, a student may be suspended for a period of up to ten (10) school days with the approval of the superintendent, as outlined below. The process by which a student may be suspended includes the following:

1. The involved administrator will provide the student with the facts, pertinent information, and reasons why the suspension action is contemplated. The student will be provided the opportunity to respond prior to any decision to suspend.
2. In extreme cases where immediate suspension is necessary, the student will be informed of the facts, pertinent information and reasons for the suspension and be given an opportunity to respond as soon as possible.
3. Prior to reinstatement there will be a conference held. That conference should include the involved student, that student's parent(s) or guardian(s), and other directly involved people.
4. In cases of extreme misbehavior where a student faces suspension for up to ten (10) days, the administrator will follow the process described above.
Should the situation warrant, that administrator may suspend the student for up to ten (10) days. The superintendent must then review the case and the length of the suspension.

The superintendent will notify the school committee when a student has been suspended for more than five (5) days.

Any suspension shall be a prohibition against such student in attending school, school functions or school affiliated activities during the period of time of suspension.

If the duration of the suspension exceeds the number of school days left in the school year then whatever days remain on the suspension shall be served at the start of the next school year. When the student involved is a high school senior and the days left in the school year are less than the days remaining under the suspension then the student shall not be allowed to attend graduation exercises or any other school activities that extend beyond the last school day.

When a student (whether suspended or not) becomes severely disruptive that the student appears to represent a danger to himself or to others and cannot be controlled and that student's parents/caregivers cannot be contacted, cannot report to school, do not wish to cooperate, or also cannot manage the student at school, the Dudley or Charlton Police Department may be called at the discretion of the building administrator(s) to remove the student.

Expulsion

The exclusion or expulsion of a student from school requires the action of the principal. Such exclusion of a student from school should be considered only after a careful study of all facts surrounding each individual case indicates that no other approach is feasible.

The principal shall not permanently exclude a student from the public schools for alleged misconduct without first giving him/her and his/her parent/caregiver an opportunity to be heard.

The following guidelines should be considered with regard to expulsion:

1. Evidence that the student's behavior interferes with the maintenance of discipline and/or the learning processes of other students.
2. Professional advice that it is in the best interest of the student, in terms of his/her intellectual and social development, to remove him/her from the school system.
3. A student being excluded should be advised as to which action, if taken, may be useful in his/her gaining readmission.

In School Suspension

In-school suspension (ISS) allows a student to be removed from the regular classroom setting for disciplinary reasons while remaining in school and continuing to receive instruction and support. The Principal or designee may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term out-of-school suspension for disciplinary offenses.

A. Notice

Before placing a student in in-school suspension, the Principal or designee shall verbally inform the student of the disciplinary offense and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to respond. If the in-school suspension will last longer than (a) ten (10) consecutive school days, or (b) more than ten (10) cumulative school days in a school year where a pattern of removal has been demonstrated, the school shall afford the student the same procedural protections given for a short-term or long-term out-of-school suspension, as applicable.

B. Notification to Parents/Caregivers

The Principal or designee shall attempt to notify the parent/caregiver, on the day of the in-school suspension, by telephone or in person of the disciplinary offense, the reason for the suspension, and its length. The Principal or

designee shall also send written notice to the parent/caregiver, in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, within twenty-four (24) hours of the start of the in-school suspension.

C. Duration

In-school suspension shall not exceed ten (10) school days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

D. Academic Progress During In-School Suspension

A student serving an in-school suspension shall:

- Receive all assigned classwork and homework for completion during the suspension;
- Have the opportunity to make academic progress, meet with teachers as needed, and complete tests or quizzes missed during the suspension period; and
- Have the in-school suspension excluded from the count of the student's cumulative absences from class, provided the student completes the assigned academic work.

E. Location and Supervision

Students serving an in-school suspension shall complete their school day in a supervised setting designated by the Principal, separate from the regular classroom environment, with adult supervision at all times.

Alternatives to Suspension, Re-engagement, and Remedies

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal or designee shall first consider ways to re-engage the student in learning, and shall not use suspension from school as a consequence until alternative remedies have been employed and documented, except where:

- The Principal documents specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive for the particular student and incident; or
- The student's continued presence in school poses a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm to another person while in school.

A. List of Alternative Remedies

Depending on the nature of the offense and the individual needs of the student, the school shall consider one or more of the following alternative remedies before imposing a suspension:

- Verbal warning and re-teaching of the expected behavior;
- Loss of specific privileges (e.g., recess, classroom responsibilities) tied to the misbehavior;
- Mediation and guided conflict resolution between students, facilitated by a counselor, school psychologist, or trained staff member;
- Restorative justice conferencing, including restorative conversations and behavior contracts;

- Collaborative problem solving between the student, family, and school staff;
- Referral to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team for a Tier 2 or Tier 3 behavioral intervention;
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies already in place building-wide;
- Trauma-sensitive, social-emotional learning-based approaches (e.g., RULER-aligned strategies) delivered by the classroom teacher, counselor, or school psychologist;
- Short-term separation from the classroom to a supervised, alternative location within the school (“calm down” or reset space), followed by a re-entry conversation; and
- Parent/caregiver conference to jointly develop a behavior support or safety plan.

B. Procedures Ensuring Students Are Re-Engaged in Learning

Whenever a student is removed from the classroom or from school for any period of time, whether through in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or another disciplinary consequence, the school shall take the following steps to re-engage the student upon return:

- Prior to or upon the student's return, a staff member (classroom teacher, counselor, school psychologist, or administrator) shall meet briefly with the student to review expectations and reconnect the student with the classroom community.
- The classroom teacher, in coordination with the school counselor or MTSS team as appropriate, shall ensure the student has access to any instruction, assignments, or academic support missed during the removal.
- For students with repeated removals, the building principal shall convene the MTSS/student support team to review the student's behavioral data and determine whether a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or additional supports are warranted.
- The school shall communicate with the parent/caregiver about the plan for the student's successful return to the classroom, including any agreed-upon supports.
- The Principal or designee shall implement school-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process, including but not limited to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and trauma-sensitive learning approaches.

PROCEDURES

Procedures for suspension up to 10 days and after 10 days: General requirements

1. All students, including eligible students with disabilities, receive prior written notice regarding the school's Code of Conduct.
2. The school's Code of Conduct includes required procedural safeguards such as opportunity for a hearing (per *Goss v. Lopez*).
3. Any eligible student may be suspended up to 10 days in any school year without implementation of procedures described.

4. After a student with special needs has been suspended for 10 days in any school year, during any subsequent removal the public school provides sufficient services for the student to continue to receive a free and appropriate public education.
5. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 school days in a year (consecutive or otherwise).

A. Manifestation Determination Review

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the LEA) will review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine—

- (i) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
 - (ii) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP.
1. If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the district may suspend or expel the student consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer an appropriate education program to the student with disabilities which may be in some other setting.
 2. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 days.
 - d. if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance while at school or a school function; or
 - e. if the district provides evidence that the student is “substantially likely” to injure him/herself or others and a hearing officer orders the alternative placement; and
 - f. the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue to receive educational services, as provided in § 300.101(a), so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP

3. If the Team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the district takes steps (with the consent of the parent) to correct the IEP or Section 504 Plan, the placement, or the behavior intervention plan.

B. Parent Notification and Procedural Safeguards Notice

The school district provides written notice to the parent of all rights to appeal and to an expedited hearing. If the parent chooses to appeal, during the appeal the student stays put in the placement of the last accepted IEP or Section 504 Plan or the interim alternative placement, unless the parent and the school district agree.

No later than the date on which the district makes a decision to impose a disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement for a student with a disability, the district shall:

- Notify the parent/caregiver of that decision; and
- Provide the parent/caregiver with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice described in 34 CFR 300.504.

This notification and the accompanying Procedural Safeguards Notice shall be provided in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall not be delayed until the manifestation determination meeting itself.

C. Section 504

The district shall not discriminatorily apply discipline to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Before imposing a suspension or exclusion of more than ten (10) days, or a series of removals constituting a pattern, on a student with a 504 Plan, the district shall conduct a review to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, and shall provide the parent/caregiver with notice of their rights under Section 504 at that time.

Due Process Protections for Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education

A student who has not been determined eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and who has engaged in behavior that violates a rule or code of conduct may assert the protections available under IDEA discipline procedures if the district is deemed to have had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

A. Basis of Knowledge

The district shall be deemed to have had knowledge that a student was a student with a disability if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent/caregiver of the student expressed concern in writing (or orally if the parent does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement) to supervisory or administrative personnel of the school, or to a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent/caregiver of the student requested an evaluation of the student pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300 through 300.311; or

- The teacher of the student, or other district personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services or to other supervisory personnel of the district.

B. Exception

The district shall not be deemed to have had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability if the parent/caregiver of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the student, has refused special education services, or the student has been evaluated and it was determined that the student was not a student with a disability.

C. Conditions If No Basis of Knowledge

If the district does not have a basis of knowledge that a student was a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors.

- If a request is made for an evaluation of the student during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner.
- Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.
- If the student is determined to be a student with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation and information provided by the parents/caregivers, the district shall provide special education and related services in accordance with IDEA, including the discipline procedures described in the following section.

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Student Discipline Procedures — Compliance Amendment

Middle School Handbook, 2025–2026 (Charlton Middle School / Dudley Middle School)

Insert into the Middle School Handbook as new subsections within “Suspension and Expulsion (Policy JK),” pp. 22–25, immediately before the “Hazing” section.

Prepared in response to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Program Progress Monitoring finding regarding student discipline procedures.

PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT

This amendment adds the discipline procedures identified as missing from the Middle School Handbook in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) 2026 Program Progress Monitoring finding. The existing Policy JK suspension and expulsion procedures, and the General Disciplinary Guidelines discipline matrix, remain in effect and are supplemented — not replaced — by the four elements below:

- Re-engagement procedures and a list of alternative remedies (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H¾; 603 CMR 53.05) — the Handbook currently reproduces §37H¾ but does not describe the district/school procedures or list the remedies used;
- Due process protections for students not yet determined eligible for special education (34 CFR 300.534);
- Parent notification and procedural safeguards requirements for students with disabilities facing a disciplinary change in placement (34 CFR 300.530(h)); and
- A dedicated Students with Disabilities discipline section, which does not currently appear in the Handbook.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION, RE-ENGAGEMENT, AND REMEDIES (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H^{3/4}; 603 CMR 53.05)

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal, building administrator, or other decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing shall first consider ways to re-engage the student in learning, and shall not use suspension from school as a consequence until alternative remedies have been tried and documented, except where:

- The decision-maker documents specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive; or
- The student's continued presence in school poses a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm to another person while in school.

A. List of Alternative Remedies

Before imposing an out-of-school suspension, the school shall consider one or more of the following remedies, matched to the nature of the offense and the individual student's needs:

- Verbal warning, reflection assignment, or re-teaching of expected behavior;
- Lunch, recess, or after-school detention;
- Loss of specific privileges (e.g., extracurricular participation, unstructured time);
- Mediation and guided conflict resolution;
- Restorative justice conferencing, including restorative circles and behavior agreements;
- Collaborative problem solving involving the student, family, teachers, and counselor;
- Referral to the school counselor, school psychologist, or the building's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)/intervention team;
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies;
- Trauma-sensitive, social-emotional learning-based interventions (e.g., RULER-aligned strategies);
- In-school suspension in lieu of out-of-school suspension, as described elsewhere in this Handbook; and
- Parent/caregiver conference to jointly develop a behavior support, safety, or re-entry plan.

B. Procedures Ensuring Students Are Re-Engaged in Learning

Whenever a student is removed from the classroom or from school for any disciplinary reason, the school shall take the following steps to re-engage the student:

1. The student shall be provided all missed assignments, tests, and coursework, with a make-up timeline consistent with the Handbook's “Makeup Work” provisions.
2. Upon the student's return, a designated staff member (team teacher, counselor, or administrator) shall meet with the student to review behavioral expectations and support a successful transition back to class.

3. For a student with repeated removals, the Principal shall convene the building's MTSS or student support team to review behavioral data and consider a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or additional Tier 2/3 supports.
4. The school shall communicate with the parent/caregiver regarding the re-entry plan and any supports being put in place.
5. The Principal shall implement school-wide re-engagement models, including PBIS and trauma-sensitive learning approaches, consistent with district practice.

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS NOT YET DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (34 CFR 300.534)

A student who has not been determined eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) may assert IDEA discipline protections if the district is deemed to have had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

A. Basis of Knowledge

The district shall be deemed to have had knowledge that a student was a student with a disability if, before the behavior occurred:

- The parent/caregiver expressed concern in writing (or orally, if the parent does not know how to write or has a disability preventing a written statement) to school supervisory or administrative personnel, or to a teacher, that the student needs special education and related services;
- The parent/caregiver requested an evaluation of the student under 34 CFR 300.300–300.311; or
- A teacher or other district personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services or other supervisory personnel.

B. Exception

The district shall not be deemed to have had such knowledge if the parent/caregiver has not allowed an evaluation, has refused special education services, or the student was evaluated and determined not to be a student with a disability.

C. Conditions If No Basis of Knowledge

If the district has no basis of knowledge, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities engaging in comparable behavior.

- If an evaluation is requested during the period the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be conducted on an expedited basis.
- Until the evaluation is complete, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services.
- If the student is subsequently found eligible, the district shall provide special education and related services consistent with IDEA, including the discipline procedures in the following section.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES — DISCIPLINE CONSIDERATIONS

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.) and must be read together with Massachusetts discipline law. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits the discriminatory application of discipline to students with disabilities.

A. IDEA Disciplinary Protections

Students eligible for special education under IDEA retain procedural protections, including:

- A manifestation determination review (MDR), conducted by the IEP Team and relevant school personnel, is required before any disciplinary change of placement exceeding ten (10) school days in a school year;
- If the MDR Team determines the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to placement (unless the parent/caregiver agrees otherwise), and the IEP Team shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement or revise a behavior intervention plan;
- Students removed for disciplinary reasons continue to receive special education and related services consistent with their IEP; and
- Special rules apply to removals involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury (see 20 U.S.C. §1415(k)).

B. Parent Notification and Procedural Safeguards Notice

No later than the date on which the district decides to impose a disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement for a student with a disability, the district shall:

- Notify the parent/caregiver of that decision; and
- Provide the parent/caregiver with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice described in 34 CFR 300.504.

This notice shall be given in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, at the time the decision is made — not deferred until the manifestation determination meeting.

C. Section 504

Before imposing a suspension or exclusion of more than ten (10) days, or a series of removals constituting a pattern, on a student with a 504 Plan, the district shall conduct a review to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, and shall provide the parent/caregiver notice of their rights under Section 504 at that time.

Legal references: 20 U.S.C. §1415(k); 34 CFR §§300.530–300.536; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; M.G.L. c. 71, §37H½; 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

Middle School Handbook 2026-2027

Proposal for Changes / Additions:

P. 37 - General Disciplinary Guidelines (Proposed new language in **BOLD**)

Discipline Overview: It is universally understood that teachers cannot effectively teach and students cannot effectively learn when disruptive and/or unsafe behaviors occur in a school. Therefore, Dudley and Charlton Middle Schools will utilize a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to student discipline that adheres to modern laws and best practices.

Disciplinary practices will remain at an individual level with an increased focus on re-teaching expected behaviors when incidents occur.

Disciplinary consequences are cumulative in nature. This is often referred to as progressive discipline. **Dudley and Charlton Middle Schools utilize a “Step Plan” to ensure that disruptive and/or unsafe behaviors are addressed in a progressive manner. The Middle School Step Plans vary slightly by school and grade level, but generally include the following:**

- Step 1 - Warning / Review of behavior**
- Step 2 - Teacher/Team Detention / Reflection Assignment**
- Step 3 - Referral to Administration / Student Success Plan**
- Step 4 - Office Detention(s) / Reflection Assignment**
- Step 5 - Office Detention(s) / In School Suspension**

***Parents/Guardians are notified of each Step.**

***Extracurricular Privileges may be revoked after Step 3 at the discretion of the administration.**

***Steps reset periodically throughout the year.**

Major offenses may supersede the Step Plan and require immediate referral to administration. Habitual major offenses and those offenses which are harmful and dangerous to others result in more severe consequences including in-school and out-of-school suspensions, all the way up to expulsion.

In all cases, the administration will give careful consideration to the safety and well-being of the student body, and also to the most likely course of action to improve the behavior of the offending student. Families, counselors, administrators and specific school staff are all important participants in the overall disciplinary process.

The Matrix below provides the most likely course of action for various behavioral offenses. However, the administration reserves the right to utilize their discretion as to what course of disciplinary action is in the best interest of the safe and orderly operation of the school.

MATRIX GOES HERE

2026 Proposed Handbook Changes - Part II
Shepherd Hill Regional High School

(Note: Routine grammatical, formatting, name, and date changes are not included.)

Current	Proposed	Rationale
Pass System p. 63	Pass System The pass system was designed to help students meet their responsibilities to be prompt and to help them get the most out of their school day. Students need a pass if they are in the corridors between 7:40 a.m. and 2:10 p.m., except when they are changing classes or attending lunch. Students found outside of classes during class time will be expected to have an active pass in SmartPass, the digital hall pass platform. Generally, teachers issue passes for several reasons. (1) Excuse a student from a class or study hall to go to another part of the building to do business. (2) Sometimes a teacher will want to see you at a certain time; that teacher will create a pass in advance in SmartPass for the scheduled appointment. (3) If a teacher should keep you late for a reason, he/she will create a pass in SmartPass to get to your next appointment. Students who do not follow the established classroom hall pass procedure and or students who exceed the established parameters will be flagged for intervention and possible disciplinary action (except for documented exceptions).	Updated language reflects the implementation of SmartPass, and the transition from paper to digital hall passes.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities p. 36	Add the following language after #6. Parent Notification of Disciplinary Decision and Procedural Safeguards No later than the date on which the decision is made to impose a disciplinary change of placement for a student with a disability (including, but not limited to, a suspension that constitutes a change of placement, an interim alternative educational setting, or an expulsion), the District will: 1. Notify the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s) in writing of that decision; and 2. Provide the parent(s)/caregiver(s) with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, as described in 34 CFR § 300.504. This notice and the accompanying Procedural Safeguards notice will be provided on or before the date of the disciplinary decision, regardless of whether the Team has yet convened a manifestation determination review. This is in addition to, and does not replace, the written notice of suspension and appeal rights described elsewhere in this Handbook and in Policy JK.	Specific handbook language required to close the gaps identified in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) special education and civil rights audit citation.
Procedures for Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education or Section 504	Replace existing section and replace with the following language: Procedures for Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education or Section 504 Services (34 CFR § 300.534) A student who has not been determined eligible for special education or related services under IDEA, and who has	Specific handbook language required to close the gaps identified in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) special education and civil rights audit citation.

Services (34 CFR § 300.534) p. 36	engaged in behavior that violates a code of student conduct, may assert the protections available under this policy if the District had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. Basis of Knowledge. The District will be deemed to have had knowledge that a student was a student with a disability if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred: The student's parent/caregiver expressed concern in writing (or orally, if the parent/caregiver does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement) to supervisory or administrative personnel of the District, or to a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education or related services; The student's parent/caregiver requested an evaluation of the student pursuant to 34 CFR §§ 300.300–300.311; or A teacher of the student, or other District personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the director of special education or to other supervisory personnel of the District. Exception. The District will not be deemed to have knowledge under the above standard if: The parent/caregiver of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the student, or has refused special education services; or The student has been evaluated and determined not to be eligible for special education services under IDEA or Section 504. If No Basis of Knowledge Exists. If the District does not have a basis of knowledge that the student was a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures applied to	
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	students without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors, consistent with this Handbook and Policy JK. Requests for Evaluation During Disciplinary Period. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation will be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include the disciplinary placement imposed on the student. If the student is subsequently determined to be a student with a disability, taking into account information from the evaluation, the District will provide special education and related services in accordance with 34 CFR §§ 300.530–300.536, including a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services as appropriate.	
Suspension p. 40	Insert the following language after the suspension paragraph and before the notice of suspension paragraph: Procedures for Re-Engaging Students in Learning Before imposing an out-of-school suspension, and throughout any period of removal, the principal or designee will take the following steps to support the student's return to and continued progress in the educational program: 1. Consider the nature and circumstances of the offense, including whether a lesser or alternative consequence (see the list of alternative remedies below) would appropriately address the misconduct while keeping the student in the learning environment;	Specific handbook language required to close the gaps identified in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) special education and civil rights audit citation.

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Where a disciplinary offense may be related to an unmet behavioral, social-emotional, or academic need, consult with the school counselor, adjustment counselor, school psychologist, or special education staff (as applicable) to determine whether a referral, screening, or evaluation is warranted;3. Provide the student, prior to or upon return from any suspension, with the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other coursework necessary to make academic progress during the period of removal, consistent with the school-wide education service plan described in this Handbook;4. Conduct a re-entry conference with the student (and parent/caregiver, when appropriate) upon the student's return from an out-of-school suspension of more than two days, to review expectations, address any missed academic work, and identify supports needed to prevent recurrence;5. Where appropriate, develop or revise a behavior support plan, safety plan, or Section 504/IEP accommodations in collaboration with the student's Team; and6. Document the re-engagement steps taken in the student's discipline record. | |
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List of Alternative Remedies

Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}, the following is a non-exhaustive list of alternative remedies and evidence-based strategies that the principal or designee will consider, and may use in place of or in addition to suspension, before imposing an out-of-school suspension:

	• Verbal or written warning and parent/caregiver contact • Teacher-student or administrator-student conference • Mediation between students • Restorative justice conferencing or circles • Peer mentoring or peer mediation • Short-term behavior contract or check-in/check-out plan • Loss of specific privileges (e.g., parking, senior privileges, extracurricular participation) in lieu of removal from the educational program • Community service or restitution/repair of harm (see Alternative Consequences, page 86) • Referral to school counselor, adjustment counselor, or school psychologist • Referral for a functional behavioral assessment and/or development of a behavior intervention plan • Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies • Classroom or office detention • In-school suspension in lieu of out-of-school suspension • Modified schedule or temporary schedule change • Referral to a District or community-based counseling, substance use, or intervention program • Parent/caregiver conference and home-school action plan The principal retains discretion to determine, based on the nature and circumstances of the offense and any statutory requirements (e.g., weapons, drugs, assault offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H), whether an alternative remedy is	
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	appropriate or whether suspension or another consequence identified in this Handbook is warranted.	
Student Technology Responsible Use Policy p. 15	Replace existing language with updated Policy IJNDBA.	Updated language.
Use of Artificial Intelligence and General Artificial Intelligence	Insert Policy IJNDBB.	New language.

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dudley, Massachusetts

POLICY JIC — STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Outline of Changes: Original Policy → Updated Draft

Prepared for School Committee Review

Change Type Legend

NEW Section or content added — did not exist in original policy

EXPANDED Existing content substantially strengthened with regulatory detail

CLARIFIED Language refined for legal precision without substantive change

REORGANIZED Content moved or restructured for clarity; substance preserved

RETAINED Original language kept as written

PART 1: OVERALL STRUCTURE

The original Policy JIC was a single continuous narrative organized loosely around disciplinary topics with minimal internal headings. The updated draft reorganizes the entire policy into 15 numbered sections, each mapped to its specific regulatory citation in 603 CMR 53.00 or M.G.L. c. 71. This makes it easier for principals to locate applicable procedures during a disciplinary proceeding and easier for DESE reviewers to verify compliance.

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
REORGANIZED	Single narrative, ~10 informal headings	15 numbered sections with regulatory citations	Entire policy restructured for navigability. Each section header now identifies the governing regulation (e.g., '603 CMR 53.07') so staff can cross-reference the law directly.
NEW	No cover page or legal authority block	Cover page with full legal authority table	Added cover page identifying all governing statutes and regulations, original adoption date, amendment date field, and annual review requirement.
NEW	Legal refs listed only at end	Regulatory citation embedded in every section header	Each section now opens with its specific 603 CMR 53.00 section number and M.G.L. citation so the reader always knows the legal basis for that procedure.

PART 2: SECTION-BY-SECTION CHANGES

Section I — Purpose and Scope (formerly: opening paragraph)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	Opening statement of Committee belief; student conduct expectations	Section I.A — same language preserved	Core statement of purpose and student conduct expectations kept as written.
CLARIFIED	No explicit scope statement	Section I — Scope paragraph added	Added explicit statement that the policy governs all DCRSD public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs, consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, 37H¾; M.G.L. c. 76, §§ 17 and 21; and 603 CMR 53.00.
RETAINED	Academic punishment prohibition	Section I.A — retained verbatim	No change.
RETAINED	Extracurricular removal provision	Section I.B — retained with 603 CMR 53.11 citation added	Language preserved; regulatory citation (603 CMR 53.11) added for legal grounding.
RETAINED	Annual review of 603 CMR 53.00 by each Principal	Section I.C — retained verbatim	No change.

Section II — Definitions (NEW — did not exist in original)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
NEW	No definitions section	Section II — full definitions table (603 CMR 53.02)	Original policy used key terms (short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, in-school suspension, parent, principal) without defining them. Updated draft adds a definitions table pulling all terms directly from 603 CMR 53.02, including: Disciplinary Offense; Disciplinary Offense under §§ 37H/37H½; In-School Suspension (with 10-day rule and cumulative-to-long-term conversion); Short-term Suspension; Long-term Suspension (with 90-day cap); Expulsion; Parent; Principal; Superintendent; School-wide Education Service Plan.

Section III — Alternatives to Suspension (formerly: 'Suspension' opening paragraph)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
EXPANDED	'Consider ways to re-engage student' — one paragraph	Section III — full 603 CMR 53.05 requirements	Original stated the obligation to consider alternatives but did not specify the two exception conditions. Updated draft explicitly states both exceptions: (1) documented reasons why alternatives are unsuitable/counterproductive; (2) specific, documentable concern about serious bodily injury. Exception language is required by 603 CMR 53.05 and important for legal defensibility.
RETAINED	List of alternative remedies: mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, collaborative problem solving	Section III — retained with PBIS and trauma-sensitive learning added	Original list preserved; PBIS and trauma-sensitive learning models added to align with the Superintendent/Principal school-wide model obligation already stated in the original policy.

Section IV — In-School Suspension (formerly: brief paragraph, no standalone section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
EXPANDED	One sentence: ISS allowed if process followed and academic progress opportunity provided	Section IV — full 603 CMR 53.10 process	Original had one sentence. Updated draft adds: (a) explicit 10-day cumulative cap; (b) the 10-day-to-long-term-suspension conversion rule; (c) required same-day oral parent notification; (d) parent invitation to meeting; (e) required written notice on day of ISS with delivery method options — all required by 603 CMR 53.10.

Section V — Notice of Suspension and Hearing (formerly: 'Notice of Suspension' section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
EXPANDED	Required notice items listed generally	Section V.A — seven specific required	Original listed notice requirements without specificity. Updated draft enumerates all seven required elements per 603 CMR 53.06(2), including: (f) interpreter services right — which was missing from the original; and (g) the

		notice elements from 603 CMR 53.06(2)	specific long-term suspension additional rights notice requirement.
CLARIFIED	'Two dates and times offered' mentioned in notice section	Section V.A — retained as fourth bullet of required notice elements	This DCRSD-specific requirement (two dates/times for hearing) is preserved and incorporated into the notice elements list.
EXPANDED	Reasonable efforts to include parent — one sentence	Section V.B — 603 CMR 53.06(3) presumption standard added	Added the regulatory presumption: reasonable efforts are presumed if written notice was sent AND at least two documented contact attempts were made. This protects the district when conducting hearings without a parent.
NEW	No delivery method specificity	Section V.C — 603 CMR 53.06(4) delivery methods enumerated	Added specific permissible delivery methods for written notice: hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email, or other agreed method.
REORGANIZED	K-3/preschool notification to Superintendent mentioned within short-term hearing section	Section V.D — consolidated K-3 rule with citations to both 53.08(2)(d) and 53.08(3)(e)	Applies to both short- and long-term suspensions. Relocated to the notice section for easier reference; regulatory citations added.

Section VI — Emergency Removal (formerly: 'Emergency Removal' section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	Three conditions for emergency removal stated	Section VI — retained with regulatory citation 603 CMR 53.07	Core conditions preserved verbatim.
EXPANDED	Required actions during two-day window listed	Section VI.A — four required actions with specific cross-referen	Original listed the four required actions. Updated draft adds regulatory cross-references specifying which hearing standard applies (53.08(2) or (3)) and which decision standard applies (53.08(2)(c)/(d) or 53.08(3)(c)/(d)) — critical for determining which due process tier governs the post-emergency hearing.

RETAINED	Safety and transportation provision	ces to hearing standards Section VI.B — retained with 603 CMR 53.07(2) citation	Language preserved; regulatory citation added.
NEW	Immediate written notification to Superintendent required	Section VI — added Superintendent notification requirement	603 CMR 53.07 and the original policy both state this. Explicitly called out as a separate affirmative obligation in updated draft.

Section VII — Principal's Hearing: Short-Term Suspension (formerly: 'Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension')

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	Purpose of hearing — three-part statement	Section VII.A — retained verbatim	No change.
RETAINED	Student opportunity to present mitigating facts	Section VII.A — retained	No change.
RETAINED	Parent/guardian opportunity to offer information	Section VII.A — retained	No change.
RETAINED	Written determination requirements	Section VII.C — retained with 603 CMR 53.08(2) citation	Language preserved; regulatory citation added.
RETAINED	K-3/preschool written determination to Superintendent	Section VII.D — retained with 603 CMR 53.08(2)(d) citation	Language preserved; regulatory citation added.

Section VIII — Principal's Hearing: Long-Term Suspension (formerly: 'Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension')

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
CLARIFIED	Long-term defined as 'more than 10 days but less than 90 days' in section heading	Section VIII — definition corrected: 'more than 10 consecutive days OR more than 10 cumulative days'	Original heading language suggested long-term suspension is always less than 90 days. Updated draft clarifies the cumulative trigger and states the 90-day cap is a maximum, not a defining element of long-term suspension, consistent with 603 CMR 53.02.
RETAINED	Five additional student rights at long-term hearing	Section VIII.B — all five rights retained	No change to substance.
RETAINED	Written determination must include five specified elements	Section VIII.D — all five elements retained	No change to substance; regulatory citation (603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)) added.
RETAINED	Appeal rights notice requirements	Section VIII.E — retained verbatim with 5-day / 7-day extension rule	No change.
EXPANDED	K-3/preschool Superintendent notification mentioned once (short-term section only)	Section VIII.F — explicit statement that K-3 rule applies to both short- and long-term out-of-school suspensions	603 CMR 53.08(3)(e) applies the K-3 Superintendent notification requirement to long-term suspensions as well. Original policy implied this but did not state it clearly for long-term.

Section IX — Superintendent's Hearing (formerly: 'Superintendent's Hearing')

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
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RETAIN ED	Right to appeal long-term suspension to Superintendent	Section IX — retained	No change.
RETAIN ED	5-day filing deadline; 7-day extension available	Section IX.A — retained	No change.
RETAIN ED	3-school-day hearing window; 7-day extension if requested	Section IX.B — retained	No change.
RETAIN ED	Good faith effort to include parent/guardian	Section IX.B — retained with presumption standard	Presumption language (good faith effort presumed if efforts made to find mutually workable time) added per 603 CMR 53.09(4).
RETAIN ED	Audio recording requirement; student has all long-term hearing rights	Section IX.C — retained	No change.
RETAIN ED	5-calendar-day written decision; same or lesser consequence only; decision is final	Section IX.D — retained	Regulatory citation (603 CMR 53.09(8)) added for the finality provision.

Section X — Offenses under §§ 37H and 37H½ (NEW as standalone section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
NEW	§§ 37H/37H½ offenses folded into	Section X — dedicated section distinguishing §§	Original policy did not clearly separate the two disciplinary tracks. This is one of the most common compliance gaps flagged in DESE monitoring. Updated draft creates a standalone section explaining that §§ 37H/37H½ operate under different rules (no 90-day cap, expulsion permitted),

	Expulsion section only	37H/37H½ from § 37H¾ track	identifying the four specific offense types, and requiring district adoption of separate policies and procedures for these offenses per 603 CMR 53.12(1).
NEW	No explicit statement that § 37H¾ procedures do not apply to §§ 37H/37H½	Section X — explicit statement added	Added clear statement that the procedures in Sections IV–IX (the § 37H¾ track) do not govern §§ 37H/37H½ offenses. This is a frequent source of procedural error.
NEW	Due process requirements for §§ 37H/37H½ not addressed	Section X.C — due process elements enumerated	Added four required due process elements for §§ 37H/37H½ proceedings: written notice of charges; opportunity to be heard before the Principal; written determination with appeal rights; and access to education services during removal.

Section XI — Expulsion (formerly: 'Expulsion' paragraph)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	Four grounds for expulsion listed	Section XI.A — four grounds retained verbatim	No change.
EXPANDED	'Any student expelled shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services' — one sentence	Section XI.B — cross-reference to full Section XII (Education Services)	Original stated the right but did not describe how it would be implemented. Updated draft cross-references the full education services section.
NEW	No explicit statement limiting expulsion to §§ 37H/37H½ only	Section XI — explicit statement added: expulsion is permitted only under §§ 37H or 37H½, not under § 37H¾	This is a legally significant clarification. No student may be expelled for a § 37H¾ offense. The original policy did not state this limitation, leaving ambiguity.

Section XII — Education Services and Academic Progress (formerly: 'Academic Progress' section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	All suspended/expelled students may earn credits and make up work	Section XII.A — retained with 603 CMR 53.13(1) citation	No change to substance.
CLARIFIED	'Inform student and parent in writing' of academic progress opportunity	Section XII.A — clarified to include 'in English and in primary language of the home'	Language requirement for the notice was in the regulation but missing from the original policy.
RETAINED	>10 consecutive days → school-wide education service plan	Section XII.B — retained with 603 CMR 53.13(2) citation	No change.
RETAINED	School-wide education service plan requirements	Section XII.C — retained with 603 CMR 53.13(3) citation	No change to substance.
RETAINED	Notice to parent of education services at time of expulsion/long-term suspension	Section XII.D — retained with content requirements added	Added the two required elements of the notice per 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a): (1) list of specific services available; (2) contact information for a staff member. These were implied but not enumerated in the original.
RETAINED	Document enrollment in education services; track/report data to DESE	Section XII.E — retained with 603 CMR 53.13(4)(b) citation	No change to substance.

Section XIII — Students with Disabilities (NEW as standalone section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
NEW	One sentence referencing IDEA and Section 504 federal guidance URLs only	Section XIII — full section on disability-specific discipline requirements	Original policy included two URLs to federal guidance documents but no substantive policy content. Updated draft adds: (a) IDEA manifestation determination review (MDR) requirements triggered at 10 cumulative days; (b) behavioral intervention plan (BIP) requirements when conduct is a manifestation of disability; (c) continuation of special education services during removal; (d) special rules for weapons/drugs/serious bodily injury offenses; (e) Section 504 anti-discrimination review requirements for removals exceeding 10 days; (f) false allegation disciplinary provision.

Section XIV — Data Collection, Reporting, and Equity Review (formerly: 'Reporting' section)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
RETAINED	Annual data reporting to DESE — categories listed	Section XIV.A — retained with 603 CMR 53.14(1) citation	No change to substance.
RETAINED	Principal periodic review of discipline data by student population	Section XIV.B — retained with populations enumerated per 603 CMR 53.14(2)	Original listed student populations; updated draft preserves list and adds the regulatory obligation to assess over-reliance on exclusionary discipline.
NEW	No reference to DESE annual analysis or Commissioner oversight	Section XIV.C — DESE annual publication and Commissioner corrective action provision added	Added 603 CMR 53.14(3)–(4): DESE annual public discipline data report; Commissioner authority to identify districts with disproportionate discipline rates by race, ethnicity, or disability; and requirement that identified districts develop a DESE-approved corrective plan. Relevant to DCRSD's Title I equity obligations.

Section XV — Legal References (formerly: 'LEGAL REF' block at end of policy)

Change Type	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Description of Change
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EXPANDED	Legal refs listed in a single line block at the end	Section XV — full legal reference section organized by category	Original condensed all legal references into two lines. Updated draft organizes references into: (A) State Statutes; (B) State Regulations with all 14 sections of 603 CMR 53.00 listed; (C) Federal Law (IDEA, Section 504); (D) Federal Guidance Documents. Adoption/amendment history box moved here from the cover.
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PART 3: SUMMARY OF CHANGES BY TYPE

Type	Count	Primary Sections Affected
NEW	10	Cover; Sec. II (Definitions); Sec. X (§§37H/37H½ standalone); Sec. XIII (Disabilities); Sec. XIV.C (DESE Commissioner oversight); multiple notice and expulsion provisions
EXPANDED	11	Sec. III (Alternatives); Sec. IV (ISS process); Sec. V (Notice elements, parent presumption); Sec. VI (Emergency removal hearing standards); Sec. VIII (K–3 long-term rule); Sec. XI (Education services cross-ref); Sec. XIV (Equity review); Sec. XV (Legal refs)
CLARIFIED	6	Sec. I (Scope); Sec. V (Extracurricular removal citation); Sec. VIII (Long-term definition corrected); Sec. XI (Expulsion limited to §§37H/37H½); Sec. XII (Language requirement for academic progress notice)
REORGANIZED	3	Overall structure (15 numbered sections); K–3 Superintendent notice consolidated in Sec. V; Legal references expanded and categorized in Sec. XV
RETAINED	17	Purpose statement; student conduct expectations; academic punishment prohibition; extracurricular removal; annual review requirement; all hearing rights and procedures; appeal timelines; Superintendent hearing finality; expulsion grounds; school-wide education service plan; data reporting

Key Compliance Gaps Closed by the Updated Draft

The following items represent the most significant compliance gaps in the original policy that are addressed in the updated draft. These are most likely to be flagged in a DESE monitoring review:

- No definitions — All key terms now defined per 603 CMR 53.02, eliminating ambiguity in application.
- No separation of §§ 37H/37H½ from § 37H¾ tracks — The two disciplinary tracks are now clearly distinguished, with Section X establishing that §§ 37H/37H½ require separate district procedures.
- Expulsion limitation not stated — The updated policy now explicitly states that expulsion is available only under §§ 37H/37H½, not under § 37H¾.
- ISS process incomplete — The 10-day cumulative cap, same-day parent notification, and parent meeting invitation requirements (603 CMR 53.10) were absent from the original.
- Interpreter services right omitted from notice requirements — Now included per 603 CMR 53.06(2)(f).
- Parent reasonable-efforts presumption standard absent — District lacked a clear standard for documenting reasonable efforts to include parents in hearings.

- No disability-specific discipline policy content — Original had only two URLs. Updated draft adds substantive IDEA and Section 504 requirements including MDR trigger, BIP obligations, and continuation of services.
- Language access for academic progress notice — The requirement to provide the academic progress notice in the home language was missing from the original.
- Commissioner/DESE corrective action provision absent — Districts with disproportionate discipline data must develop a DESE-approved plan; this obligation was not referenced in the original.

Update

POLICY JIC STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Legal Authority

M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, 37H¾ | M.G.L. c. 76, §§ 17, 21
603 CMR 53.00 — Student Discipline (eff. July 1, 2014; last amended September 19, 2023)
Chapter 222, An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion
from School
IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.) | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Policy Info	
Policy Number	JIC
Original Adopted	December 12, 2012
Last Amended	_____ (School Committee Vote)
Annual Review	Required — each Principal reviews 603 CMR 53.00 annually

Update

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others.

Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect established authority, conform to school rules, and comply with those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

This policy governs student discipline in all DCRSD public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs, consistent with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾; M.G.L. c. 76, §§ 17 and 21; and 603 CMR 53.00. It is intended to keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair, lawful, and effective disciplinary practices.

A. Student Handbooks and Prohibited Conduct

Each Principal shall identify prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication made available to students and parents/guardians. Academic punishment of any form shall not be used as a consequence for inappropriate student behavior or actions.

B. Removal from Extracurricular Activities

The Principal or a building administrator may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ or 603 CMR 53.00. (603 CMR 53.11)

C. Annual Review of Regulations

Each Principal and building administrator shall have access to, annually review, and adhere to 603 CMR 53.00, as promulgated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Update

II. DEFINITIONS (603 CMR 53.02)

The following definitions apply to this policy and are drawn from 603 CMR 53.02.

Term	Definition (603 CMR 53.02)
Disciplinary Offense	Any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student, except for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or conviction if the Principal determines continued presence is substantially detrimental to the school. (Subject to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ³ / ₄ and 603 CMR 53.00.)
Disciplinary Offense under §§ 37H / 37H¹/₂	Possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge/conviction where the Principal determines continued presence is substantially detrimental to the school. Subject to M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ¹ / ₂ .
In-School Suspension	Removal from regular classroom activities but not from school premises for no more than ten consecutive or ten cumulative school days. ISS of 10 days or fewer is not a short-term suspension. ISS exceeding 10 days cumulatively is deemed a long-term suspension for due process and reporting purposes.
Short-term Suspension	Removal from school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less.
Long-term Suspension	Removal from school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple offenses in a school year. May not exceed 90 school days in a year (except under §§ 37H/37H ¹ / ₂). Does not extend beyond the end of the school year in which imposed.
Expulsion	Removal from school for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H ¹ / ₂ only.
Parent	A student's father, mother, or legal guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student.
Principal	The instructional administrative leader or headmaster of a public school, or their designee for purposes of school disciplinary matters.
Superintendent	The chief executive officer employed by the school committee, or their designee for purposes of conducting a student disciplinary hearing.
School-wide Education Service Plan	Document developed by the Principal under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21 listing education services available to students expelled or suspended for more than ten consecutive days.

Update

III. ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION (603 CMR 53.05 / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal, building administrator, Superintendent, or other decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing shall:

- First consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and
- Not use suspension from school as a consequence until alternative remedies have been tried and documented,

except where:

- The decision-maker documents specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive; or
- The student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm to another person while in school.

Alternative remedies may include, but are not limited to, evidence-based strategies and programs such as:

- Mediation
- Conflict resolution
- Restorative justice
- Collaborative problem solving
- Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS)
- Trauma-sensitive learning approaches

The Superintendent and/or Principal shall implement district/school-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process, including but not limited to positive behavioral interventions and support models and trauma-sensitive learning models.

IV. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (603 CMR 53.10 / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

The Principal or building administrator may use in-school suspension (ISS) as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses, provided:

- The process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10 is followed; and
- The student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by 603 CMR 53.13(1).

A. Duration

In-school suspension shall not exceed ten (10) school days cumulatively or consecutively in a school year. If ISS exceeds ten days cumulatively, it is deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

B. Process

- The Principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged, the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances.
- If the Principal determines the student committed the offense, the Principal shall inform the student of the length of the in-school suspension.

Update

- On the same day as the ISS decision, the Principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of: the disciplinary offense; the reasons for concluding the student committed the infraction; and the length of the ISS. The Principal shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss academic performance, behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior.
- The Principal shall send written notice to the student and parent/guardian on the day of the suspension, by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email, or other agreed delivery method.

V. NOTICE OF SUSPENSION AND HEARING (603 CMR 53.06 / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

Except for emergency removal (see Section VI) or in-school suspension of ten or fewer days (see Section IV), the Principal or building administrator shall not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first:

- Providing the student and parent/guardian oral and written notice; and
- Providing the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent/guardian an opportunity to participate.

A. Content of Notice

The Principal shall provide oral and written notice in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English (or other means of communication where appropriate). The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- The disciplinary offense charged
- The basis for the charge
- The potential consequences, including the potential length of suspension
- The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Principal, including the right to dispute the charges and present an explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend; the notice shall include two (2) dates and times offered for the hearing
- The date, time, and location of the hearing
- The right of the student and parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed
- If a long-term suspension may result: the additional rights set forth in Section VII.B and the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent

B. Parent/Guardian Participation

The Principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the Principal must document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. The Principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if written notice has been sent and at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian (in the manner specified for emergency notification) have been documented.

C. Method of Delivery

Update

Written notice to the parent/guardian may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and parent/guardian. (603 CMR 53.06(4))

D. K–3 and Preschool Students

If a student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before such suspension takes effect, whether short-term or long-term. (603 CMR 53.08(2)(d) and 53.08(3)(e))

VI. EMERGENCY REMOVAL (603 CMR 53.07 / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

The Principal may remove a student from school temporarily — without prior notice or hearing — when:

- The student is charged with a disciplinary offense; and
- The student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school; and
- In the Principal's judgment, no alternative is available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the emergency removal, including a description of the danger or disruption presented by the student.

A. Duration and Required Actions

The temporary emergency removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of removal. During that period, the Principal shall:

- Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for removal, and the other matters required by 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian as required by 603 CMR 53.06(2), including all rights enumerated in law and regulation;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal (compliant with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or (3) as applicable) and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend, before expiration of the two-school-day period, unless an extension is agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent/guardian; and
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, meeting the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and (d) or 53.08(3)(c) and (d).

B. Student Safety and Transportation

The Principal shall ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation before removing the student from school. (603 CMR 53.07(2))

Update

VII. PRINCIPAL'S HEARING — SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION (603 CMR 53.08(2) / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

A short-term suspension is the removal of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

A. Purpose of Hearing

The purpose of the hearing 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; and
- Determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss 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. The parent/guardian, if present, shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

B. Determination

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

C. Written Determination

The Principal shall notify the student and parent/guardian in writing of:

- The determination and the reasons for it;
- If suspended: the type and duration of suspension and the date of return to school; and
- The opportunity to make up assignments and school work needed to make academic progress during the removal period, as required by 603 CMR 53.13(1).

The written determination may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

D. K–3 and Preschool Students

If the student is in a preschool program or grades K–3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent with an explanation of reasons before the out-of-school suspension takes effect. (603 CMR 53.08(2)(d))

VIII. PRINCIPAL'S HEARING — LONG-TERM SUSPENSION (603 CMR 53.08(3) / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in a school year. No long-term suspension may exceed ninety (90) school days in a school year (except under §§ 37H/37H^{1/2}) or extend beyond the end of the school year in which it is imposed.

A. Purpose of Hearing

Update

The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing is the same as the short-term suspension hearing (see Section VII.A). In addition, before the hearing, the student shall have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely.

B. Additional Student Rights at Long-Term Suspension Hearing

In addition to the rights afforded at a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights at a long-term suspension hearing: (603 CMR 53.08(3)(b))

- 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;
- The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense;
- The right to produce witnesses on the student's behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
- The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
- The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If an audio recording is requested, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made.

C. Parent/Guardian Participation

The Principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, for the Principal to consider in determining consequences.

D. Written Determination — Long-Term Suspension

The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email, or other agreed method of delivery. If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (603 CMR 53.08(3)(d))

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date of the hearing, and the hearing participants;
- Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal;
- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13; and
- Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent (applicable only when a long-term suspension is imposed).

E. Notice of Appeal Rights

Notice of the right of appeal shall be provided in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English (or other means of communication where appropriate). The notice shall state in plain language:

- The process for appealing, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension;

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- That within those five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time to file of up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and
- That the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

F. K–3 and Preschool Students

If the student is in a preschool program or grades K–3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent with an explanation of reasons before the out-of-school suspension (whether short- or long-term) takes effect. (603 CMR 53.08(3)(e))

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S HEARING — APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION (603 CMR 53.09 / M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4})

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal has the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

A. Filing the Appeal

The student or parent/guardian shall file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal for good cause in their discretion.

Within those five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time to file of up to seven (7) additional calendar days.

B. Scheduling the Hearing

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian, including making efforts to find a day and time that allows both the parent/guardian and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

C. Conduct of the Hearing

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, what the consequence shall be. The student shall have all rights afforded at the Principal's long-term suspension hearing under Section VIII.B. (603 CMR 53.08(3)(b))

The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made. A copy shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

D. Written Decision

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. The decision shall meet the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)(1) through (4). If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the

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Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision.

The decision of the Superintendent is the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension. (603 CMR 53.09(8))

X. DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H AND 37H½ (603 CMR 53.12)

The procedures in Sections IV–IX (governing 603 CMR 53.00 / § 37H¾ offenses) do not apply to disciplinary offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½. School districts shall adopt separate disciplinary policies and procedures for these offenses, consistent with the applicable statute and providing due process of law. (603 CMR 53.12(1))

A. Offenses Subject to §§ 37H and 37H½

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H — The following offenses may result in expulsion by the Principal:

- Found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events in possession of a dangerous weapon (as defined in M.G.L. c. 269, § 10(b)); or
- Found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events in possession of a controlled substance as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C, § 1; or
- Assaulted a member of the educational staff. (The Principal may expel a student who committed a second or subsequent such assault.)

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½ — A student charged with or convicted of a felony:

- A student who has been charged with a felony or felony delinquency complaint, or convicted of, or adjudicated or admitted guilt with respect to such a felony may be suspended or expelled 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.

B. Removal Beyond 90 Days

The Principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or § 37H½ from school for more than 90 days in a school year, or indefinitely or permanently (expulsion), consistent with the applicable statute and due process requirements. (603 CMR 53.12(2))

C. Due Process

DCRSD shall adopt and maintain disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to §§ 37H and 37H½ offenses that are consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law, including:

- Written notice to the student and parent/guardian of the charges and the basis for the proposed action;
- An opportunity for the student to be heard before the Principal prior to a suspension or expulsion taking effect, except in cases of emergency removal;
- Written notice of the determination and the reasons for it, and of any right of appeal available to the student; and

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- Access to education services and academic progress during any period of removal, as provided in Section XII.

XI. EXPULSION (M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H½; 603 CMR 53.12)

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently. (603 CMR 53.02)

Expulsion is permitted only for disciplinary offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½ as set forth in Section X. No student may be expelled under § 37H¾.

A. Grounds for Expulsion

- Possession of a dangerous weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event;
- Possession of a controlled substance on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event;
- Assault on a member of the educational staff (second or subsequent assault under § 37H; any such assault under § 37H may result in expulsion); or
- A felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such 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. (§ 37H½)

B. Education Services During Expulsion

Any student expelled from school shall be afforded an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of expulsion, as set forth in Section XII and 603 CMR 53.13.

XII. EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS (603 CMR 53.13 / M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, 37H¾)

Consistent with 603 CMR 53.13 and M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, DCRSD shall ensure that all students who are suspended or expelled have an opportunity to make academic progress during any period of removal.

A. All Suspended or Expelled Students

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to:

- Earn credits, as applicable;
- Make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school. (603 CMR 53.13(1))

The Principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing — in English and in the primary language of the home — at the time suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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B. Students Suspended or Expelled More Than Ten Consecutive Days

Any student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school-wide education service plan. (603 CMR 53.13(2))

C. School-wide Education Service Plan

The Principal shall develop and maintain a school-wide education service plan describing the education services available to students expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall: (603 CMR 53.13(3))

- Describe available education services;
- Include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services; and
- Describe how services will be arranged. Education services shall be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established under M.G.L. c. 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

D. Notice for Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion

The Principal shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home (or other means of communication where appropriate) and shall include: (603 CMR 53.13(4)(a))

- A list of the specific education services available to the student; and
- Contact information for a district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

E. Enrollment Documentation and Reporting

For each student expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive days (in-school or out-of-school), the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. The school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by DESE. (603 CMR 53.13(4)(b))

XIII. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES — DISCIPLINE CONSIDERATIONS

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.) and must be read in conjunction with Massachusetts state law on student discipline. Additionally, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits the discriminatory application of discipline to students with disabilities. (603 CMR 53.08(3); DESE Guidance)

A. IDEA Disciplinary Protections

Students identified as eligible for special education under the IDEA retain procedural protections, including:

- A manifestation determination review (MDR) is required before any change in placement for disciplinary reasons exceeding ten (10) school days in a school year for students with IEPs;

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- If the MDR team determines the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to placement unless the parent agrees otherwise, and the IEP team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan;
- Students with disabilities who are removed for disciplinary reasons must continue to receive special education and related services consistent with their IEP; and
- Special rules apply to removal for offenses involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury (see 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k)).

B. Section 504

DCRSD shall not discriminatorily apply discipline to students with disabilities. Before imposing a suspension or exclusion of more than ten days (or a series of removals that constitutes a pattern) to a student with a 504 plan, the district shall conduct a review to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability.

See: U.S. Department of Education, OCR Guidance: "Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504" (<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-discipline-guidance.pdf>) and OSEP Q&A on IDEA Discipline Provisions (<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/qa-addressing-the-needs-of-children-with-disabilities-and-idea-discipline-provisions.pdf>)

C. False Allegations

If the Principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of misconduct against another student or staff member, that student may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with this policy.

XIV. DATA COLLECTION, REPORTING, AND EQUITY REVIEW (603 CMR 53.14)

A. Annual District Reporting to DESE

DCRSD shall collect and annually report to DESE data regarding: (603 CMR 53.14(1))

- In-school suspensions;
- Short- 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 DESE.

B. Building-Level Equity Review by Principal

Each Principal shall periodically review discipline data disaggregated by selected student populations, including but not limited to: (603 CMR 53.14(2))

- Race and ethnicity;
- Gender;
- Socioeconomic status;

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- English learner status; and
- Students 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, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The Principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on exclusionary discipline, or due to disproportionate impact on any student population.

C. DESE Analysis and Commissioner Oversight

DESE shall annually publish an analysis of student discipline data disaggregated by district, school, and selected student populations. (603 CMR 53.14(3))

The Commissioner shall identify schools with the highest rates of long-term suspension or expulsion and schools with significant racial, ethnic, or disability-based disparities in suspension and expulsion rates. Schools and districts so identified shall develop and implement a DESE-approved plan to address such disparities. (603 CMR 53.14(4))

XV. LEGAL REFERENCES AND RELATED RESOURCES

A. State Statutes

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H — Policies relative to conduct of teachers or students; possession of dangerous weapons or controlled substances; assault on educational staff; expulsion
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½ — Felony charges or convictions; suspension or expulsion
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ — Disciplinary offenses; alternatives to suspension; due process; appeal (Chapter 222, Acts of 2012)
- M.G.L. c. 76, § 17 — Establishment of minimum standards for student discipline by school committees
- M.G.L. c. 76, § 21 — School-wide education service plans; academic progress during exclusion

B. State Regulations

- 603 CMR 53.00 — Student Discipline (effective July 1, 2014; last amended September 19, 2023)
 - 53.01: Purpose and Scope
 - 53.02: Definitions
 - 53.03: Policies and Procedures
 - 53.04: Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents
 - 53.05: Alternatives to Suspension
 - 53.06: Notice of Suspension and Hearing
 - 53.07: Emergency Removal
 - 53.08: Principal's Hearing
 - 53.09: Superintendent's Hearing
 - 53.10: In-School Suspension
 - 53.11: Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities

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- 53.12: Disciplinary Offenses under §§ 37H or 37H½
- 53.13: Education Services and Academic Progress
- 53.14: Student Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting

C. Federal Law

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. — Discipline of students with disabilities
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794 — Prohibition on discriminatory discipline of students with disabilities

D. Federal Guidance Documents

- U.S. DOE Office for Civil Rights: "Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973" — <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-discipline-guidance.pdf>
- U.S. DOE OSEP: "Questions and Answers Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions" — <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/qa-addressing-the-needs-of-children-with-disabilities-and-idea-discipline-provisions.pdf>

Adoption and Amendment History

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Amendment Dates: _____

Next Review Date: _____

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District

File: ECAF - SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS

(New)

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe, secure, and orderly learning and working environment for students, employees, volunteers, visitors, and members of the public while protecting District property, facilities, and assets.

The School Committee authorizes the use of security camera systems in and around District buildings, facilities, grounds, parking areas, school buses, and other District property for legitimate educational, operational, and public safety purposes. The primary purposes of the District's security camera system include:

- Promoting the safety and security of students, staff, volunteers, and visitors;
- Deterring, preventing, and documenting criminal activity, vandalism, theft, violence, bullying, and other misconduct;
- Protecting District buildings, grounds, equipment, technology, and other property;
- Assisting in emergency response, investigations, incident review, and threat assessment;
- Supporting compliance with School Committee policies and applicable laws; and
- Enhancing the District's overall physical security program.

Security cameras may be installed in locations determined by the Superintendent or designee following consultation with appropriate District administrators and, when appropriate, local law enforcement, fire, emergency management, or other public safety officials. Cameras may be placed in any location where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy, including, but not limited to, school entrances, hallways, cafeterias, gymnasiums, auditoriums, libraries, parking lots, athletic facilities, school buses, and exterior grounds.

Security cameras shall not be installed or used in areas where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including, but not limited to, restrooms, locker rooms, designated changing areas, health examination or treatment rooms, counseling offices when confidential meetings are occurring, or similar locations, except as otherwise permitted by law.

The District shall provide reasonable notice that security cameras are in use through appropriate signage, student and employee handbooks, and other District communications.

Security camera systems are intended to enhance school safety and security and are not continuously monitored. The existence of security cameras does not guarantee that all incidents will be detected, recorded, or prevented.

Video recordings may be reviewed by authorized District administrators whenever there is a legitimate educational, operational, safety, security, or investigative purpose. Recordings may be used in connection with student discipline, employee investigations, law enforcement investigations, insurance claims, litigation, or other lawful administrative purposes. The use of security camera recordings for routine employee performance evaluations is prohibited unless

the recording relates to alleged misconduct, safety concerns, violations of law, or violations of School Committee policy or administrative procedures.

Access to live camera feeds and recorded video shall be limited to individuals authorized by the Superintendent or designee who have a legitimate educational or operational need to access such information in the performance of their official duties. Access may also be provided to law enforcement agencies, emergency responders, legal counsel, insurance representatives, or other governmental agencies as permitted or required by law.

All video recordings shall remain the property of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and shall be maintained in a secure manner to preserve their integrity, confidentiality, and evidentiary value. Recordings shall be retained, disclosed, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, including the Massachusetts Public Records Law, student records requirements, and applicable records retention schedules.

Video recordings that directly relate to an identifiable student may constitute part of the student's education record and shall be maintained and disclosed in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and applicable Massachusetts student records regulations.

Protection of Security Systems and Data

The District shall make reasonable efforts to protect the integrity, reliability, and security of its security camera systems and associated data through appropriate physical, administrative, and cybersecurity safeguards. Such safeguards may include user authentication, role-based access controls, encryption where appropriate, system monitoring, software updates, vulnerability management, and other reasonable measures designed to reduce the risk of unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, or disruption of security systems and recorded data.

The District may utilize security technologies that complement its camera system, including but not limited to electronic access control systems, visitor management systems, emergency notification integration, video analytics, and other physical security technologies designed to enhance the safety and security of students, staff, visitors, and District property. The implementation and use of such technologies shall be authorized by the Superintendent or designee, shall be consistent with the educational mission of the District, shall respect the privacy rights of students, employees, and visitors, and shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

The Superintendent shall develop, implement, and periodically review administrative procedures governing the operation of the District's security camera systems and related security technologies. Such procedures shall address, as appropriate, system operation, authorization, monitoring, viewing, retention, disclosure, cybersecurity, maintenance, records management, incident review, employee training, and compliance with applicable records retention requirements. The Superintendent may issue additional administrative procedures or guidance as necessary to implement this policy consistent with applicable law and School Committee policy.

Nothing in this policy shall create an expectation of constant surveillance or guarantee the existence, availability, or retention of any particular video recording beyond applicable legal and operational requirements.

Legal References:

- M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 26 (Public Records)
- M.G.L. c. 66 (Massachusetts Public Records Law)
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H (Student Conduct and Discipline)
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (Bullying Prevention and Intervention)
- 603 CMR 23.00 – Student Records
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99
- Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)
- Massachusetts Records Conservation Board Records Retention Schedule

Cross References:

- JIH – Search and Seizure
- JICFB – Bullying Prevention

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District

File: ECAFB

(NEW)

VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING DEVICES ON STUDENT TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee recognizes its responsibility to provide safe, secure, and orderly transportation for students traveling to and from school, school-sponsored activities, athletic events, field trips, and other authorized District programs.

To promote student and employee safety, protect District property, assist in the investigation of accidents and misconduct, and support compliance with School Committee policies and applicable laws, the School Committee authorizes the use of video recording devices, audio recording devices were permitted by law, and other approved security technologies on District-owned, leased, or contracted student transportation vehicles.

The Superintendent or designee shall have the authority to determine when and where recording devices will be installed or activated on student transportation vehicles. This authority includes the prerogative to equip any District-owned, leased, or contracted vehicle used for the transportation of students with recording technology whenever deemed appropriate to enhance safety, security, accountability, or operational efficiency.

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers, and other authorized passengers should have no reasonable expectation of privacy while aboard a District transportation vehicle, except as otherwise provided by law. Appropriate signage shall be displayed on vehicles equipped with recording devices, and the District shall provide reasonable notice through student and employee handbooks and other District communications that video and/or audio recording systems may be utilized during student transportation.

Recordings may be used to:

- Promote the safety and security of students, staff, and transportation personnel;
- Deter, document, and investigate misconduct, bullying, harassment, vandalism, theft, violence, or other violations of law or School Committee policy;
- Investigate transportation accidents, safety concerns, or complaints;
- Assist law enforcement or emergency response agencies when appropriate;
- Support student discipline, employee investigations, and other lawful administrative proceedings; and
- Protect District property and transportation assets.

Recordings created through transportation security systems are the property of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Access to live or recorded video and audio shall be limited to individuals authorized by the Superintendent or designee who have a legitimate educational, operational, safety, or investigative need in the performance of their official duties. Recordings may also be disclosed to law enforcement agencies, legal counsel, governmental agencies, insurance representatives, or others as permitted or required by law.

Recordings that directly relate to an identifiable student may constitute part of the student's education record and shall be maintained, disclosed, and protected in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), applicable Massachusetts student records regulations, and other applicable federal and state laws.

The District shall retain, secure, disclose, and dispose of transportation recordings in accordance with applicable records retention requirements, the Massachusetts Public Records Law, and administrative procedures established by the Superintendent.

The District shall make reasonable efforts to protect transportation recording systems and associated data through appropriate physical, administrative, and cybersecurity safeguards designed to reduce the risk of unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, or disruption of recorded information.

The Superintendent shall develop, implement, and periodically review administrative procedures governing the operation, maintenance, access, retention, disclosure, cybersecurity, and lawful use of recording devices installed on student transportation vehicles. Such procedures shall remain consistent with this policy and applicable law.

Nothing in this policy shall create an expectation that every student transportation vehicle will be equipped with recording devices or that every incident will be recorded or retained.

Legal References:

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H (Student Conduct and Discipline)
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (Bullying Prevention and Intervention)
- M.G.L. c. 90, § 7B (School Buses)
- M.G.L. c. 272, § 99 (Interception of Oral and Wire Communications)
- M.G.L. c. 66 (Massachusetts Public Records Law)
- M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 26 (Definition of Public Records)
- 603 CMR 23.00 – Student Records
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99

Cross References:

- ECAF – Security Camera Systems
- JICC – Bus Conduct
- JIH – Search and Seizure
- JICFB – Bullying Prevention

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dudley, Massachusetts

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

Outline of Changes

Original Policy JICFB → 2025–2026 BPIP Draft

Change Type Legend

NEW Section or content added — did not exist in original policy

EXPANDED Existing content substantially strengthened with regulatory or procedural detail

CLARIFIED Language refined for legal precision or alignment with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and 603 CMR 49.00

REORGANIZED Content moved or restructured; substance preserved

RETAINED Original language kept as written

PART 1: OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

The original Policy JICFB was a single-page board policy — a high-level statement of prohibition and intent with minimal procedural detail, organized under approximately eight informal headings. It served as the district's governing policy statement but did not constitute a full Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and 603 CMR 49.00.

The new BPIP is a standalone, comprehensive plan document — separate from but aligned to the board policy — organized into nine numbered sections plus Appendix A, with each section mapped to its regulatory requirement under the DESE Model Plan, M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
REORGANIZED	Policy JICFB: single board policy document (~2 pages)	BPIP: nine-section standalone plan (~20+ pages) plus Appendix A	The original served as the policy statement. The new document is the required comprehensive Plan. Both are needed: the policy authorizes the Plan; the Plan provides the required operational detail. The BPIP should be cross-referenced in Policy JICFB.
NEW	No cover page, legal authority block, or School Committee adoption field	Cover page with legal authority table, adoption date field, and annual review date field	M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O requires School Committee adoption of the Plan. The cover page formalizes this and identifies all governing authorities.
NEW	~8 informal headings, no section numbering	9 numbered sections with regulatory citations embedded in each heading	Each section now identifies the specific DESE Model Plan element and regulatory basis it satisfies, supporting DESE monitoring review.
NEW	No table of contents	Table of contents with all nine sections and Appendix A	Added for navigability given the document's length.

PART 2: SECTION-BY-SECTION CHANGES

Definitions (formerly: opening definition paragraphs of Policy JICFB)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	Definition of 'Bullying' — five-part harm criteria	Section VIII — Definition of Bullying retained verbatim from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Original definition matches the statute. Language preserved without alteration.
EXPANDED	Definition of 'Cyber-bullying' — three paragraphs including identity impersonation and distribution	Section VIII — 'Cyberbullying' definition drawn from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Substance retained. The new BPIP uses the statutory term 'cyberbullying' (one word) consistently throughout, per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and 603 CMR 49.00. Identity impersonation and distribution provisions preserved.
NEW	No definition of 'Aggressor'	Section VIII — 'Aggressor' defined per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Statutory term added. Important because the Plan uses 'aggressor' throughout to describe the student who engages in bullying; leaving it undefined was a gap.
NEW	No definition of 'Target'	Section VIII — 'Target' defined per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Statutory term added. 'Target' is used throughout the Plan and must be defined.
NEW	No definition of 'Hostile Environment'	Section VIII — 'Hostile Environment' defined per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Added to support staff understanding of the threshold for substantiated bullying.
NEW	No definition of 'Retaliation'	Section VIII — 'Retaliation' defined per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Statutory term added. Retaliation prohibition is a distinct requirement of the Plan.
NEW	No definition of 'Staff'	Section VIII — 'Staff' defined to include all school employees and volunteers	Clarifies who is bound by reporting duties and the prohibition,

REORGANIZED	Definitions appeared at the top of the policy	Definitions moved to Section VIII	consistent with the DESE Model Plan. Relocated to a dedicated definitions section consistent with DESE Model Plan structure. Definitions are cross-referenced throughout the document.
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Section VII — Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation (formerly: 'Bullying is prohibited' list)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	Seven-location prohibition list (grounds, adjacent property, school-sponsored activities, bus stops, buses, district technology)	Section VII — retained as statutory prohibition language from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b)(i)	Original prohibition language preserved verbatim. Seven locations retained.
RETAINED	Off-campus/non-school technology prohibition where bullying creates hostile environment, infringes rights, or disrupts school	Section VII — retained as M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b)(ii)	Original language preserved. The BPIP adds the statutory note that nothing in the Plan requires the district to staff non-school-related activities.
NEW	No explicit retaliation prohibition statement	Section VII — explicit prohibition of retaliation added as a separate paragraph	M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O requires a specific prohibition against retaliation in the Plan. The original policy addressed retaliation in a separate section heading but did not include it within the prohibition statement itself.
NEW	No statement that prohibition applies to all students and must appear in handbooks	Section VII — statement added that prohibition applies to all students and shall be included in student and staff handbooks	Handbook inclusion is a required dissemination element under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

Section I — Leadership (NEW — no equivalent in original policy)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
NEW	One sentence: 'The Superintendent and/or their designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan'	Section I.A — Statement of Priority (full district commitment statement)	Original had no formal priority statement. The new BPIP includes a comprehensive Statement of Priority identifying DCRSD's commitment to a safe environment free from bullying, explicitly naming vulnerable student populations as required by the DESE Model Plan.
NEW	No public involvement process described	Section I.B — Public Involvement in Developing the Plan	M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O requires the Plan to be developed in consultation with teachers, staff, professional support personnel, volunteers, administrators, community representatives, law enforcement, students, parents, and guardians, with public notice and comment. Original policy named these constituencies only in a general clause. New BPIP enumerates all required parties and describes the process.
NEW	No needs assessment process described	Section I.C — Assessing Needs and Resources	DESE Model Plan requires districts to conduct ongoing needs assessments including student climate surveys, incident data review, identification of 'hot spots,' and staff/family surveys. None of this was in the original.

EXPANDED	'The Principal is responsible for implementation and oversight' — one sentence	Section I.D — Planning and Oversight table mapping responsibilities to specific DCRSD roles	Original stated the Principal's general responsibility. New BPIP adds a planning and oversight table mapping twelve specific responsibilities to roles (building principals, Asst. Superintendent, Director of Student Services, counselors), consistent with the DESE Model Plan's leadership element.
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Section II — Training and Professional Development (formerly: 'Training and Assessment')

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	Annual training for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students	Section II.A — annual staff training requirement retained	Core obligation preserved.
EXPANDED	Training topic: 'preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying' — one phrase	Section II.B — six required PD content areas from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O enumerated	Original stated the general purpose of training. New BPIP enumerates all six content areas required by statute: (1) developmentally appropriate prevention strategies; (2) immediate effective interventions; (3) aggressor/target/bystander power dynamics; (4) research findings including at-risk categories; (5) incidence and nature of cyberbullying; (6) internet safety. These six areas are mandatory under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(e).
NEW	No locally identified PD areas	Section II.B — locally identified PD areas added	New BPIP adds DCRSD-specific PD priorities: RULER SEL alignment, multilingual family communication, PBIS, restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, and the intersection of disability and bullying including IEP Team

NEW	No provision for staff hired mid-year	Section II.A — mid-year hire training requirement added	obligations under M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O requires staff hired after the start of the year to complete training during their hire year. Original policy was silent on this.
	Annual written notice of the BPIP to all school staff; relevant sections in employee handbook	Section II.C — retained	No change.

Section III — Access to Resources and Services (formerly: 'Target Assistance')

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	'The school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators'	Section III — retained as core obligation; expanded with specific resource inventory	Core counseling/referral obligation preserved.
EXPANDED	One sentence on counseling/referral to services	Section III.A — resource inventory listing counseling staff by role across all seven schools; MTSS teams	New BPIP names the specific categories of support staff available (school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, SPED behavioral specialists, MTSS teams) and identifies all seven schools. Original was silent on what resources exist.
NEW	No differentiation between services for targets vs. aggressors	Section III.B — separate description of services for targets, aggressors, and families	DESE Model Plan requires the Plan to describe counseling and services available to both targets and aggressors, and to families. Original combined these in one sentence.
NEW	No IEP Team provision	Section III.C — IEP Team consideration for students with disabilities added per M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3	M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 requires IEP Teams to consider bullying-related skills when a student's disability affects social skills development or

			makes them vulnerable to bullying. This was absent from the original.
NEW	No outside referral protocols described	Section III.D — referral protocols to outside services named (DCF, local law enforcement, community mental health, AG's office)	New BIIP identifies specific referral pathways and agencies. Original mentioned law enforcement in the investigation section but did not describe a referral protocol.

Section IV — Academic and Non-Academic Activities (formerly: 'Training and Assessment' — student instruction sentence)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BIIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	'Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students'	Section IV — retained as core obligation	Core K–12 instruction obligation preserved.
EXPANDED	One sentence — no programs named, no content described	Section IV.A — required curriculum content areas enumerated; DCRSD programs identified	New BIIP enumerates the required curriculum emphases from the DESE Model Plan: scripts/role plays, bystander empowerment, power dynamics, cybersafety, healthy relationships, and diversity. DCRSD-specific programs named: RULER SEL, HMH curriculum integration, I&E blocks at middle schools, MTSS-aligned supports.
NEW	No general teaching approaches described	Section IV.B — school-wide teaching approaches supporting bullying prevention	New BIIP adds the DESE Model Plan's required general teaching approaches: clear expectations, positive behavioral supports, adult-student relationships, modeling pro-social

NEW	No student orientation provision	Section IV.C — student orientation requirement added	behavior, conflict resolution, and safe digital citizenship. Students must be informed of the Plan and the prohibition at the start of each year in a developmentally appropriate manner. Original was silent on this.
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Section V — Reporting and Responding to Bullying (formerly: 'Reporting' and 'Investigation Procedures')

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	Students obligated to report bullying; target not disciplined for failure to report	Section V.A — retained	No change.
RETAINED	Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting; no formal action solely on anonymous report	Section V.A — retained with addition of specific reporting mechanisms	Core anonymous reporting provisions retained. New BPIP adds specific mechanisms: Bullying Incident Reporting Form available in main office, counseling office, and nurse's office; verbal report to any staff; designated voicemail/email/drop box as established by building principal.
RETAINED	Staff shall immediately report to principal or designee	Section V.A — retained	No change.
RETAINED	Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation shall be subject to disciplinary action	Section V.A — retained	No change.
RETAINED	Parents/guardians encouraged to report incidents	Section V.A — retained	No change.
NEW	No provision for how the Reporting Form is distributed to families	Section V.A — Reporting Form distribution requirements added	New BPIP specifies that the Incident Reporting Form shall be included in beginning-of-year packets and available in the most prevalent

EXPANDED	'Principal shall promptly contact parents of alleged target and alleged perpetrator' — one sentence	Section V.B(1) — Safety: expanded to describe specific safety restoration measures before investigation is complete	language(s) of DCRSD families, consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O language access requirements. Original moved directly from report to parent contact. New BPIP adds a pre-investigation safety step consistent with the DESE Model Plan: personal safety plans, seating arrangements, trusted staff 'safe person,' and schedule adjustments. This step is required before the investigation concludes.
EXPANDED	'Principal shall promptly investigate using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing target, perpetrator, staff, students, and/or witnesses'	Section V.C — Investigation: full investigation protocol with written record requirement and Director of Student Services consultation	Original investigation description was one sentence. New BPIP adds: written record requirement; reminder to all parties that retaliation is prohibited; confidentiality maintenance; consultation with school counselor, Director of Student Services, or legal counsel as appropriate.
CLARIFIED	'Investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days'	Section V.C — fourteen-day completion timeline retained with written record requirement	Timeline preserved. 'Written record' requirement added to align with 603 CMR 49.00.
EXPANDED	'If criminal charges may be pursued, principal shall consult with SRO and Superintendent to determine if warranted; if so, notify local law enforcement'	Section V.B(2)(c) — Notice to Law Enforcement: expanded to cover former students under age 21	Original covered currently enrolled students. New BPIP adds the M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O provision that if an incident involves a former student under age 21 no longer enrolled and criminal charges may be pursued, the principal shall contact local law

NEW	No notice-to-another-school provision	Section V.B(2)(b) — Notice to Another School added	enforcement (Dudley PD or Charlton PD as appropriate). New BPIP adds the M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 requirement: if a reported incident involves students from more than one school, the principal first informed shall promptly notify the principal of the other school(s) so each may act. Original was silent on cross-school incidents.
NEW	No formal determination step described	Section V.D — Determinations: full determination process added	New BPIP adds what happens after the investigation concludes: the principal makes a formal determination, determines remedial and disciplinary action, ensures the target is not restricted from school activities, and notifies both families of results and actions. Original implied this but did not describe the step.
RETAINED	'Weekly status contact with parents during investigation'	Section V.C — retained	No change.
RETAINED	'Disciplinary actions shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies'	Section V.E(2) — retained with cross-reference to Policy JIC	No change to substance. Cross-reference to Policy JIC added.
EXPANDED	'Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law' — one sentence	Section V.C — confidentiality obligation retained and applied specifically to investigation phase; limitation on reporting disciplinary information to target's family added	New BPIP adds the 603 CMR 49.00 limitation: the principal cannot report specific disciplinary action information to the target's parent/guardian unless it involves a directive (such as a stay-away order) of which the target must be aware.

NEW	No skills-building response framework	Section V.E(1) — Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-Building added	M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v) requires the Plan to address teaching appropriate behavior through skills-building. New BPIP adds: individualized skill-building sessions; educational activities; PBIS-aligned approaches; parent meetings to reinforce skills at home; behavioral plans; referral for evaluation. Original addressed only disciplinary response.
NEW	No follow-up contact with target after determination	Section V.E(3) — follow-up contact requirement added	New BPIP requires the principal to contact the target within a reasonable period after the determination to assess whether bullying has recurred and whether additional supports are needed.
RETAINED	Each school shall document incidents; file maintained by Principal; monthly report to Superintendent	Section V.F — retained with DESE data reporting requirement added	Monthly reporting to Superintendent retained. New BPIP adds the annual DESE data reporting requirement.

Section VI — Collaboration with Families (formerly: 'Publication and Notice' — partial)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	Annual written notice of relevant sections to students and parents in age-appropriate terms	Section VI.B — retained as annual notification requirement	Core obligation preserved.
RETAINED	BPIP posted on district website	Section VI.B — retained	No change.
NEW	No parent education programs described	Section VI.A — Parent Education and Resources added	DESE Model Plan requires the Plan to describe parent education programs. New BPIP adds four program topics, collaboration with SEPAC

NEW	No language access provision for family notices	Section VI.B — language access requirement added	and PTOs, and linguistic/cultural accessibility requirements. Original had none of this. New BPIP specifies that all notices and materials shall be provided in hard copy and electronic formats and in the most prevalent language(s) of DCRSD families. Incident Reporting Form also available in those languages.
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Retaliation Prohibition (formerly: standalone 'Retaliation' heading)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
REORGANIZED	'Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying, shall be prohibited' — standalone section	Section VII — incorporated into the Prohibition section alongside the bullying prohibition	Language preserved verbatim. Relocated to Section VII (Prohibition) consistent with DESE Model Plan structure, which treats retaliation prohibition as part of the core prohibition statement rather than a separate section.

Section IX — Relationship to Other Laws (NEW — no equivalent in original)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
NEW	No statement on relationship to other anti-discrimination laws	Section IX — Relationship to Other Laws added	DESE Model Plan requires the Plan to address the relationship to other applicable laws. New BPIP adds: non-discrimination statement under M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; explicit statement that the Plan does not prevent DCRSD from taking action on harassment/discrimination under other laws; explicit statement that the Plan does not limit authority

under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H/37H½.
Full related-law citation list added.

Appendix A — Bullying Incident Reporting Form (NEW — no equivalent in original)

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
NEW	No Incident Reporting Form included in the policy	Appendix A — five-section Bullying Incident Reporting Form	Original referenced use of a 'Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form' in the investigation section but did not include or describe one. New BPIP includes a complete standardized form with: Section 1 (Reporter, optional); Section 2 (Target); Section 3 (Alleged Aggressor); Section 4 (Incident description, type, recurrence, witnesses); Section 5 (Office Use Only tracking fields including investigation initiation, determination, parent notification dates, law enforcement notification, and follow-up scheduling).

PART 3: LEGAL REFERENCES — ORIGINAL VS. NEW BPIP

Change Type	Original JICFB	New BPIP Section	Description of Change
RETAINED	M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O	Section VII, VIII, IX and throughout	Core anti-bullying statute. Retained as primary authority.
RETAINED	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972	Section IX — retained in related laws list	No change.
RETAINED	Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Federal Reg. 74676 (EEOC)	Section IX — retained as Title VI/VII citation	Retained; updated to Title VI and Title VII citation format consistent with DESE Model Plan language.
RETAINED	M.G.L. c. 265, §§ 43, 43A (criminal harassment/stalking)	Section IX — retained in related laws list	No change.
RETAINED	M.G.L. c. 268, § 13B (witness intimidation); M.G.L. c. 269, § 14A (hazing)	Section IX — retained in related laws list	No change.
CLARIFIED	603 CMR 26:00 cited in original	603 CMR 49.00 cited throughout new BPIP	603 CMR 26:00 is the former regulation number. The current regulation governing bullying in schools is 603 CMR 49.00, effective 2014. The original policy cited the superseded regulation number.
NEW	Not cited in original	M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 — IEP Team disability/bullying consideration	Added. Required by the DESE Model Plan for districts serving students with disabilities.
NEW	Not cited in original	M.G.L. c. 76, § 5 — Non-discrimination in public schools	Added per DESE Model Plan requirement to address relationship to other civil rights laws.
NEW	Not cited in original	ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Added per DESE Model Plan requirement.
NEW	Not cited in original	IDEA — Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act	Added per DESE Model Plan requirement.

NEW

Not cited in original

FERPA — Family
Educational Rights and
Privacy ActAdded. Governs
confidentiality
obligations in
investigation and
notification.

PART 4: SUMMARY OF CHANGES BY TYPE

Change Type	Count	Primary Areas
NEW	22	Leadership (Sec. I); Needs assessment; Public involvement; Definitions (5 new terms); IEP Team provision; Referral protocols; Bystander/skills-building curriculum; Student orientation; Safety step before investigation; Notice to another school; Formal determination step; Skills-building response; Follow-up contact; Parent education; Language access; Relationship to Other Laws (Sec. IX); Appendix A (Reporting Form); 5 new legal citations
EXPANDED	11	Training PD content areas (6 statutory areas enumerated); Resource inventory across 7 schools; Target vs. aggressor service differentiation; Reporting Form distribution; Investigation protocol (written record, retaliation reminder, SPED consultation); Law enforcement notice (former students under 21); Confidentiality limitation; Monthly-to-DESE reporting; Prohibition statement
CLARIFIED	3	Cyberbullying terminology (one word, per statute); 14-day investigation timeline (written record added); 603 CMR 26:00 corrected to 603 CMR 49.00
REORGANIZED	3	Definitions moved to Section VIII; Retaliation prohibition moved into Section VII; Overall structure from single policy to nine-section BPIP
RETAINED	12	Core bullying definition; Cyber-bullying substance; Seven-location prohibition; Off-campus/non-school technology prohibition; Staff reporting obligation; Anonymous reporting with no-formal-action rule; False accusation discipline; Student reporting obligation (no discipline for failure to report); Annual staff training; K–12 curriculum instruction; Annual family/student notice; Website posting

Key Compliance Gaps Closed by the New BPIP

The following items in the original Policy JICFB were the most significant gaps relative to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and the DESE Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan:

- 603 CMR 26:00 cited instead of 603 CMR 49.00 — the operative regulation since 2014. Now corrected throughout.
- No required definitions — 'Aggressor,' 'Target,' 'Hostile Environment,' 'Retaliation,' and 'Staff' were all absent. All five now defined per statute.
- No leadership section — the DESE Model Plan requires documented public involvement, needs assessment, and a planning/oversight structure. None existed in the original.
- Training PD content underspecified — M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(e) requires six specific content areas. The original stated only the general purpose of training.
- No IEP Team provision — M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 requires IEP Teams to address bullying vulnerability for students with disabilities. Absent from original.
- No safety step before investigation — the DESE Model Plan requires the principal to assess and restore target safety before completing the investigation. Original moved directly from report receipt to parent contact.

- No formal determination step — original described investigation but not the formal determination process or what happens after.
- No notice-to-another-school provision — required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for cross-school incidents.
- No skills-building response framework — M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v) requires the Plan to address teaching appropriate behavior. Original addressed only discipline.
- No parent education program description — required by the DESE Model Plan.
- No language access provisions for family notices or the Reporting Form — required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.
- No Incident Reporting Form — original referenced a form in the investigation process but did not include or standardize one.
- No Relationship to Other Laws section — required by the DESE Model Plan.



DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

2026–2027 School Year

Aligned With:

DESE Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O | 603 CMR 49.00

An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools (Ch. 92, Acts of 2010; Ch. 86, Acts of 2014)

District Information	
Superintendent	Steven Lamarche
Asst. Superintendent for Teaching & Learning	Kelly True
Title IX Coordinator	Kelly True
Address	68 Dudley Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571
Phone	(508) 943-6888
Schools Served	Four Elementary, Two Middle Schools, Shepherd Hill Regional High School

Adopted by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee: _____

Annual Review Date: _____

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I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing and implementing the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District (DCRSD) Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") within the context of broader whole-school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. DCRSD leaders have a primary responsibility for teaching students to be civil to one another and to promote understanding of and respect for diversity and difference.

A. Statement of Priority

DCRSD expects that all members of the school community will treat each other with civility and respect for differences. The District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior.

DCRSD recognizes that certain student groups — including students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, English learners, and students experiencing homelessness — may be more vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing. The District will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations and will provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying.

DCRSD will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. All reports and complaints of bullying will be investigated promptly, and the District will take prompt action to end prohibited conduct and restore the target's sense of safety.

B. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Community members were provided notice and a public comment period before the Plan was adopted by the School Committee.

DCRSD will engage the following constituencies in ongoing Plan development and review:

- Building principals and assistant principals
- Classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff across all seven schools
- Guidance counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and school nurses
- Special Education staff, including the Director of Student Services
- Student representatives (middle and high school levels)
- Parent and guardian representatives, including the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
- Local law enforcement (Dudley Police Department, Charlton Police Department)
- School Committee members

C. Assessing Needs and Resources

DCRSD will conduct ongoing needs assessments to identify areas of concern and inform prevention strategies. Assessments will include:

- Administration of the DESE-developed student climate survey at least once every four years, beginning 2015-2016, to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying
- Annual collection and analysis of building-level bullying incident data
- Review of behavioral data disaggregated by school, grade, and student subgroup
- Identification of 'hot spots' in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses where bullying is more likely to occur
- Staff and family surveys to assess perceptions of school safety and climate

Findings from needs assessments will inform resource allocation, supervision strategies, professional development priorities, curriculum selections, and in-school support services.

D. Planning and Oversight

The building principal, or their designee, is responsible for the implementation and oversight of this Plan at the school level. District-level oversight is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. Responsibilities include:

Responsibility	Assigned To
Receiving all reports of bullying	Building Principal or Designee
Collecting and analyzing building-level bullying data	Building Principal or Designee
Recording and tracking incident reports	Building Principal or Designee
Coordinating annual staff professional development on the Plan	Asst. Superintendent / Building Principals
Planning supports for targets and aggressors	Building Principal, Counselor, or Designee
Selecting and implementing prevention curricula	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching & Learning
Revising policies, handbooks, and codes of conduct	Asst. Superintendent / Building Principals/School Committee
Leading parent and family engagement efforts	Building Principals
Annual review and update of the Plan	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching & Learning
Reporting annual bullying data to DESE	Superintendent / Designee

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DCRSD will provide ongoing professional development for all staff as required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O. Training applies to all school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals.

A. Annual Staff Training on the Plan

All school staff will receive annual training on the Plan that includes:

- Staff duties and responsibilities under the Plan
- An overview of the steps the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a bullying report
- An overview of the bullying prevention curricula in use at the school or district
- Reporting procedures and confidentiality requirements

Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to complete school-based training during the year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in a comparable program within the past two years.

B. Ongoing Professional Development Content

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, ongoing professional development will be research-based and will include:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses
- Research findings on bullying, including information about categories of students particularly at risk for bullying
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying

Additional locally identified areas for professional development include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- Fostering understanding of and respect for diversity and difference, consistent with DCRSD's Title I equity commitments
- Building relationships and communicating with families, including multilingual families
- Constructively managing classroom behaviors using positive behavioral support (PBIS) strategies
- Applying constructive, restorative disciplinary practices
- Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy
- Addressing the intersection of disability and bullying, including for students with autism or whose disability affects social skills development (IEP Team considerations per M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3)

- Trauma-informed practices and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) aligned to DCRSD's RULER SEL implementation

C. Written Notice to Staff

The District will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by including it in the employee handbook and code of conduct distributed at the start of each school year.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

DCRSD is committed to ensuring that the underlying emotional and behavioral needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The Plan describes strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs across all seven schools.

A. Identifying Resources

DCRSD will maintain a current inventory of counseling, behavioral health, and social-emotional supports available within each building and across the district, including:

- School guidance counselors (all seven schools)
- School psychologists
- Licensed clinical social workers / adjustment counselors
- School nurses
- Special Education staff and behavioral specialists
- MTSS intervention teams at each school

Where resource gaps are identified through needs assessments, the district will explore partnerships with community agencies, including Community Service Agencies (CSAs) for Medicaid-eligible students.

B. Counseling and Other Services

Culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and support services will be made available to:

- Targets of bullying: including safety planning, individual counseling, peer support, and referral to outside services as appropriate
- Aggressors: including individual skill-building, behavioral intervention planning, family engagement, and referral for evaluation or services
- Family members: including access to community resources, parent education programs, and information on local and state support organizations

C. Students with Disabilities

When the IEP Team determines that a student has a disability that affects social skills development, or that a student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of their disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing, consistent with M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3.

The Director of Student Services will be consulted in investigations and response planning when a student with a disability is involved, either as target or aggressor.

D. Referral to Outside Services

DCRSD building principals and school counselors will maintain referral protocols for connecting students and families to outside services, including:

- Community-based mental health providers
- Dudley and Charlton Police Departments (for law enforcement referrals as required)
- DESE and the Massachusetts Attorney General's office (for civil rights or legal compliance matters)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF) as mandated reporters

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, DCRSD provides age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention in each grade, integrated into school curricula.

A. Bullying Prevention Curricula and Approaches

Bullying prevention curricula across DCRSD schools will be informed by current research and will emphasize:

- Using scripts and role plays to develop practical social skills
- Empowering students as active bystanders — knowing what to do when they witness bullying, including seeking adult assistance
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying, including underlying power imbalances
- Cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies
- Enhancing students' skills for healthy relationships and respectful communications
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment respectful of diversity and difference

The following evidence-based or research-aligned programs are used or being implemented across DCRSD:

Program / Approach	Grade Level / School
RULER Social-Emotional Learning (Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence) — Train-the-Trainer Model	All seven schools (PK–12), beginning 2026-2027
HMH Curriculum — Social-Emotional integration	Middle Schools
Intervention and Enrichment blocks (Middle Schools)	All seven schools
MTSS-aligned behavioral supports	All schools

Building-level advisory / classroom meeting structures	As established per building
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B. General Teaching Approaches Supporting Bullying Prevention

The following classroom and school-wide approaches support the goals of this Plan:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students, and students experiencing homelessness
- Using positive behavioral supports and restorative practices
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students
- Modeling, teaching, and reinforcing pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors
- Teaching conflict resolution, collaborative problem-solving, and positive communication skills
- Supporting students' participation in extracurricular activities and areas of strength
- Safe, responsible use of digital tools and the Internet

C. Student Orientation and Awareness

At the start of each school year, students will be informed of the relevant sections of this Plan, including the prohibition against bullying and retaliation and the procedures for reporting incidents. This instruction will be delivered in a developmentally appropriate manner at each grade level.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

DCRSD has established clear policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These procedures ensure that all members of the school community — students, parents, and staff — understand how to report incidents and what will happen when reports are made.

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. All oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member shall report immediately to the building principal or designee whenever they witness or become aware of conduct that may constitute bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report does not limit a staff member's authority to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies.

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

DCRSD expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report incidents, including:

- The DCRSD Bullying Incident Reporting Form (available in the main office, counseling office, school nurse's office, and on the district website)
- Verbal report to any trusted adult staff member

Incident Reporting Forms will be included in beginning-of-year packets for students and parents or guardians, and will be available in the most prevalent language(s) of students and families served by DCRSD.

B. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

1. Safety

Before completing an investigation, the principal or designee will assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and protect the alleged target from further incidents. Safety measures may include:

- Creating a personal safety plan for the target
- Pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or aggressor in classrooms, at lunch, or on the bus
- Identifying a trusted staff member to serve as a 'safe person' for the target
- Altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target

The principal or designee will also implement appropriate strategies to protect students who reported bullying, provided information during an investigation, witnessed bullying, or have reliable information about bullying.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to Parents or Guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of both the target and the aggressor, consistent with 603 CMR 49.00. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents prior to the conclusion of an investigation.

b. Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify the principal or designee of the other school(s) so that each may take appropriate action. All communications will comply with state and federal privacy laws and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. Notice to Law Enforcement: At any point, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued, the principal will notify the Dudley Police Department or Charlton Police Department, as appropriate. If an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact local law enforcement if criminal charges may be pursued.

C. Investigation

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

During the investigation, the principal or designee will:

- Interview the alleged target, alleged aggressor, witnesses, staff, and parents or guardians as necessary
- Remind all parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action
- Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigation
- Maintain a written record of the investigation
- Consult with the school counselor, Director of Student Services, or legal counsel as appropriate

If a student with a disability is involved, the Director of Pupil Personnel will be included in the investigative process and any subsequent planning for supports.

D. Determinations

After completing the investigation, the principal or designee will make a determination based on all facts and circumstances. If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will:

- Determine what remedial action is required to prevent recurrence
- Determine what responsive and/or disciplinary action is necessary
- Ensure the target is not restricted from participating in school or benefiting from school activities
- Promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the investigation results and actions being taken

All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. The principal or designee cannot report specific information about disciplinary action to the target's parent or guardian unless it involves a directive (such as a stay-away order) of which the target must be aware.

E. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-Building

When bullying or retaliation has been substantiated, DCRSD will use a range of responses that balance accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v)). Skills-building responses may include:

- Individualized skill-building sessions based on anti-bullying curricula
- Educational activities for individual students or groups, in consultation with guidance counselors
- Positive behavioral supports to help students develop pro-social ways to achieve their goals
- Meetings with parents or guardians to engage parental support and reinforce anti-bullying and social skills curricula at home
- Behavioral plans with a focus on developing specific social skills
- Referral for evaluation or additional services as appropriate

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

Where disciplinary action is warranted, it will be determined based on the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s), and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the school's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and must be read in conjunction with Massachusetts state law on student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider adjustments needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety. Strategies may include increasing adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying has occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period following the determination and any remedial or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether bullying has recurred and whether additional supportive measures are needed.

F. Reporting and Data

DCRSD will comply with all DESE data reporting requirements, including:

- Annual reporting of bullying incident data to DESE in the form and manner established by the Department
- Reported data will include: number of reported allegations, number and nature of substantiated incidents, and actions taken
- District administration will use annual data to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention efforts and identify areas for improvement

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

DCRSD recognizes that effective bullying prevention requires meaningful collaboration with families. The district will engage and inform parents and guardians through multiple channels throughout the school year.

A. Parent Education and Resources

DCRSD will offer education programs for parents and guardians focused on:

- The parental components of the anti-bullying curricula in use
- The dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety
- How to reinforce bullying prevention and social competency skills at home
- How to report a bullying concern to the school and what to expect from the process

Programs will be offered in collaboration with School Councils, PTOs, and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), and will reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of DCRSD families.

B. Annual Notification Requirements

Each year, DCRSD will:

- Inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula being used
- Provide written notice of the student-related sections of this Plan, including information on cyberbullying and online safety
- Publish the Plan on the district website
- Include information about reporting procedures in beginning-of-year materials

All notices and materials will be provided in hard copy and electronic formats, and in the most prevalent language(s) of DCRSD families. The Incident Reporting Form will also be made available in these languages.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

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

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

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

This prohibition applies to all students and shall be included in the student code of conduct, the student handbook, and the staff handbook.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are drawn from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O. Schools and districts may add clarifying language but may not alter the legal meaning or scope of these definitions.

Term	Definition
Aggressor	A student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.
Bullying	The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the

	target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
Cyberbullying	Bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. Includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the full legal definition.
Hostile Environment	A situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.
Retaliation	Any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
Staff	Includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.
Target	A student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal law and DCRSD policies, no person shall be 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.

Nothing in this Plan prevents DCRSD from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or district policies.

Nothing in this Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of DCRSD to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether such behavior is covered by this Plan.

Related laws and regulations include:

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O — An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools (as amended by Ch. 86, Acts of 2014)
- 603 CMR 49.00 — Regulations Pertaining to Bullying in Schools
- M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 — IEP Team considerations for students with disabilities
- M.G.L. c. 76, § 5 — Non-discrimination in public schools
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

APPENDIX A: BULLYING INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Use this form to report suspected bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation. You may submit this form to the principal's office, the guidance office, or the school nurse's office. Reports may also be submitted anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

This form is available in the main office, guidance office, nurse's office, and on the DCRSD website. It is available in the most prevalent languages of DCRSD families upon request.

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District

K-4 BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. **Check whether you are the :** **Target of the behavior** _____ **Reporter** (not the target) _____

3. **Check whether you are a:** **Student** _____ **Staff Member** (specify role) _____
 Parent _____ **Administrator** _____ **Other** (specify) _____

Your contact information/telephone

number: _____

4. **If student, state your school:** _____

5. **If staff member, state your school or work site:** _____

6. **Information about the Incident:**

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

Name of aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s)

Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

7. **Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____

Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____

Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____

8. **Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

9. **Signature of Person Filing this Report:**_____ **Date:**_____

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

10. **Form Given to:**_____ **Position:**_____ **Date:**_____