Avon School Committee Policy Manual

April 2019

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY MANUAL

AVON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AVON, MASSACHUSETTS 02322

This manual contains the official policies of the Avon School Committee; the major procedures intended to implement policy; and certain reference or "exhibit" documents that relate to policies and/or procedures.

Policy development in a modern, forward-looking school system is a dynamic, ongoing process. New laws, issues, and needs give rise to the continuing need to develop new policies or to revise existing ones. This is why the committee employs the loose-leaf format for this manual. It is easy to keep up to date.

Each person holding a copy of this manual should make a diligent effort to keep it up to date as new policies, procedures, and exhibits are distributed by the central office.

How to Use this Manual

The school department operates according to policies established by the School Committee. The committee then appraises the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary.

In the interests of harmony, efficiency, uniformity of interpretation, coordination of effort, and in fairness to all concerned, and the Committee makes this manual available to all who are affected by its policies.

Please Note: All copies of this manual are the property of the Avon School Committee.

How the Manual is organized

The manual is organized in accordance with the classification system developed by the National School Boards Association. This system provides an efficient means of coding, filing, and finding policies and other documents. There are 12 major classifications each assigned an alphabetical code:

A -- FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS
B -- SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS
C -- GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
D -- FISCAL MANAGEMENT
E -- SUPPORT SERVICES
F -- FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT
G -- PERSONNEL
H -- NEGOTIATIONS
I -- INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
J -- STUDENTS
K -- SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
L -- EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

Sub classification under each heading is based on logical sequence and alphabetical sub coding. For an example of the sub coding system, examine the white pages immediately following the tab for Section AD--Foundations and Basic Commitments.

The pages that follow the tab for each major section present the classification system, section by section, and serve as the tables of contents for each section or "chapter" of this manual.

Using the Signs and Symbols

Various signs and symbols are used in connection with the classification system. They are for your use in locating and/or in examining policies. Included are the following:

Also: Certain policies bear two codes in the upper right-hand corner. The second is in parentheses and is preceded by 'Also'. This means that the identical policy (or regulation) is filed under both codes.

-R This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is a procedure, not a committee policy.

-E Exhibit. This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is a reference document such as a calendar, application form, etc., rather than a policy.

DATES:
Where possible, the original date of adoption/issuance appears immediately following each policy or procedure. In other instances, an approximate adoption or re-approval date is used.

LEGAL REFERENCE:
Pertinent legal references are given to inform the reader where in state law s/he may find the statutes that relate to a specific policy. Unless otherwise noted, all references direct the reader to the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (cited as M.G.L., Chapter and section).

CONTRACT REFERENCE:
Agreements reached through negotiations with recognized staff organizations have the full force of committee policy. References to negotiated agreements are provided, as appropriate, to direct the reader to statements in these agreements.

CROSS REFERENCE:
Certain policies and regulations relate to others. Cross-references are provided following many statements to help the reader find all of the related information needed.

About Policies and Procedures

Generally, the role of a School Committee is to set policy and the role of the administration is to implement it through procedures. Written policies are the chief means by which a School Committee governs the schools, and procedures are one of the means by which the committee's policies are implemented. The following definitions provide a distinction between these two types of statements:

> POLICIES are principles adopted by the School Committee to chart a course of action. They are broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the administration in meeting a number of day-to-day problems while being narrow enough to give the administration clear guidance.
>
> PROCEDURES are detailed directions usually developed by the administration to put policy into practice.

These definitions are serviceable some of the time. They reflect sound theory of governance and administration. But policies and procedures are obviously closely related. They can and do merge, making it difficult to ascertain where one begins and the other ends. For example:

* State and federal governments require school committees to make or officially approve detailed regulations, and procedures in certain areas.

* A School Committee signs contracts and agreements that may contain and interweave policies, regulations, and procedural detail.

* The public staff, or school committee members may demand that the School Committee itself, not the administration, establish specific procedures in certain sensitive areas.

It is the intermingling of policy and procedure in law, in contracts, and in adopted statements of the School Committee that can cause confusion. Sometimes they are not easily separated. Therefore, the separation of policies and procedures in this manual follows several "rules of thumb" in addition to basic theory:

1. When the school system's practice in a particular area is established by law, any informational statement covering the practice is presented as "policy". (A law may, of course, be quoted or referred to in a procedure.)

2. When a school system's practice in a particular area has been established through a negotiated agreement, any statement pertaining to that practice is presented as "policy".

3. Where the School Committee has interwoven procedures with policy and where separation would interfere with their meaning, the entire statement is presented as a policy.

4. Where the School Committee has adopted rules and by-laws concerning its own organizational and operating procedures, these statements appear as policy. As long as the administration operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, it may issue procedures without prior committee approval, unless law requires committee action, or unless the committee has specifically asked that certain types of procedures be submitted for committee approval. The School Committee is to be informed of all school system procedures issued by the administration. All such procedures are subject to committee review.

Is the Manual Complete?

No. The manual contains all of the current approved policies of the school committee to date. But, the need for putting additional policies in writing, for adopting new or revising existing ones, becomes apparent.

Additionally, state laws; and regulations change. No matter how well conceived and well developed, a policy manual can never remain 100% complete and 100% up-to-date. Policy development is a continuing process. From time to time, new policies, procedures, and reference documents will be developed, coded under the classification system, and issued for insertion in the manual.

Order of Precedence

School committee policies and procedures, as well as negotiated agreements with staff bargaining units, must be read and interpreted in the light of the Massachusetts General Laws and State

regulations. Wherever inconsistencies of interpretation arise, the law and state regulations prevail. A conflict between a local policy or procedure and a negotiated agreement must be interpreted in line with the contract for members of the particular bargaining unit.

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It is the hope of the Avon School Committee that this collection of policies and procedures will make greater harmony and efficiency possible in all areas of school operations. This will enable the committee to devote more time to its primary duty--the development of long-range policies and planning for the future of the school system.

Avon School Committee

Policy Manual Adopted on August 28, 2024

SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the town is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

> "… Every town shall maintain … a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein."

The public educational system of Avon structurally is a department of the town operated under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Avon Public Schools is conterminous with the Town of Avon.

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Massachusetts, part II, Chapter V, Section II
M.G.L. 71:1

Historical Note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony required towns to provide for a program of public education.

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens' expectations for the education of the community's youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizen's desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communications with citizens of community. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.

2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.

3. Act as a truly representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual school committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Avon School Committee and Avon Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members. that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Avon Public Schools.

Avon Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of APS from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements. The School Committee commits to:

1. Promoting the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encouraging positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Working toward a more integrated society and enlisting the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Using all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and address the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school district, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations.
6. Initiating a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school district in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Avon Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.
It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

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

LEGAL REFS:
Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7905 (The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 - https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF:
ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity
IJ, Instructional Materials
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

Avon Public Schools 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 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, 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 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.

"Title IX Sexual Harassment" (effective August 14, 2020) means verbal, physical or other conduct that targets a person based on their sex, and that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning educational benefits or services on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo);
- Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's educational program or activity;
- Any instance of "sexual assault", "dating violence", "domestic violence", or "stalking", as those terms are defined by the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)) and the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), (10) & (30)).

Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment shall be reported and investigated pursuant to the Avon Public Schools Protocol for Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX.

Resources

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 Avon Public Schools, and can be reached at:

Lori Jodoin, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services
ljodoin@avon.k12.ma.us
508-588-0230

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Avon Public Schools. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

Lori Jodoin, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services
ljodoin@avon.k12.ma.us
508-588-0230

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
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Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 -
https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity
IJ, Instructional Materials
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure
Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE 603 CMR 26:00

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

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

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Avon School Committee and Avon Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members. that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Avon Public Schools.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity it also, includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

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

- Unwelcome sexual advances—whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

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

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of harassment including sexual harassment, and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

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

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

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

NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The regulations require a school district to respond when the district has actual notice of sexual harassment. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances). Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

The regulation highlights the importance of supportive measures designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the regulation would require remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

1) A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
2) A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
3) The clear and convincing evidence or preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;
4) The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross examination, subject to "rape shield" protections;
5) Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
6) Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
7) Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
8) Upon filing a formal complaint the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

A district may establish an informal investigation process that may, upon the request of the complainant be followed by a formal process.

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

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every Title IX sexual harassment complaint. This could include mediation, restorative justice, or other models of alternative dispute resolution. Schools must keep records regarding the school's response to every report of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware even if no formal complaint was filed, including documentation of supportive matters offered and implemented for the complainant.

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

List the name and phone number of the District's Title IX Coordinator
List the appropriate party by name and phone number to receive a complaint in each District School
Please note that the following entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

- The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 601
  Boston, MA 02108.
  Phone: 617-994-6000.
- Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)
  5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
  Boston, MA 02109.
  Phone: 617-289-0111.
- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
  John F. Kennedy Bldg.
  475 Government Center
  Boston, MA 02203.

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

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition: A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the District.

Reasonable Accommodation: The District shall make reasonable accommodation in policies, practices, or procedures when the accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the District can demonstrate that making the accommodations would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Communications: The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the District shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the District. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the District shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: "Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or accommodation of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Accommodation: The District is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the District shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. A written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion shall accompany the decision.

Notice: The District shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the District. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

Compliance Coordinator: The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The District shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school district receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified disabled person solely on the basis of disability is unfair; and

2. To the extent possible, qualified disabled persons should be in the mainstream of life in the school community. Accordingly, employees of the school district will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of disability.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as amended
Education for All Disabled Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended
Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 3/28/78

CROSS REFS.: IGB, Support Services Programs

MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION

To educate all students to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a global society.

OUR VISION

The Avon Public Schools are committed to excellence in teaching and learning and are a source of pride in the community. We respect and appreciate individual differences. We utilize a variety of teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of our students and foster an atmosphere of intellectual pursuit. All students will graduate from the Avon Public Schools with the skills necessary to be lifelong learners and productive and responsible citizens in a global society.

CROSS REFS.: District Improvement Plan

TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H; 270:6

CROSS REFS.: GBED, Tobacco use on School Property by Staff Members Prohibited
JICH, Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use by Students Prohibited

BACKGROUND CHECKS ADDA

It shall be the policy of the school district that, as required by law, a state and national fingerprint criminal background check will be conducted to determine the suitability of full or part time current and prospective school employees, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. School employees shall include, but not be limited to any apprentice, intern, or student teacher or individuals in similar positions, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The school committee shall only obtain a fingerprint background check for current and prospective employees for whom the school committee has direct hiring authority. In the case of an individual directly hired by a school committee, the chair of the school committee shall review the results of the national criminal history check. The superintendent shall also obtain a state and national fingerprint background check for any individual, who regularly provides school related transportation to children. The school committee, superintendent or principal as appropriate may obtain a state and national fingerprint criminal background check for any volunteer, subcontractor or laborer commissioned by the school committee, school or employed by the city or town to perform work on school grounds, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. School volunteers and subcontractors/laborers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children must continue to submit state CORI checks.

The fee charged by the provider to the employee and educator for national fingerprint background checks will be $55.00 for school employees subject to licensure by DESE and $35.00 for other employees, which fee may from time to time be adjusted by the appropriate agency. The employer shall continue to obtain periodically, but not less than every 3 years, from the department of criminal justice information services all available criminal offender record information (CORI) for any current and prospective employee or volunteer within the school district who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children.

Direct and unmonitored contact with children is defined in DESE regulations as contact with a student when no other employee who has received a suitability determination by the school or district is present. “Contact” refers to any contact with a student that provides the individual with opportunity for physical touch or personal communication.

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

Requesting CHRI checks

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

Access to CHRI

All CHRI is subject to strict state and federal rules and regulations in addition to Massachusetts CORI laws and regulations. CHRI cannot be shared with any unauthorized entity for any purpose, including subsequent hiring determinations. All receiving entities are subject to audit by the Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and the FBI, and failure to comply with such rules and regulations could lead to sanctions. Federal law and regulations provide that the exchange of records and information is subject to cancellation if dissemination is made outside of the receiving entity or related entities. Furthermore, an entity can be charged criminally for the unauthorized disclosure of CHRI.

Storage of CHRI

CHRI shall only be stored for extended periods of time when needed for the integrity and/or utility of an individual's personnel file. Administrative, technical, and physical safeguards, which are in compliance with the most recent CJIS Security Policy have been implemented to ensure the security and confidentiality of CHRI. Each individual involved in the handling of CHRI is to familiarize himself/herself with these safeguards.

In addition to the above, each individual involved in the handling of CHRI will strictly adhere to the policy on the storage, retention and destruction of CHRI.

Retention and Destruction of CHRI

Federal law prohibits the repurposing or dissemination of CHRI beyond its initial requested purpose. Once an individual's CHRI is received, it will be securely retained in internal agency documents for the following purposes only:

Historical reference and/or comparison with future CHRI requests,
Dispute of the accuracy of the record
Evidence for any subsequent proceedings based on information contained in the CHRI.

CHRI will be kept for the above purposes in a secure location in the office of the superintendent. When no longer needed, CHRI and any summary of CHRI data must be destroyed by shredding paper copies and/or by deleting all electronic copies from the electronic storage location, including any backup copies or files. The shredding of paper copies of CHRI by an outside vendor must be supervised by an employee of the district.

CHRI Training

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to receive and/or review CHRI at the district will review and become familiar with the educational and relevant training materials regarding SAFIS and CHRI laws and regulations made available by the appropriate agencies, including the DCJIS.

Determining Suitability

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

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

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

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

Relying on Previous Suitability Determination.

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

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

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

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

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

Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

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

Provide the individual with a copy of his/her CHRI used in making the adverse decision;
Provide the individual with a copy of this CHRI Policy;

Provide the individual the opportunity to complete or challenge the accuracy of his/her CHRI; and
Provide the individual with information on the process for updating, changing, or correcting CHRI.

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

If a school employer receives criminal record information from the state or national fingerprint- based background checks that includes no disposition or is otherwise incomplete, the school employer may request that an individual, after providing him a copy of said background check, provide additional information regarding the results of the criminal background checks to assist the school employer in determining the applicant's suitability for direct and unmonitored contact with children, notwithstanding the terms of General Laws chapter 151B, S. 4,(9,9 ½). Furthermore, in exigent circumstances, a school employer may, pursuant to the terms of DESE regulations (see specific regulations in legal references), hire an employee on a conditional basis without first receiving the results of a national criminal background check. After exhausting several preliminary steps as contained in the above referenced regulation the district may require an individual to provide information regarding the individual's history of criminal convictions; however, the individual cannot be asked to provide information about juvenile adjudications or sealed convictions. The superintendent is advised to confer with legal counsel whenever he/she solicits information from an individual concerning his/her history of criminal convictions.

Secondary Dissemination of CHRI

If an individual's CHRI is released to another authorized entity, a record of that dissemination must be made in the secondary dissemination log. The secondary dissemination log is subject to audit by the DCJIS and the FBI.
The following information will be recorded in the log:

Subject Name;
Subject Date of Birth;
Date and Time of the dissemination;
Name of the individual to whom the information was provided;
Name of the agency for which the requestor works;
Contact information for the requestor; and
The specific reason for the request.

Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Pursuant to state law and regulation, if the district dismisses, declines to renew the employment of, obtains the resignation of, or declines to hire a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license because of information discovered through a state or national criminal record check, the district shall report such decision or action to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing within 30 days of the employer action or educator resignation. The report shall be in a form requested by the Department and shall include the reason for the action or resignation as well as a copy of the criminal record checks results. The superintendent shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to the regulations to the Commissioner.

Pursuant to state law and regulation, if the district discovers information from a state or national criminal record check about a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license that implicates grounds for license action pursuant to regulations, the superintendent shall report to the Commissioner in writing within 30 days of the discovery, regardless of whether the district retains or hires the educator as an employee. The report must include a copy of the criminal record check results. The school employer shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to regulations to the Commissioner and shall also send a copy of the criminal record check results to the employee or applicant.

C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

It shall be the policy of the district to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the department of criminal justice information services of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the department of criminal justice informational services on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service.

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

Pursuant to a Department of Education regulation, "'Direct and unmonitored contact with children' means contact with students when no other employee, for whom the employer has made a suitability determination of the school or district, is present. " Contact" refers to any contact with a student that provides the individual with opportunity for physical touch or personal communication. The school employer may determine when there is potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children by assessing the circumstances and specific factors including but not limited to, whether the individual will be working in proximity with students, the amount of time the individual will spend on school grounds, and whether the individual will be working independently or with others. An individual shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children if he or she has only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact in commonly used areas of the school grounds."

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign an acknowledgement form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the department of criminal justice information services. In the event that a current employee has a question concerning the signing of the

acknowledgement form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the CORI acknowledgement form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed acknowledgement forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under the policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

CORI is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. CORI shall be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, pursuant to law, regulation and the following model policy, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the department of criminal justice informational services.

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

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law and the model policy, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision.

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.6:167-178; 15D:7-8; 71:38R, 151B, 276:100A
P.L. 92-544; Title 28 U.S.C. § 534; Title 28 C.F.R. 20.33(b) 42 U.S.C. §16962
603 CMR 51.00
803 CMR 2.00
803 CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)
FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Security Policy Procedure for correcting a criminal record
FAQ – Background Checks

DCJIS MODEL CORI POLICY

This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective and current employees, subcontractors, volunteers and interns, and professional licensing applicants.

Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and other criminal history checks may be part of a general background check for employment, volunteer work, licensing purposes, the following practices and procedures will be followed.

CONDUCTING CORI SCREENING

CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the DCJIS, state law, and regulation, and only after a CORI Acknowledgement Form has been completed.

If a new CORI check is to be made on a subject within a year of his/her signing of the CORI Acknowledgement Form, the subject shall be given seventy two (72) hours notice that a new CORI check will be conducted.

ACCESS TO CORI

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information must be limited to those individuals who have a "need to know". This may include, but not be limited to, hiring managers, staff submitting the CORI requests, and staff charged with processing job applications. The district must maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI. This list must be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection upon request by the DCJIS at any time.

CORI TRAINING

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly. All district personnel authorized to review or access CORI will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

USE OF CRIMINAL HISTORY IN BACKGROUND SCREENING

CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied.

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

VERIFYING A SUBJECT'S IDENTITY

If a criminal record is received from the DCJIS, the information is to be closely compared with the information on the CORI Acknowledgement Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant.

If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination is to be made by an individual authorized to make such determinations based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

INQUIRING ABOUT CRIMINAL HISTORY

In connection with any decision regarding employment, volunteer opportunities, or professional licensing, the subject shall be provided with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or from any other source, prior to questioning the subject about his or her criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history record is also to be disclosed to the subject.

DETERMINING SUITABILITY

If a determination is made, based on the verification of identity information as provided in this policy, that the criminal record belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) Relevance of the record to the position sought;
(b) The nature of the work to be performed;
(c) Time since the conviction;
(d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
(e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
(f) The number of offenses;
(g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
(h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof; and
(i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization.

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the basis for it in a timely manner.

ADVERSE DECISIONS BASED ON CORI

If an authorized official is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of a criminal history background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The subject shall be provided with a copy of the organization's CORI policy and a copy of the criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history will also be revealed. The subject will then be provided with an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the CORI record. Subjects shall also be provided a copy of DCJIS' *Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record.*

SECONDARY DISSEMINATION LOGS

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. A central secondary dissemination log shall be used to record *any* dissemination of Cori outside this organization, including dissemination at the request of the subject.

File: ADF
Updated on: April 8, 2024

Wellness Committee

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent, student, community partner, nurse, school food service representative, teacher, school administrator, and district administrator. The Superintendent, or designee, will serve the district as the Wellness Program Coordinator. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators.

Section 1 - Nutrition Education

Avon Public Schools teach, encourage, and support healthy lifestyles of students. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of nutrition education learning experiences in their health courses, in the general curriculum (when appropriate), and in the cafeteria. Nutrition education lessons teach the skills students need to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors and nutritious food choices. Nutrition education is age-appropriate based on the Massachusetts Health Education Curriculum Framework Standards and USDA guidelines. The entire school environment will deliver aligned messaging to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. The intention of school messaging and education will be to:

- promote fruit, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices
- include access to valid health information and health- promoting products and services
- include use of interpersonal communication skills, goal-setting, decision making, and self-management skills to enhance health
- include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities for students

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education
The District will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate
- Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat

- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

Section 2 - Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

Setting USDA Child Nutrition Standards and School Meals Goals

Meals served through the district's Food Service Program will comply with the national school lunch and breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages/grade levels served as specified in 7 CFR 210.10 or 220.8, as applicable. All schools will provide breakfast through the USDA School Breakfast Program.

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program will:

- be appealing and attractive to children
- provide free potable water during meals and throughout the day
- be served in clean and pleasant settings
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations, as documented

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) & School Breakfast Program (SBG):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/nutrition-standards-school-meals
https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf

The school district will send home information regarding income eligibility for the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program. Information packets will be distributed at the beginning of the year and as students enroll.

Breakfast: To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will operate the School Breakfast Program.
- The district and schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals: Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Employees will be aware that it is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or “paid” meals. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling
Schools:

- Should try to schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11am and 1pm
- Schools should offer seat time of no less than 10 minutes for breakfast and 30 minutes for lunch
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities; will provide students with ample time to eat breakfast and lunch
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks
- Should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff: Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district’s responsibility to operate a food service program, the schools will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Avon Food Service Staff will adhere to the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professional development in addition to local and state requirements.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages: With concerns about food allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets, the building principal, assistant principal, and/or designees will promote a "No Food Trading" and "No Utensil Sharing" standard in all schools with particular focus at the elementary school level.

Avon Food Service (AFS) may engage students, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, AFS should make available information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

Section 3 - Nutrition Standards

All competitive foods sold during the school day will comply with the Massachusetts Nutrition Standards for Food and Beverages and USDA Smart Snacks, whichever is more restrictive. Competitive foods can include: i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc. The school day is defined as midnight to 30 minutes after the final bell of the school day.

Smart Snacks In Schools:
https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school
Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages:
https://www.mass.gov/doc/105-cmr-225-nutrition-standards-for-competitive-foods-and-beverages-in-public-schools/download

Grades PreK-5. The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Products & Produce: When able schools will always select local products and produce over other domestic items. Avon will participate in the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program to supplement the purchase of fresh produce.

Vending Machines: Vending machines must comply with Massachusetts Nutrition Standards for Food and Beverages and USDA Smart Snacks 24/7, regardless of the machine being on or off.

Rewards: Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP), and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations: Due to the increase in medical conditions with diagnoses related to food intake and the increase in the variety of foods with the potential for an allergic response, student celebrations that occur during the school day will no longer include any foods or food products without prior approval from the building administrator and the school nurse. Student birthday celebrations, holiday celebrations, and end-of-the-year celebrations will no longer include food without prior approval from the building administrator and the school nurse. Alternative recommendations will be available to parents and teachers when requested.

Fundraisers/Events: For all other school related events (i.e. after school community events, fundraisers, and faculty events) the emphasis should be on foods from the four food groups (proteins, breads/cereals/grains, fruit/vegetables, and dairy products). An emphasis should be considered on increasing the servings of complex carbohydrates, low fat choices of protein foods and controlling the amount of fat (especially saturated fat), sugars, salt, and other non-nutritious foods and beverages. All school fundraisers shall be signed off by the principal of the building. As referenced in the September 2023 memo from the Department of Public Health, no competitive food based fundraisers will be held during the school day. Schools should avoid participating in fundraisers or corporate incentive programs that promote a message inconsistent with the goals of a healthy school community. Link to memo here: https://mcusercontent.com/d8f37d1a90dacd97f207f0b4a/files/f93d4749-5ecd-3681-0841-10ae641217f5/MA_Competitive_Foods_Memo_September_2023.pdf

Section 4 - Physical Education and Physical Activity

Physical Education Program:

The physical education program shall be designed to highlight physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles. The physical education program shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing abilities of students. Students shall be exposed to a wide array of different physical activities and sports to help broaden their exposure.

- The school district's comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum identifies the progression of skill development in grades K-12. The physical education curriculum for grades K-12 will be aligned with the Massachusetts standards.
- Avon Public Schools will provide all students physical education that teaches skills needed to be lifelong learners of health and fitness.
- Physical Education courses will be taught by highly trained and licensed educators in Physical Education and Health.
- Avon Public Schools provides our highly qualified educators professional development opportunities to grow in their discipline.
- Avon Public Schools provides a Safe Route to School for students who live in the town of Avon.

- Avon School District shall work with community partners to provide after school programs.

Physical Activity Program:

Physical activity during the school day - Schools will promote an environment supportive of physical activity. Students will be given opportunities for physical activity such as recess periods, physical education (P.E.) classes, and physical activity programs.

- All students shall receive weekly physical education instruction throughout the school year that teaches skills for lifelong physical fitness. Every effort will be made to provide physical fitness activities that are inclusive of all students.
- Avon Public Schools are not exempt from the required physical education class time or credit unless the student has medical or social-emotional needs. In this situation a principal, or designee, may determine their need for exemption with appropriate documentation.
- Physical activity clubs and intramurals shall be available after-school hours.
- Avon Public Schools shall provide daily recess to all elementary school students.

Section 5 - Wellness Promotion and Marketing

Avon Public Schools recognizes that the images and promotions of unhealthy foods and beverages are inconsistent with our general wellness policy and our efforts to promote healthy choices by our students.

Staff members in the Avon Public Schools are encouraged to model healthy eating habits as well as exercise and physical activity behaviors.

The Avon Public Schools values the health and well being of every staff member and plans and implements activities that support personal efforts by staff members to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff members in the Avon Public Schools will be provided access to an array of programming and resources on topics including nutrition, exercise, emotional wellness and self-care through a partnership with MIIA and additional resources including confidential counseling from the Employees Assistance Program.

Physical activity should be an integral part of the school day. Teachers may use extra physical activity as a reward for academic achievement or good behavior. Staff members shall not use physical activity as a punishment (for example, running laps, requiring sit-ups or push-ups). Staff members shall not withhold physical activity, including recess or physical education class, as a punishment or for a time to make it academic work.

Marketing on school campus will meet the Smart Snacks in Schools standards. This includes logos and brand names on vending machines, books, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, and sports equipment.

Schools should avoid educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward as well as programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low nutritional food products. It is our objective to promote healthy foods and beverages both through the elimination of materials that promote unhealthy foods as well as actively marketing the healthy items that are offered. This may be done through enticing language, colorful menus, coupons, signage, student suggestions and other marketing techniques.

Marketing for foods and beverages can be seen in schools on posters, the fronts of vending machines, textbook covers, and scoreboards. The Avon Public Schools are committed to policies and practices that promote foods and beverages that support healthy diets (fruits and vegetables, plain water). The schools can help students make healthy choices by marketing and promoting healthful foods and beverages. Some low-cost strategies may include:

- Collecting suggestions from students and families for meals and snack items that might be offered.
- Gathering feedback on new menu items
- Placing nutritious items where they are easy for students to select (placing fruits and vegetables to the front of the school meal line or near the cash register).
- Using attractive displays for fruits and vegetables (fruit basket).
- Pricing nutritious foods and beverages at a lower cost, while increasing the price of less nutritious foods and beverages.
- Using signs or verbal prompts to encourage students to try healthy foods. (CDC)
- Provide nutrition education to parents beginning at the elementary level with the goal to continue to educate parents throughout middle and high school levels.
- The nutrition education will be provided in the form of postings of the website and any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.
- Provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion with staff with the purpose of:
    - Encouraging all school staff, support staff and administrators to improve their own personal health and wellness.
    - Creating positive role models and improving staff morale.
    - Building the commitment of staff to promote health, improve nutrition, and encourage physical activity.
    - Promote and market healthy selections of foods and beverages to all students and staff, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through a la carte, vending machines, fundraising events, concessions, catering and student stores.
    - Community Connections – School personnel will strive to establish relationships among families, members of the school community, and of the greater Avon community in order to identify and facilitate access to available wellness resources.

Section 6 - Implementation, Evaluation, Communication

An Avon Public Schools Wellness Committee will continue to be formed annually to assist in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Wellness Policy. The Wellness Committee may be composed of representatives of district and school administrators, teachers, community members, health professionals, a representative of Avon's food service department, parents and students.

The Wellness Committee will meet four times a year and official minutes will be kept. Members of the Wellness Committee will be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools, or designee.

The Superintendent, or designee, shall ensure compliance with established district wide wellness policy. In each school, the building administrator or designee shall ensure compliance.

The Wellness Committee will establish measurable goals and objectives based on review of public health data as well as input from school staff and the community as a whole.

At least one staff member from each school should serve on the District Wellness Committee and ensure that there is ongoing communication at the building level.

Every three years members of the Wellness Committee will assess the implementation of the Wellness Policy using the WellSAT:3.0 tool or other equivalent assessment. The committee will work to update the policy as a result of this assessment as needed. The results of this assessment will be available to the public. The Wellness Policy is made available to the public on the district website.

SECTION B

BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

BA	**SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS**
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school district has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate concerns.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school district. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of the public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.

2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.

3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.

4. Establishing practical and SMART district goals.

5. Conducting a periodic review of performance against these goals.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee – superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the school committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. The school committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the municipality's public school district. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of municipal government, the School Committee has, unlike other municipal boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. Legislative or policy making. The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a superintendent who will implement its policies.

2. Appraisal. The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.

3. Provision of financial resources. The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the committee's policies.

4. Public relations. The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.

5. Educational planning and evaluation. The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

Personnel Matters

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent there to, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School Physician, School Nurses, and Supervisor of Attendance. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status
BDG, School Attorney

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have the authority only when acting as a committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the committee.

No member of the committee, by virtue of his or her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual committee member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and school department.

2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.

3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the District.

4. To work effectively with other committee members without trying either to dominate the committee or neglect his/her share of the work.

5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.

6. To vote and act in committee impartially for the good of all students.

7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all committee decisions once they are made.

8. To represent the committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.

9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.

10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for school committee members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALITICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the town from which he/she is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee.

From the Municipal or District Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign a receipt for, within 30 days of taking office, a copy of the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's Summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. As municipal employees, all School Committee members shall receive a copy of said summary annually. All School Committee members shall, within 30 days of taking office, and every 2 years thereafter, complete the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's online training program. Upon completion of the online training program, members shall provide notice of such completion to be retained for 6 years by the Municipal or District Clerk.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:20; 41:1; 41:107; 76:5; 268A:27-28;

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates School Committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the Town of Avon,, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, the board of Select Board and the remaining members of the committee share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the School Committee will notify the Select Board that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. After one week's notice has been given by the committee to the Select Board, so that voters of the town may have the opportunity to state their candidacy, the two governing bodies will meet to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected will fill the seat on the committee until the next town election, at which time a member will be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

Established by law

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:11

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

School Committee members, in their relations with their community, should:

1. Realize that their primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that their basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that they are part of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. Remember that they represent the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from their Committee activities.

School Committee members, in their relations with their school administration, should:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.

3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his or her professional duties and hold the administrator responsible for acceptable results.

4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

School Committee members, in their relations with their fellow Committee members, should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that they alone cannot bind the Committee outside such meetings.

2. Realize that they should not make statements or promises of how they will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.

3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.

4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of their own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems.

5. Make decisions only after all facts on any questions have been presented and discussed.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at its first regular meeting following the District's annual elections, will elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

In the event the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary are no longer members of the School Committee, the senior member (years served) will act as the Chair Pro-Tem.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. Nominations for the office of Chair will be made from the floor. The Chair will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.

2. Upon election, the new Chair will preside, calling for the election of a Vice-Chair and Secretary, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above. Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.

2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.

3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.

4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.

5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.

6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.

7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chair will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.

2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.

3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.

4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.

5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.

6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.

7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.

8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Secretary

The Secretary, through the clerk, will cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36

Note: The treasurer of the town serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer.

Further:

1. The Superintendent may seek guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever he wishes. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.

2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee shall appoint members to subcommittees at their annual organizational meeting for a period of one year.

The School Committee has the following Standing Subcommittees:

Budget
Personnel/Negotiations
Policy
Maintenance
Insurance
Mutual Understanding

The School Committee may authorize the establishment of special subcommittees for special assignments and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through actions of the Committee.

2. The subcommittee chair and its members will be appointed by the School Committee chair, subject to approval by the Committee.

3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.

4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.

5. The Superintendent will be an ex-officio member of all special subcommittees.

6. A subcommittee may be dissolved by a vote of the Committee at any time.

7. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.

2. If an advisory committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.

3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.

4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.

5. Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.

6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:

   a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.

   b. The assignment the School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.

   c. The resources the School Committee will provide.

   d. The approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.

   e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.

   f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press.

7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.

8. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.

9. Advisory committees created under this policy are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: JIB, Student Involvement in Decision-making

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours.

School councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal and Robert's Rules of Order.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive agendas and minutes of all school council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

The following guidelines define the role of the school council: The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.

2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.

3. Review of the school building budget.

4. Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C; C30A:18-15

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually.

This plan shall be written and submitted for approval to the Superintendent no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented and reviewed by of the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school, consistent with District mission and goals, and the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.

3. The means to address student performance, with focus on improvement of student learning.

    a. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
    b. Clearly identify actions to be taken to implement the goals.
    c. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
    d. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

4. Professional development for the school's professional staff.

5. The enhancement of parent/guardian involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline.

    a. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.

6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child.

7. The establishment of a culture of inclusion and respectful of diversity.

8. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate, except that:

    a. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and
    b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school council, and resubmit it for approval.

SCHOOL ATTORNEY

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to them. They will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school law to enable them to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school district will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, they will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

The School Committee may use the services provided by the town counsel. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek their services to counsel and represent the school district at various times.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E; 71:37F

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS – DEFINED & LENGTH

The Avon School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular, special and/or Subcommittee meetings as defined as follows:

1. **Regular Meeting:** All Regular School Committee Meetings are to be no longer than 3 hours in length and adjourned no later than 10:00 p.m., unless a specific motion to extend beyond 3 hours in length and 10:00 p.m. is approved at the meeting. At these meetings, all legal actions of the Committee take place.

2. **Special Meetings:** An official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

3. **Subcommittee Meetings:** An official meeting at which members of the Subcommittee deliberate matters of concern to it, and formulate opinions which will be conveyed to the School Committee at either a regular or special meeting.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular, special, and/or subcommittee, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with State law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.

2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.

3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.

2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.

3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.

4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.

5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.

6. Transactions of property, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.

7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.

8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the school committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent.) This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.

9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.

10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first case, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Subcommittees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings

KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the School Committee including all Sub- Committee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings may be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. However, a minimum of 48 hours prior to each meeting the Committee shall cause to be posted a listing of each subject the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting (the agenda). Notification of a change in a regular meeting time, place, or agenda and notification, including agenda, of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

AGENDA FORMAT

The Superintendent, conferring with the chairman of the School Committee will arrange the order of items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members no less than three business days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

CROSS REFS: BEDH, Public Comment at School Committee Meetings

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the School Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the Committee's approved policies and regulations.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or a hand count and shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 3 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. The date, time, place, the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting, a summary of each subject, and a list of documents and exhibits used at the meeting,

2. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.

3. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved. Minutes of all meetings shall be created and approved in a timely manner which is defined in regulation as within the next 3 meetings of the body or within 30 days, whichever is later.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10; 940 CMR 29.00

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know; BEC, Executive Session

PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires individuals to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear public comment.

Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the School Committee. It is an individual's opportunity to express an opinion on issues within the School Committee's authority.

To ensure the ability of the School Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals will sign in for an opportunity to speak during public comment. The public comment segment shall not exceed 15 minutes. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner

2. Speakers will be allowed up to three (3) minutes to present their material and must begin their comments by stating their name and city/town. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit, in extenuating circumstances.

3. Topics for discussion should be limited to those items within the School Committee's scope of authority. The authority of the School Committee primarily concerns the review and approval of the budget of the district's public schools, the performance of the Superintendent, and the educational goals and policies of the district's public schools. Comments and complaints regarding school personnel (apart from the Superintendent) or students are generally prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of School Committee authority.

4. The Chair of the meeting, after a warning, reserves the right to terminate speech which is not constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats that are likely to provoke a violent reaction and cause a breach of the peace, or incitement to imminent lawless conduct, or contains obscenities.

5. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the presiding Chair before or after the meeting. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting. Comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Avon School Committee.

6. Sign up instructions will be provided for those who wish to participate in Public Comment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A: 18-25

CROSS REFS: BE, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEC, EXECUTIVE SESSIONS
BEDA, NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as it deems advisable, the school committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.

2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.

3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the committee's policy.

The chairman of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the chair, and all remarks must be addressed to the chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school district. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with agenda

2. Discussion item - reading of the proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting

3. Action item - discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

In its review, the Committee will evaluate how policies have been implemented. It will consider feedback from school staff, students, and the community when revising policies, as appropriate.

The Superintendent is expected to call to the attention of the Committee all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as “on loan” to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee’s policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent’s office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first hand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the Principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text messages, social media postings, internet web forums, and internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic mail correspondence between and among members of the School Committee, or the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 23B; 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 36A as amended on December 24, 2002, each new School Committee member elected to the Avon School Committee is required to complete, within 1 year of their election or appointment, at least 8 hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's function, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given the following materials:

A. A copy of the School Committee policy manual
B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
C. A copy of the Conflict Interest Regulations
D. A copy of the district's budget
E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
F. Student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent determine to be necessary.

The Chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

A. arranging visits to schools to administrative offices
B. requesting information regarding school district operations
C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
D. handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36A

CROSS REF.: BBBA/BBBB School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The School Committee will be made aware of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system.

2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.

3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel reimbursement policy.

4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

CROSS REFS.: BID, School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
DKC, Expense Reimbursements

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, unless otherwise eligible under city or town charter or regional agreement. No member of a School Committee in any town shall be eligible to the position of teacher, or Superintendent of public schools therein, or in any union school or superintendency union or district in which their town participates.

Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.

Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior School Committee approval.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:52

CROSS REF.: BIBA, School Committee Conferences, Conventions, and Workshops

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause.

To this end:

1. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.

2. The Committee will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups in developing an annual, as well as a long-range, legislative program. One of the major objectives of the Committee's legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.

3. The Committee will annually designate a person, who may or may not be a member of the Committee, to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the Committee's behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts Legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the Legislature or Congress, the Committee's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee may choose to maintain memberships in the national, state and regional school committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

SECTION C

GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

CB	**SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT**
CBD	**SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT**
CBI	**EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**
CCB	**STAFF RELATIONS**
CD	**ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**
CE	**ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES**
CH	**POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**
CHA/CHC	**DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF PROCEDURES**
CHB	**REVIEW OF PROCEDURES**
CHD	**ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE**
CM	**SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT**

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and fix the Superintendent's compensation. The Superintendent shall act in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 59, and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine. The Superintendent shall also prepare such reports as may be required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and shall submit materials for the Committee's annual report to the Select Board in sufficient time for printing in the annual report.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:59, 72:3

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the appointment of a candidate to be Superintendent will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent which will meet the requirements of law and protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent. In accordance with said contract or, in the absence of specific contract language, by vote of the members, the Committee may choose to negotiate a successor contract with an incumbent Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:42

NOTE: Under the laws of the Commonwealth, the School Committee may award a contract to a Superintendent of schools for a period not to exceed six years.

EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT

Evaluation can serve the purpose of helping educators and educational leaders continually improve their practice.

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Ensure the efforts of the Superintendent are focused on district goals and the standards of professional practice established by state regulation are met by the Superintendent.

2. Ensure all Committee members and the Superintendent are in agreement and clear on the role of the Superintendent and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities.

3. Provide excellence in administrative leadership of the school district.

4. Develop a respectful and productive working relationship between the School Committee and Superintendent.

The School Committee and Superintendent will periodically develop a set of goals based on the needs of the school district and in keeping with state regulations for evaluation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent's performance will be reviewed in accordance with specified goals and standards. Goals will be established according to the evaluation cycle agreed upon with the Superintendent.

All School Committee discussion and deliberation related to the Superintendent's performance evaluation shall be conducted in open session in accordance with the open meeting law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 30A:18-25
603 CMR 35.00

STAFF RELATIONS

The School Committee expects the Superintendent to establish clear understandings on the part of all personnel of the working relationships in the school district.

Personnel will be expected to refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator to whom they are responsible. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes, but all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility; when the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school district.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

In the absence of a Building Administrator, the authority and responsibility for decision-making at that site will fall to the next-named individual present at the worksite in accordance with ascending sequential order beginning with #1:

ABSENCE OF THE BUTLER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

1. Assistant Principal
2. Superintendent or designee

ABSENCE OF THE AVON MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

1. Senior Middle High School Assistant Principal
2. Superintendent or designee

ABSENCE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

1. Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services
2. Senior Principal

In all cases, the Superintendent, and on the occasions of the Superintendent absence from the District, the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services and/or the Coordinator of Business Services hold the final decision-making authority, and will be contacted for final disposition on matters concerning the Avon Public Schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as they deem necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and procedures, and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity, all councils, cabinets, and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the School Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee and authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition, and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets, and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at their discretion. However, the School Committee wishes to be kept informed of the establishment and dissolution of these groups as well as their membership and their purpose.

Expenses incurred by such groups for consultative services, materials, and any investigative travel will be paid by the school district, but only within budgetary allotments and when approved in advance by the Superintendent.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through procedures, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the committee and the procedures developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all School Committee members, employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and procedures and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.

DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF PROCEDURES

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school district will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school district will be governed.

In the development of procedures, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the procedures, including staff members, students, parents/guardians, and the public. They must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student, and community organizations. They will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of procedures and in presenting procedures for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, they may issue procedures without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law; or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of procedures be given Committee approval; or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

A procedure concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the procedure.

CROSS REF.: BDG, School Attorney

REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. Changes to handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school district where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act. The Superintendent's decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Committee.

File: CM

SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school district and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent, Building Principals, and Athletic Director. These reports will be shared with the School Committee. The School Committee Chair shall also prepare an annual report for the School Committee, and, upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing the parents/guardians, citizens, and others of the programs and conditions of the town's public schools.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 72:4

SECTION D

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

DA	**FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS**
DB	**ANNUAL BUDGET**
DBC	**BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES**
DBD	**BUDGET PLANNING**
DBG	**BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES**
DBJ	**BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY**
DD	**GRANTS, PROPOSALS, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS**
DEC	**FEDERAL FUNDS SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT POLICY**
DGA	**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES**
DH	**BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS**
DI	**FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING**
DIE	**AUDITS**
DJ	**PURCHASING**
DJA	**PURCHASING AUTHORITY**
DJE	**PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS**
DK	**PAYMENT PROCEDURES**
DKC	**EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS

As the trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Committee will use these funds wisely in pursuit of the district's goals.

The quantity and quality of the district's educational programs are dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. Achievement of the district's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

It is imperative that the educational program be held of paramount importance. Decisions made due to resource limitations must center on the educational goals of the district.

This prioritization will be incorporated into all aspects of district management and Committee decision making.

Regarding the district's fiscal management, it is the Committee´s intent:

1. To allocate public funding, centering equity while achieving the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets
3. To advocate for levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all students.
4. To support the use of the best techniques for budget development and management.
5. To provide timely and appropriate information to the community.

ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is the financial expression of the goals of the School Committee in meeting the needs of all students.

The budget then requires an orderly and cooperative effort by the Committee, the staff, and the community to achieve the goals of the district.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local School Committee policy. The operating budget for the school district will be prepared and managed in line with the above.

In developing a budget, care shall be taken to make all presentations and documents associated with the budget clear and accessible to the members of the School Committee, to the municipal officials, and to the general public.

The budget shall be in compliance with the foundation budget. It is acknowledged that the foundation budget reflects the minimum recommended spending for a District, and excludes transportation costs, debt service costs, and costs associated with the acquisition of fixed assets. The aforementioned items must, therefore, be budgeted in addition to the foundation budget, and funds to support those expenditures must be raised from the community, after the use of any offsetting revenues received from the state.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer but may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of their staff, as they deem appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer are budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

A budget is a spending plan, which is developed well in advance of the fiscal year.

Circumstances may occur which necessitate changing spending priorities and redirecting funds within the budget accordingly. Revisions to the budget may be made from time to time by the Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Annual budgets for each school operated by the District shall be developed with input from the School Council and shall reflect the priorities established in the annual school improvement plan.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34; 71:37 and 71:38N

BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES

Preparation of the annual budget will be scheduled in stages throughout the school year with attention to certain deadlines established by law and charter.

The calendar year for budget preparation will be determined by calculating backwards from the final adoption date.

The School Committee will also observe the statutory requirement of holding a public hearing on the proposed budget not less than seven days after the notice for this hearing has been published in a local newspaper.

Whatever dates are assigned, the final date for the submission of the budget to the Select Board will be arranged cooperatively with the School Committee and Finance Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37; 71:38N

BUDGET PLANNING

A sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects the District's goals The budget is a financial planning tool that grounds itself in careful analysis of student achievement, enrollment, mandated services, and community values to allocate resources towards the goals set by the Committee. The first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

The Committee also holds in balance the valid interest of the taxpayers.

The budget document shall reflect all sources of revenue. It shall clearly explain how those funds will be used.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar which will be shared publicly with the community. Such calendar will take into consideration the requirement that School Councils are to be consulted in developing school budgets.

BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES

The district budget is adopted by the School Committee at the cost center level. Cost centers should represent appropriate levels of transparency for the Committee to oversee goal implementation while allowing for administrative day-to-day work. Cost centers will be agreed upon by the Committee and administration.

All revenue sources are subject to adoption by the School Committee. The budget is adopted by a simple majority.

Authority for adoption of the final school budget bottom line lies with the citizens who comprise, and who are entitled to vote at, the town meeting. The school budget is presented as part of the total town budget for action at the annual town meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34; 71:37

CROSS REF.: DBJ, Budget Transfer Authority

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

In keeping with the need for periodic reconciliation of the District budget, the School Committee will consider requests for transfers of funds between cost centers as they are recommended by the Superintendent.

The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and expedite financial record keeping for the school district.

All requests for transfers between cost centers as approved during the annual budget deliberation must be submitted to the School Committee for approval as part of the School Business Officer's quarterly report at the business meetings of the School Committee.

All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be returned to the municipality.

LEGAL REFS.: MGL 71:37
DOR 94-660

CROSS REFS.: DBG, Budget Adoption Procedures
DI, Fiscal Accounting and Reporting

GRANTS, PROPOSALS, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

In accordance with state law, all grants and gifts to the District must be reviewed and accepted by the School Committee before expenditure. The School Committee will encourage the administration to seek and secure possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds that will enhance the educational opportunities for the children in alignment with district goals. The superintendent will submit for School Committee approval spending plans at the same cost center level as the district budget.

The Superintendent will be responsible for coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects and for keeping the Committee apprised and updated on all such projects.

The Superintendent shall ensure the district has and follows a written set of procedures in grant administration that aligns with state and federal laws and regulations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 44:53A; 71:37A
2 CFR 200 Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements

FEDERAL FUNDS SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT POLICY

The Avon School District is committed to utilizing federal grant funds to supplement instructional programs funded by local, state, and other sources as required by law and regulation. Federal funds will be used to complement and extend district-funded programs, not to take the place of (supplant) programs previously funded by the district, except as provided by the granting program.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that federal grant funds are disbursed appropriately and that associated record-keeping and reporting complies with required guidelines and mandates.

LEGAL REF: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended

CROSS REFS: IHBD, Compensatory Education

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

Three members of the School Committee are requires to review and approve all warrants as correct and approved for payment. A record of this approval will be made available on the next regular Committee agenda.

The municipal treasurer, who also serves as the school department treasurer, signs all checks drawn against school department funds. No other signature is valid.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:41; 41:52; 41:56

CROSS REF: DK Payment procedures

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school district who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and disbursing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The municipality will pay the cost of the bond.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 40:5; 41:109A; 71: 47

CROSS REFS: DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
JJF Student Activity Funds

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent will be ultimately responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school district, maintaining effective internal controls so as to assure the effectiveness and efficiency of operations; adequate safeguarding of property; assurance of expenditures in accordance with programs under which revenues are received; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations

The accounting system used will conform with the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System as well as good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

LEGAL REF.: MGL Ch. 44:38
603 CMR 10:00
2 CFR 200.303

CROSS REFS: DBJ Budget Transfer Authority
DIE Audits

AUDITS

As a department of the Town of Avon, an audit of the school department's accounts shall be conducted annually by external auditors within nine months of the close of the fiscal year. This review shall be conducted in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles and the Government Auditing Standards issued by the U. S. Comptroller General.

Upon completion of the external audit, the superintendent will share the resulting documentation with the Committee. The Committee will consider the recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school department's assets.

Additionally, the district is also subject to the following:

- End of Year Financial Compliance Report: Every Massachusetts school district must submit the results of this report to the Department. This End of Year report must be submitted to the Department on or before September 30 each year.
- Government Accounting Standards Board 34: The District is covered in these government financial statements of revenue and expenditures of the municipality.
- Federal grant audits: As a district that spends about thresholds required, the district is subject to the Single Audit Act.
- Student Activity Account: As required by state law, student activity accounts are audited annually. For accounts that exceed $25,000, the School Committee shall consider an audit conducted by an outside firm every three years

The Committee may request an additional audit of the school district's accounts at its discretion.

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LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 44:38-40; 71:47; 72:3

CROSS REFS: DI, Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
JJF, Student Activity Accounts

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PURCHASING

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent:

- To procure materials, supplies, equipment, and services at the lowest possible cost consistent with the quality necessary for the proper operation of the District, thereby attaining the maximum value for each public dollar spent;

- To maintain the District's reputation for fairness and integrity and to promote impartial and equal treatment to all who wish to conduct business with the District;

- To encourage a mutually cooperative relationship with requesting departments, recognizing that successful purchasing is a result of team planning and effort;

- To promote social and economic goals such as encouraging local, small, minority, and women-owned businesses to participate in bidding for District purchases.

The acquisition of materials, equipment, and services will be centralized in the Superintendent's office of the school district.

The Superintendent will designate the District's purchasing agent. The agent will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and within the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by the Superintendent or designee, with such exceptions as may be made by the latter for emergency purchases.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30B; 71:49A

PURCHASING AUTHORITY

Authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is extended to the Superintendent through cost-center appropriation as part of the District budget process.

The purchase of items and services within the cost-center appropriation requires no further Committee approval except when by law or by Committee policy.

Contracts may be entered into for a period of up to three years. Contracts of longer duration may only be entered into by vote of a duly called town meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30B

CROSS REF.: DJE, Bidding Requirements

PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

All purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance will conform to the requirements of law. Any contract between the District and a vendor is subject to procurement requirements, whether the District or another entity completes the purchase.

To foster greater efficiency, the District will enter into state and local intergovernmental agreements where appropriate for procurement or use of common or shared services.

For any supply or service over $100,000, bids will be advertised appropriately. Suppliers will be invited to have their names placed on distribution lists to receive invitations to bid. When specifications are prepared, they will be distributed to all merchants and firms who have indicated an interest in bidding.

All bids will be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Superintendent and plainly marked with the name of the bid and the time of the bid opening. Bids will be opened in public at the time specified, and all bidders will be invited to be present.

Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of the bids.

Any bid received after the time and date specified will not be considered. All bids will remain firm for a period of 30 days after opening.

The contract will be awarded to the responsive and responsible bidder offering the lowest price for the supplies/services specified in the Invitation to Bid. The bidder to whom an award is made may be required to enter into a written contract with the school district.

The Chief Purchasing Officer may, if it would best serve the District's interest, use a Request for Proposals, instead of the above process.

A procurement for a supply or service in the amount of $10,000 or greater by not more than $100,000 shall be awarded to the responsible party offering the needed quantity or supply among three written quotations sought and retained by the procurement officer.

A procurement in the amount of $10,000 or less shall be obtained through the exercise of sound business practices.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22 B; 30:39M: 30B

CROSS REF.: DJA, Purchasing Authority

NOTE: Chapter 198 of the Acts of 2022 lifted the thresholds for both written quotations and for bids for school districts ONLY from $50,000 to $100,000. The School Committee of a municipal district conducting all of its own purchasing may choose to lift the caps above at its discretion. In order for districts in which purchasing is conducted by the municipal purchasing department to do so, the municipality may, per the Office of the Inspector General, 1) change the procurement policy to decentralize the procurement function so the school department can conduct its own procurement process; OR 2) make a limited policy change by using the Chief Purchasing Officer's delegation to revert some school-related procurements back to the school department); OR 3) keep a centralized process but the CPO can make separate purchases for the school department using the higher school-related thresholds. If none of these occur, the Committee must keep the thresholds as they stand.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from school department funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Committee will receive monthly lists of bills (warrants) for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee and then forwarded to the municipal auditor for processing and subsequent payment by the municipal treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school building administrators will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:41; 41:52 41:56

CROSS REFS.: DGA, Authorized Signatures

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school department officials who incur authorized expenses in carrying out their duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent.

When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Committee, aligned with the Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee. Staff travel requests within budgetary limits may be approved by the Superintendent. Staff travel requests that exceed budgetary limits will require the approval of the School Committee and the identification of funding sources by the administration. Each request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 40:5; 44:58

SECTION E

SUPPORT SERVICES

EB	**SAFETY PROGRAM**
EBAB	**PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY**
EBB	**FIRST AID**
EBC	**EMERGENCY PLANS**
EBCD	**EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**
EC	**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT**
ECA	**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY**
ECAC	**VANDALISM**
ECAF	**SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS**
EDC	**AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS**
EEAA	**STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**
EEAE	**SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM**
EEAEA	**SCHOOL BUSES – DUTIES OF DRIVERS**
EEAEB	**DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS**
EEAEC	**STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**
EEAG	**STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES**
EEAJ	**MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**
EFC	**UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS**
EFD	**MEAL CHARGE POLICY**
EFE	**CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT POLICY FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**
EHAA	**DISTRICT SECURITY RELATING TO TECHNOLOGY**
EHB	**DATA AND RECORDS RETENTION**

SECTION F

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

FA	**FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS**
FCB	**RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES**
FF	**NAMING NEW FACILITIES**
FFA	**MEMORIALS**

The School Committee believes that educational programs are influenced greatly by the environment in which it functions. The development of a quality educational program and of school facilities that help implement that program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee's goal to provide the facilities needed for the number and educational requirements of students in the school district and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support the educational program. To best use local resources, it is the Committee's intent, wherever possible, to partner with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Recognizing that school facilities are long-term community investments, the Committee will develop projects that reflect cost-effective designs, are consistent with good engineering practice, and use high quality construction, with attention to current and future technological practices for students, faculty, and school staff. Sites will be chosen to meet the educational need, maximize the use of any available community resources, and minimize any possible adverse education, environmental, social, or economic impacts on the community.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 70B
963 CMR 2.00

When a school building becomes inadequate by virtue of age, condition, size of site, lack of need, or other overriding limitations, and cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, the building should be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent will recommend to the School Committee, which facilities appear to justify further analysis.

The School Committee may seek both professional advice and the advice of the community in making its recommendations as to the retirement of any school facility. This will permit the public, which originally acquired the property, to benefit from its recycling or retirement.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those neighborhoods considered in the study and will be concerned with all or some of the following factors:

1. Age and current physical condition of the facilities, its operating systems, and program facilities

2. Adequacy of site, location, access, surrounding development, traffic patterns, and other environmental conditions

3. Reassignment of children, including alternative plans according to Committee policy

4. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bused, time, distance, and safety

5. Alternative uses of the building

6. Cost/Savings

    a. Personnel

    b. Plant Operation

    c. Transportation

    d. Capital Investment

    e. Alternative Use

7. Continuity of instructional and community programs

Naming a school facility is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a name for a school, a portion of a school, or a portion of school grounds. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents/guardians and students, should be considered in naming school facilities.

The School Committee has the authority to approve the naming and renaming of buildings, structures, and facilities located on school property. The School Committee also has the authority to name subsections of existing structures or facilities, such as classrooms, auditoriums, and gymnasiums.

Names and/or wording associated with school facilities shall be consistent with school district policies and promote messages aligned with the mission, vision and goals of the school district. To the extent possible, names and/or wording should be designed not to restrict the use of a space or inhibit changing the function of the space should that become necessary in the future.

When the opportunity to name or dedicate a new school or school related property, structure or facility is forthcoming, an orderly procedure will be communicated at the next available School Committee meeting. The Committee's agendas should clearly reflect the intent to consider, review, and vote on naming opportunities.

Submission of a name for a school space may be made by any resident or by the Superintendent, in writing, and should be made to the School Committee Chair. If a name is being initiated at the local school level, the Principal must take reasonable steps to include the School Council and PTA/PTO in the nomination of the name before submission to the School Committee.

The written request should specify the intent of the requestor and the reasons why this particular name would fit the facility. It should offer appropriate background information on the person or organization after which the facility will be named. An offer of a financial contribution to the School District may accompany the naming request, but the School Committee is not obligated to accept or reject a name based upon financial considerations alone. Philanthropic contributions in support of the School District are encouraged by the School Committee. The School Committee may acknowledge generous donors by designating appropriate spaces within the School District's facilities consistent with the level of financial commitment.

Following the submission of a naming request, the School Committee Chair will specify a consideration period that allows for public comment, following which the Committee will deliberate and vote on the name.

The School Committee recognizes that the death of a student, member of the staff, or prominent community member is deeply felt by the school community. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for permanent memorials.

Permanent memorials within the schools shall be limited in form to perpetual awards or scholarships.

Any permanent memorials in existence before the adoption of this policy can only be removed by a vote of the School Committee.

SECTION G

PERSONNEL

GBA	EQUAL EMPLOYMENT
GBEA	STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST
GBEB	STAFF CONDUCT
GBEBB	STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS
GBEBC	GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF
GBEBD	ONLINE FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATIONS – CROWDFUNDING
GBEC	DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE
GBED	USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY PROHIBITED
GBEE	PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY
GBEHA	PROFESSIONAL/SUPPORT STAFF LEAVES – JURY DUTY
GBGB	STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY
GBGE	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE
GBI	STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
GBJ	PERSONNEL RECORDS
GBK	STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
GCA	PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS
GCBA	PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES
GCBB	EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

GCBC	**PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS**
GCE	**PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/ POSTING OF VACANCIES**
GCF	**PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING**
GCG	**PART-TIME AND SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT**
GCIA	**PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT**
GCJ	**PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS**
GCK	**PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS**
GCO	**EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF**
GCQF	**SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS**
GCRD	**TUTORING FOR PAY**
GDA	**SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS**
GDB	**SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS**
GDB	**SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS (MASC)**
GDE	**SUPPORT STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES**
GDO	**EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF**
GDQD	**SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS**

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school district must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school district will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.

SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

In establishing rates of pay and levels of compensation for support staff personnel, the School Committee will take into account the responsibilities of the position, the qualifications needed, past experience of the individual, and years of service in the school department.

Compensation plans will be reviewed annually for all categories of staff. Such review, where applicable, will be carried out in connection with negotiations with representatives of recognized bargaining units. The master agreements with these units will have the full force of School Committee policy.

The School Committee will set the rates of pay for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Overtime

Support staff employees will be paid overtime wages for work performed in excess of contractual hours.

In counting hours for the purpose of allowing overtime work and pay, supervisors will consider sick leave, vacation time, and holidays as time worked.

Every effort must be made to minimize overtime by scheduling duties during the regular workday. Overtime will be authorized only by the Superintendent and only to cover emergency situations. All such work will be assigned on a fair and equitable basis.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:38

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contracts

SUPPORT STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

The School Committee will establish, and budget for, support staff positions in the school system on the basis of need.

The recruitment and selection of candidates for such positions will be the responsibility of the Principal for building based positions, and the Superintendent for District-wide positions, who will confer with principals and other supervisory personnel, as appropriate, in making a selection.

All support staff vacancies will be made known to all support staff personnel.

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable work loads, and establish wage and salary policies that encourage employees to put forth their best efforts.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee's responsibilities and their job descriptions.

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which they are to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.

CONTRACT REFS.: All support staff agreements

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

Support staff employed by the School District may be terminated by the Principal of the building in which they serve, with the approval of the Superintendent. However, employees may request the Superintendent to review the circumstances of their termination.

In the event of failure to perform as required, the Superintendent may immediately suspend or terminate employment depending upon agreement language.

Support staff employees may or may not be given prior notice of their dismissal depending upon the circumstances.

The Superintendent, or the Principal, with the approval of the Superintendent, may also suspend/remove employees from their individual assignments.

SECTION H

NEGOTIATIONS

HA	**NEGOTIATIONS GOALS**
HB	**NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS**
HF	**SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS**

NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the students of this community. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The School Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the School Committee, or its representatives, and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the School Committee's legal responsibilities, nor will any employee's statutory rights and privileges be impaired.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 150E

NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 1 of that chapter, as follows:

> "In the case of school employees, the municipal employer shall be represented by the school committee or its designated representative or representatives."

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of "bargaining in good faith." It is the legal responsibility of both the School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 150E:1 et seq.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

The School Committee will appoint the negotiator and the fee or salary for their services will be established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.

The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:

1. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, working conditions of employees, and all other mandated subjects of bargaining, represented by the units.

    a. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Committee.

    b. They will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.

    c. They will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will regularly report on the progress of negotiations in a properly posted executive session.

    d. They will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.

2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37E

SECTION I

INSTRUCTION

IB	**ACADEMIC FREEDOM**
IC/ICA	**SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR**
ID	**SCHOOL DAY**
IGA/IGD	**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION**
IGB	**STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAMS**
IHAM	**HEALTH EDUCATION**
IHAM-R	**HEALTH EDUCATION**
IHAMA	**PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION**
IHAMB	**TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS**
IHB	**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**
IHBA	**STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM**
IHBAA	**OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**
IHBD	**COMPENSATORY EDUCATION (Title 1)**
IHBEA	**ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION**
IHBF	**HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**
IHBG	**HOME SCHOOLING**
IHBH	**ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS**
IHCA	**SUMMER SCHOOLS**
IHD	**ADULT RESIDENTS OF AVON SEEKING TO RE-ENTER HIGH SCHOOL**
IJ	**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

IJ-R	**RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES**
IJL	**LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION**
IJLA	**LIBRARY RESOURCES**
IJND	**ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES**
IJNDA	**BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE**
IJNDB	**EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY**
IJNDBA	**USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN INSTRUCTION**
IJNDC	**INTERNET PUBLICATION**
IJNDCA	**ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES**
IJNDD	**POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA**
IJOA	**FIELD TRIPS**
IJOB	**COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS**
IJOC	**SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**
IKAB	**STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**
IKB	**HOMEWORK**
IKE	**PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**
IKF	**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**
IKFC	**CERTIFICATE OF ATTAINMENT**
ILD	**STUDENT SUBMISSION TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS AND RESEARCH**
IMB	**TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/ CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS**
IMD	**SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**
IMG	**ANIMALS IN SCHOOL**
IMGA	**SERVICE ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS**

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the State.

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education:

1. The School Committee shall schedule a school year which includes at least 185 school days for each school in the District.

2. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

3. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

For the information of staff, students, and parents/guardians, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in service days; and parent conferences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1G; 71:1; 71:4; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12
603 CMR 27.00

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help ensure the safety of all children, parents/guardians will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until the start of the official day unless circumstances require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 69:1G; 71:59
603 CMR 27.00

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, REVISION & ADOPTION POLICY

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise and gathering input from parents and the community.

The Committee expects its faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent or designee will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1E
603 CMR 26:05
M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

To support the classroom activities and other instructional needs of the District, various educational services as listed shall be provided. The Support Services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in (1) the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and (2) support services programs.

Curricular Supervision and Coordination

Coordinating personnel for specific curricular areas shall be assigned by the administration. This person shall assist in the organization, supervision, and coordination of subject material and activities in the schools.

Support Services

The Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services or designee shall be responsible for all services for students who are not eligible for special education assistance, such as psychological services, speech correction, homebound and hospital teaching and such other programs as may be assigned.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive, research-based health education program as an integral part of each student's general education. Health education will be integrated into academic classes in grades K through 6 and as a separate class in grades six through ten.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the district's health education program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

HEALTH EDUCATION
(Exemption Procedure)

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with law, the Avon School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves, human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempt by the request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.

2. inspect and review program instruction materials of these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent possible. Parent/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school, and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferable within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:32A
603 CMR 5

TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1 ;71:96

CROSS REFS: GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy
JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMODATIONS
(Programs for Children with Special Needs)

The goals of this school system's special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at his own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to return to the mainstream of school society as soon as possible.

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three to twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. These children should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide these children with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents/guardians in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs. Parents/guardians will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents/guardians will be accorded the right of due process.

The Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with the children with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

LEGAL REFS.: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq.
603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

SOURCE: Avon

STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM

In order to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all enrolled students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents'/guardian's request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal.

2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent(s)/guardian for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents'/guardian's request.

3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.

4. The Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).

5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.

6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.

7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.

8. The observer will be informed that they are not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If their presence presents a problem, they will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents/guardians can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.

9. The observer will be asked to submit their report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.

10. The observer will be informed that they are there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. They are not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform their contractual job duties.

11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s)/guardian prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71B:3
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

NOTE: The following quotes from the DESE Advisory are important points of understanding to the implementation of this policy.

"School districts and parents/guardians have reported that, typically, observations are between one and four hours. While useful as a general rule, the Department recommends that district policies and practices specify that the duration and extent of observations will be determined on an individual basis. Districts should avoid rigid adherence to defined time limits regardless of the student's needs and settings to be observed. The complexities of the child's needs, as well as the program or programs to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it. Discussion between school staff and the parent/guardian or designee is a good starting point for resolving the issue."

"The observation law states that districts may not condition or restrict program observations except when necessary to protect:

- the safety of children in the program during the observation;
- the integrity of the program during the observation;
- and children in the program from disclosure by an observer of confidential or personally identifiable information they may obtain while observing the program."

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION
(TITLE 1)

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committee ensures equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

LEGAL REF.: Title 1, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended

CROSS REF.: DEC, Federal Funds Supplement Not Supplant Policy

ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through

- home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English
- observations
- intake assessments
- recommendations of parents/guardians, teachers and other persons.

Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to DESE each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by DESE to comply with federal law.

LEGAL REFS.: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended
42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
603 CMR 14.00

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The schools may furnish homebound instruction to any student who must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than 14 school days in any school year. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school they will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization.

To qualify for the program, the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Licensed teachers shall be assigned to homebound instruction by the Superintendent or designee.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 28.03 (3)(c)

HOME SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home-Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home- based environment.

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

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents/guardians to teach the children,
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The School Committee may provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the public school system.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate academic, social, and vocational experience to aid these young people either to reenter the regular school system, move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J
603 CMR 17.00

SUMMER SCHOOLS

The school system shall make available summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding such programs is available. The focus of the program will be enrichment and credit recovery.

To attend summer school for credit recovery, students must have the approval of their classroom and/or special subject teachers.

Students in grades six through twelve may attend approved summer schools for credit recovery, enrichment, or makeup purposes. Credit towards graduation requirements may be granted to high school students in line with regulations of the School District.

All summer programs will be subject to annual approval by the School Committee through budget allocations or grant funds

LEGAL REFS: M. G. L. 71:28

ADULT RESIDENTS OF AVON SEEKING TO RE-ENTER HIGH SCHOOL

1. The district recognizes its responsibility to grant access to the day school program to all who reside within the district boundaries, who are eligible to enroll (i.e., those who have not yet earned a high school diploma), and who have not reached their twenty-second birthday.

2. In order to be granted enrollment into the day school program such persons must apply to the Principal of the school in which they wishes to enroll. Contained in the application should be the following information:

   a. Name, address and date of birth of the applicant.
   b. Applicant's statement as to the reason(s) for seeking admission into the day school program.
   c. Applicant's anticipated date of graduation from the high school.
   d. Name and address of the school last attended and last grade completed.
   e. Number of credits needed for graduation.

3. Adult residents of Avon who are granted enrollment into the day school program must enroll as full-time students and carry a full-time student academic load for the term of their enrollment.

4. Adult residents of Avon who are granted such enrollment will be subject to all of the rules as they apply to all full-time students, and as listed in the Avon Student Handbook of the school to which they request enrollment.

5. Continuing enrollment in subsequent years for adult residents of Avon granted admission into the day school program under the conditions as set forth above, will be subject to a review of the previous year's performance as assessed by the school administration.

6. Adult residents of Avon who are enrolled under the conditions as delineated above, and who reach the age of twenty-two (22) prior to completing the requirements for high school graduation, will normally be terminated from the day school program at the conclusion of the semester in which that student celebrates his/her twenty-second (22) birthday. Requests for continued attendance beyond this point, while not prescribed by any existing statute, may be granted, without prejudice and/or precedent, upon the student's making a written request to the Principal of the school attendance. The Principal will consider the request and make the determination as to whether or not continued attendance will be permitted. Students not granted continued attendance will be encouraged to pursue a G.E.D. program.

7. Applicants who are denied admittance into the day school program may, if so desired, appeal denial first, to the Superintendent of Schools, and, secondly, to the Avon School Committee.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REF.: KE, Public Complaints
IGA/IGD, Curriculum Development and Adoption

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

- **Religion – Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.**

- **Ideologies – Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.**

- **Profanity/obscenity – Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.**

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the Superintendent is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the Superintendent has adopted new materials, that decision will not be considered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.

2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel--teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KE, Public Complaints

REFERENCE: American Library Association – Library Bill of Rights

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those print, non-print, and digital materials found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student
  - Based on knowledge of students
  - Based on requests of parents and students
- Needs of the individual school
  - Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school
  - Based on requests from the professional staff
- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed "standards" or "classics", will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner. The School Committee intends to support such use with appropriate budgetary allocations, providing for timely updates to technology as necessary.

The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Director of Technology, shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD)

AVAILABILITY OF ACCESS

Access to the District's wireless network, including the Internet, shall be made available to students and employees primarily for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations. Limited personal use of the system shall be permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the District;
- Does not unduly burden the District's computer or network resources;
- Has no adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance

CONDITIONS OF USE

- Conditions of use for the District's network shall be permitted as long as the user's actions:
- Comply with the responsibilities specified in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Impose no tangible costs to the District;
- Do not unduly burden the District's computers, or network resources;
- Have no adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance;
- Do not cause a substantial disruption to the educational environment;
- Students and Parents have submitted the signature page of this agreement;

Access to the District's electronic communications system is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines.

Noncompliance with the applicable regulations may result in limitation, suspension, or termination of privileges, and other disciplinary action consistent with appropriate District policies.
Violations may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District. Participation in the "Bring Your Own Device" program is strictly optional.

The District will allow students to bring their own authorized technology devices (currently includes laptops, netbooks, eReaders, iPads, and android tablets) for personal use at the following specified times during the school day: before/after school and in the classroom when specifically permitted by the classroom teacher. Utilization of personal technology devices to enhance learning in the classroom, will be encouraged when deemed appropriate for all students in a given classroom, and at the discretion of the teacher.

Students and staff are required to access Avon Public Schools wireless network when using the approved devices during the school day with the consent and supervision of the classroom teacher and the authority of the building principal or when using approved devices for personal use at authorized times. While users may operate their own devices to access their own cellular/satellite/ use of private (3G/4G) network, access on school grounds must be in compliance with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Devices should have

- An updated web browser from which students are able to access necessary tools.
- Current antivirus software.
- Be fully charged and maintained to work properly during the school day.

MOBILE DEVICES

Tablet technology and eReaders are clearly useful for productivity purposes and will enhance instruction, so they are permitted for use on the network. This category includes but is not limited to iPads, Android tablets (Samsung Galaxy, Asus Transformer, etc.), and eReaders (Kindles, Nooks, etc.). 3G/4G Network Access is Prohibited: Mobile devices such as laptops, tablets, e-readers, are often equipped with 3G/4G wireless accessibility, which the District is unable to filter or monitor, in legal compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act. Students and employees who bring 3G/4G-enabled devices must access the Internet via the District's filtered Wi-Fi connection, only! Violators may have their devices confiscated; their participation in the BYOD program restricted, and be subject to other disciplinary action.

Any parent/guardian permitting a child to use a personally owned technology device in accordance with this agreement on, School District property, must read, sign, and return this agreement to the school.

1. The Students are responsible for keeping their devices in their possession or properly securing them, at all times. District personnel are not responsible for the security or condition of students' personal devices.

2. The Students are responsible for the loss, theft or damage that may occur on school property and are responsible for proper care of personal technology devices, including all maintenance and repair, replacement or modifications, and software updates necessary to effectively use these devices.

3. The District reserves the right to confiscate and/or inspect personal technology devices if there is reason to believe that they were used to violate our policies, administrative procedures, school rules, or for general misconduct.

4. Violations may result in the loss of privilege to use personal technology in school, and/or disciplinary and legal action, as appropriate.

5. The student must comply with the teachers' request to refrain from using a device, verify/display the authentication login screen, or to power down (turn off) the device.

6. The student may not use any devices to record, transmit or post photos or video of a person without his/her knowledge and consent. Images, video, and audio files recorded at school may not be transmitted or posted at any time, without the expressed permission of an administrator or faculty member.

7. The student should only use personal technology devices with consent and under the direct supervision of an administrator or faculty member

8. All users are required to utilize the District's secured wireless network to access the Internet.

Print Student's Name: _____Grade: _____
I understand and agree to abide by the BYOD agreement and applicable policy and guidelines. I further understand that violations may result in the loss of my network and/or device privileges, and possibly other disciplinary or legal action.

_____
Student's Signature/ Date

As a parent I understand that my child will be responsible for abiding by the above policy and guidelines. I have read and discussed this with her/him and he/she understands the responsibility he/she has while using personal devices. In the event that he/she violates this agreement, the district may confiscate and inspect the device, and appropriately discipline my child.

_____
Parent's Signature/ Date

EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY

Purpose

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

Availability

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, and the school district network is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN INSTRUCTION

Purpose

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of the curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

Students shall use digital resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

INTERNET PUBLICATION

I. PURPOSE

The School District has established a district-wide web page that links users to web pages for the district's individual schools. The School District maintains these web pages for educational purposes only, in furtherance of the educational mission of the School District. All published pages and corresponding links to other sites must relate to the district's educational mission.

II. SUPERVISION AND APPROVAL OF WEB PAGES

The Superintendent (or his/her designee) may select the person or persons ("the Webmaster") responsible for overseeing the school district's web pages and maintaining the web pages in a manner consistent with this policy and the school district's Access to Digital Resources Policy. The Webmaster must approve all links from the district web pages to other sites on the Internet. The Webmaster will review the links to ensure that the links are related to the district's educational mission.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their class projects or courses on their school's web site. Staff members must submit their material to the Webmaster for approval before the material can be published. Staff members may not publish or link to personal web pages as part of the school district web site.

Student or staff work (e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork) may be published on the district's web pages, as detailed below. All work that is published will be accompanied by a copyright notice written by the Webmaster that prohibits copying the work without the written consent of the copyright holder.

III. CONTENT STANDARDS

All web page materials are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard depending upon the age and grade level of the student. Web pages should be well-organized and professional in appearance. Web pages must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the school's web page.

IV. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

A. In general
Identifying information about students, such as first and last names, personal phone numbers or home addresses, will not be published. First names or first names and the first letter of the student's last name may be used where appropriate.

B. Student photographs
- Student photographs may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).

C. Student work
Student work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

D. Staff photographs, identifying information and work
- Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
- Staff work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Director of Technology, shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of digital resources, ethical use of such resources and issues of online privacy. In addition, procedures shall prohibit utilization of digital resources for prohibited or illegal activities and for the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Technology procedures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
- Safety and security of minors in use of digital resources;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including hacking, viruses, and other unlawful activities by minors online

Annually, all students must agree to and sign an appropriate digital use form developed by the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology; this form must also be signed for the parent or guardian for students under the age of 18.

All staff must agree to and sign an appropriate digital use form prior to being granted access to district digital resources. Employees must use district resources for the purposes directly related to educational and instructional purposes.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology, the district shall determine when and which digital resources can be made available to the community. All guest users will be prompted to and must accept a digital use agreement prior to use.

Those violating the digital use agreement will be subject to appropriate consequences.

LEGAL REF: 47 USC § 254

CROSS REF: GBEE PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY
JICJ STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY
KDC COMMUNITY USE OF DISTRICT RESOURCES

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1) Improper fraternization with students using social media or other electronic means.

    a. Teachers may not friend or follow current students on social media.

    b. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.

    c. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.

    d. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.

    e. Inappropriate contact via phone or electronic device is prohibited.

2) Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content

3) Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol

4) Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid

5) Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology

6) The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent or designees may, if warranted, periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have permission from a parent or guardian for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

CROSS REF.: JJH, Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS

Community resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

CROSS REF.: ADDA, Background Checks

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

CROSS REF.: ADDA, Background Checks

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents/guardians. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents/guardians will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents/guardians, and the Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

HOMEWORK

The term "homework" refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside class.

The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student.

Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others.

Homework assignments should be consistent in terms of the amount given each day and the time required for each assignment so that a pattern of meaningful homework can be established by the teacher and/or student.

The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual differences of students such as health ability, conditions at home, and educational resources at home. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in the use of them.

There are many other learning activities in the life of a student besides homework. Such things as participating in school activities, pursuing cultural interests, participating in family living, and exploring personal interests should be considered by teachers when planning consistent assignments. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled in the Avon Public Schools. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

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

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation is typically scheduled for the Saturday after Memorial Day, a date that falls no more than twelve school days before the regularly scheduled last day of school, in accordance with 603 CMR 27.05. The date of graduation is established annually by the School Committee as part of their adoption of the school calendar for the succeeding year. Seniors are expected to attend all scheduled classes until graduation.

Students are required to obtain a total of **120 credits**; with specific distribution in the following areas as listed below. Additionally, students are required to obtain a competency determination on the Massachusetts State examination and complete 40 hours of Community Service*.

DISTRIBUTION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

English	**4 courses -** Students must pass English each year. Any failed classes must be made up in summer school or night school.
Social Studies	**3 courses -** Students must pass U.S. History I and U.S. History II.
Science	**3 courses -** Students must pass three six-credit lab-based courses.
Mathematics	**4 courses -** Students must pass four five-credit courses.
World Languages	**2 courses -** Students must pass two sequential courses in the same language.
Fine or Applied Arts	**1 full year course or 2 semester courses** - Total of 5 credits
Computer Literacy	**1 full year course or 2 semester courses** - Total of 5 credits
Physical Education	**4 courses -** Students must pass all four years or be medically excused.
Electives	**5 courses**
***Community Service**	**No credits, but a requirement for graduation.** 40 hours of approved community service must be completed with documentation forwarded to the guidance office no later than two weeks before the graduation date. Students may begin to accumulate hours beginning in the freshman year. Guidance must approve all placements. *No credit will be given to any placement lacking pre-approval.*
Civics Project	Students must complete an approved civics project prior to their graduation through History Department.

During the first four years in high school, students must schedule a full load of courses. Please see the Program of Studies for additional information on graduation requirements. In extreme circumstances the Principal may approve the use of courses outside of the school to meet graduation requirements. This approval will be absolutely limited to three (3) courses during the high school years and all courses MUST receive prior approval before being started.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires that all students must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English Language Arts and Mathematics to earn a competency determination: meet or exceed the Proficient scaled score in the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests, or meet or exceed the Needs Improvement scaled score on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan. Students shall, in addition to meeting the requirements described above, attain a minimum of Needs Improvement on one of the high school end-of-course science tests (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics or Technology/ Engineering).

A student may be excluded from the graduation ceremony if they have been suspended for the third time during the senior year, or if their behavior during the year-end senior activities (prom, senior banquet, rehearsals, etc.) warrants such exclusion. Failure to fulfill outstanding obligations, financial or academic, to the school can also result in exclusion from graduation ceremonies.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D
603 CMR 30:00

CERTIFICATE OF ATTAINMENT

The Avon School Committee may award to a student, in lieu of a high school diploma, a Certificate of Attainment provided the student meets all the following requirements:

1. The student has completed their senior year of high school and

2. The student has failed to meet the Massachusetts Competency Determination requirement prior to the established graduation date and

3. The student has completed a program of studies prescribed by the Avon School Committee or the student's IEP team which satisfies all Avon High School graduation requirements, including attendance requirements.

A student who qualifies to receive a Certificate of Attainment may participate in graduation and be presented the certificate during the ceremony in which diplomas are awarded.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1I

STUDENT SUBMISSION TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

In this policy, "surveys, analyses, or evaluations" refer to methods of gathering data for research purposes.

Without the prior written consent of the student's parent/guardian, or of the student if they are at least 18 years of age, no student shall be required as part of any program wholly or partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education to submit to any survey, analyses, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

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

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation shall be available upon request for inspection by the student's parent/guardian. For the purpose of this policy, "instructional material" does not include academic tests or assessments.

A parent/guardian may inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student.

The Superintendent or designee will be responsible for implementing any procedures necessary to protect the privacy of participating students and to provide parents/guardians with access to surveys within a reasonable time before administration or distribution.

The School District will notify parents/guardians of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time of any substantive change in policy.

The District will directly notify parents/guardians annually at the beginning of the school year, and during the school year, when surveys, analyses, or evaluations are scheduled or anticipated. Parents/guardians shall have the opportunity to opt their child out of participation in any survey, analysis, or evaluation. Students who are 18 years of age or older may opt out of such surveys, analyses, or evaluations.

Parents/guardians or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education.

LEGAL REF.: Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h

CROSS REF.: JRA, Student Records

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.

2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.

3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.

4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.

5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).

6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.

2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.

3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A Principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

CROSS REF.: IJOB, Community Resource Persons/Speakers

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:05

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The School District is committed to providing a high-quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

The Principal, in consultation with the School Nurse, shall review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have their health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

SERVICE ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability." The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability."

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments;
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately upon notification by the School Principal.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff and will include the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF.: 28 CFR, Part 35

SECTION J

STUDENTS

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EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, support services, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

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

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
603 CMR 26:00
603 CMR 28.00
The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015
Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 -
https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

File: JBB

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

The School Committee's goal is to strive to address the needs of every student in each of our schools, subject to budgetary, space and other limitations.

Educational equity for the purpose of this policy is defined as providing all students, as reasonably practical, the high-quality instruction and support they need to reach and exceed a common standard.

1. To achieve educational equity the district will commit to:

2. Systematically, when appropriate, use districtwide and individual school level data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, national origin, language, special education, socioeconomic status and mobility to inform district decision making.

3. Raise the achievement of all students.

4. Graduate all students ready to succeed in a diverse local, national and global community. In order to reach the goal of educational equity for each and every student, the District shall:

5. Provide every student with access to high quality curriculum, support, and other educational resources.

6. Seek to promote educational equity as a priority in professional development and educator evaluation.

7. Endeavor to create schools with a welcoming and inclusive culture and environment.

8. Provide multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body and actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for each student.

The Superintendent shall include equity practices in the district's strategic plan and goal strategies to implement this policy. The Superintendent, upon request, will periodically report to the Committee on the progress of the implementation of this policy.

AGE OF ENTRANCE

Massachusetts law establishes the Board of Education as the agent that determines mandatory and permissible school attendance ages, with exceptions listed in law. Generally, the Board requires that all children be enrolled in school beginning in September of the calendar year in which they attain the age of six, and that they attend school regularly until they reach age sixteen.

Under law, each School Committee must enforce the school attendance of all children of compulsory age residing in the town.

In accordance with the above, it is the policy of the Avon School Committee that:

1. All students entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age before September 1 of the year of entry.

2. All students entering Grade One (1) must be six (6) years of age before September 1 of the year of enrollment or have successfully completed Kindergarten.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:1
603 CMR 8.00

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the district will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the district but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency of the individual holding legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A
603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REFS.: JLCA, Physical Examination of Students
JLCB, Immunization of Students
JFBB, School Choice
JFABD, Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services
JFABE, Educational Opportunities for Military Children
JFABF, Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

The school district will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools or any other public or private school by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter 12, Section 11 of the Acts of 2010

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

As required by law, the district will work with homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth[1] (collectively, "homeless students") as well as their families or legal guardians to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, school nutrition programs, summer programming and extracurricular activities.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; and
7. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

Students Remaining in Schools of Origin

It is presumed to be in the best interest of homeless students to remain in their schools of origin, i.e. the school that the student was attending at the time they became homeless, or the last school the student attended prior to becoming homeless. Homeless students may continue to attend their school of origin for as long as they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. For homeless students who complete the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term "school of origin" shall also include the receiving school in the same school district educating students at the next grade level.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation comparable to that provided for all other students attending school in the district. The district will transport students who are sheltered or temporarily residing within the district to the students' school of origin. For homeless students attending a school of origin located outside the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, the district in

[1] "A homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." 42 USC §11434a.

which the school of origin is located will coordinate with the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to provide the transportation services necessary for the student, and these districts will divide the cost equally. Formerly homeless students who find permanent housing mid-school year will continue to receive transportation services until the end of the school year.

Students Enrolling in District Where Sheltered or Temporarily Residing

Parents or guardians may elect to enroll homeless students in the school district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, rather than having the student remain in the school of origin. Enrollment changes for homeless students should take place immediately.

If homeless students are unable to provide written proof of their shelter or temporary residence in the district, the homeless liaison will work with the family seeking enrollment to determine homelessness. Information regarding a homeless student's living arrangement shall be considered a student education record, and not directory information. Records containing information about the homeless student's living arrangement may not be disclosed without the consent of the parent or satisfaction of another student-privacy related exemption.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

Dispute Resolution

If the district disagrees with a parent or guardian's decision to keep a student enrolled in the school of origin and considers enrollment in the district where the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to be in the student's best interest, the district will explain to the parent, in writing and in a language the parent can understand,[2] the rationale for its determination and provide parent with written notice of their rights to appeal the district's determination to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education[3]. During the pendency of any such appeal, the student should remain enrolled in the school selected by the parent or guardian, receiving transportation to school and access to other available services and programs.

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[2] Translation of communications of this type is required by Title I, among other laws. *See, e.g.* 20 USC § 6312.

[3] Information about the dispute resolution process managed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education can be located here: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/haa/03-7.html

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Advisory on Homeless Education Assistance contains additional information about educating homeless students and the appeal process. This advisory is available at the following link: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/haa/mckinney-vento.docx

Homeless Liaison

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families. The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in locations such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students. The liaison shall ensure district staff receive professional development and other support on issues involving homeless students.

LEGAL REFS.: The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

To facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection, and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents or guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The district believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families resulting from frequent moves required by parents' or guardians' military deployment.

Definitions

Children of military families: School aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, in the household of an active-duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve serving on active duty.

Deployment: The period one month before the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after return to their home station.

Education(al) records: Official records, files, and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school including, but not limited to, records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder.

Eligible students are children of military families as well as the children of veterans who have been severely injured and medically discharged, and children of active-duty personnel who died on active duty. Children of retired active-duty personnel are also eligible to receive services for one year following the discharge due to severe injury, or the retirement or death of an active military parent. The Compact does not apply to children of inactive Guard or Reserves, veterans and retired personnel not included above, or U.S. Department of Defense personnel and other federal civil service employees and contract employees.

The District's responsibilities to eligible students include the following:

- Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students and District receiving schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.

- Upon enrollment of an eligible student, the receiving school must request official records and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.

- Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).

- Receiving schools must initially honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school. These include, but are not limited to, Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational-technical, and career pathway courses if those courses are offered in the receiving school and space is available. The receiving schools must also initially honor placement of like programs to those of the student in the sending state, including, but not limited to, Gifted and Talented programs, and English as a Second Language programs. Receiving schools are not precluded from performing subsequent evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.

- In compliance with federal law, the district will assume financial and programmatic responsibility for the special education programs of students with existing IEPs drafted in other states.

- As appropriate, the District will exercise the right to waive prerequisites for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, also as deemed appropriate.

- Students of active-duty personnel shall have additional excused absences, as necessary, for visitations relative to leave or deployment.

- An eligible student living with a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis shall be permitted to continue to attend the school in which they were enrolled while living with the custodial parent or guardian, without any tuition fee imposed.

- The District high school will accept exit or end-of-year exams required from the sending state, national norm-referenced tests, or alternate testing instead of testing requirements for graduation in the District (receiving state.) If this is not possible, the alternative provision of the Interstate Compact shall be followed to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student in accordance with Compact provisions.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. Part I, Title II, Chapter 15E,
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the School Committee is committed to supporting all efforts to ensure that students in foster care have equal access to high-quality, stable educational experiences from preschool (if offered) through high school graduation.

Irrespective of the location of a foster care placement, students in foster care will continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process, it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which the student resides in foster care. Enrollment of students in the district where they reside in foster care will take place immediately upon such a determination.

The district has designated a point of contact for students in foster care. The district and the point of contact will collaborate with The Department of Children and Families (DCF) to ensure that students can access transportation and the other services to which they may be entitled.

Best Interest Determination

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (or, if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when appropriate) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and account for unique factors about the student and their foster care placement. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care; however, DCF will finalize the best interest determination if the relevant parties cannot agree on the best school for the student to attend.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the district will ensure that a child remains in their school of origin while the disputes are being resolved to minimize disruptions and reduce the number of moves between schools.

Transportation

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be arranged and provided to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

Immediate Enrollment

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be immediately enrolled in the district in which they reside in foster care. During enrollment of students in foster care, DCF representatives will present the district with a form indicating that the student is in foster care, along with a state-agency identification badge.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to students in foster care (homeless families) on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

LEGAL REFS: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);
Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act)

SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of the Avon School Committee to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice law (M.G.L. 76:12B) and under the following local conditions:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces by individual grades, in each school, available to choice students according to the following formula: 48 Students Kindergarten, 54 students grades 1-3, 63 students grades 4-6, 65 students grade 7-12, (recommended number of students in each grade) MINUS the number of anticipated Avon resident students (for that particular grade) EQUALS the number of available spaces for "Choice" students. The enrollment numbers by grade shall be reviewed by the Avon School Committee by the first school committee meeting in April of each year.

2. That by June 1 of every year, if consideration is being given to withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision.

3. That the selection of non-resident students for admission, when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces, be in the form of a random drawing. The random drawing shall be divided into two (2) categories. The category that shall be drawn from first will consist of applicants who have siblings currently enrolled as Choice students in the Avon system. When that category is depleted, the random drawing shall continue into the applicants in the next category (that is: "non-sibling" applicants)

4. Students admitted into the choice program shall be selected on a random basis prior to July first. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.

5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the district until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of State funding for the "Choice" program.

6. The Avon School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race*, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, homelessness, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:6; 71:6A; 76:6; 76:12; 76:12B
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Student Absence Notification Program
Each Principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

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

Dropout Prevention
No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:1B; 76:16; 76:18; 76:20

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or for diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Failure to meet the requirements of age for beginning school as fixed by the School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B
603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF: JEB, Entrance Age

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights—including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.

2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.

3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion and decisions the student believes injure his rights.

4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.

5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy in respect to the student's school records.

It is the school committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make, and delegate authority to its staff to make, rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior as specified within the Code of Conduct published in the Student Handbook.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, be made available to students and their parents through handbooks or addenda distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

As appropriate to the age of students, class, or school organizations and school government, organizations such as student councils may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expansion of student ideas and opinions.

The committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

Students will be welcome at Committee meetings and granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

Student Advisory Committee

As required by state law, the committee will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee, which is composed of five students elected by the high school student body. The student advisory committee shall elect a chairperson. Such chairperson shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the School Committee, without the right to attend executive sessions unless such right is expressly granted by the individual school committee.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:38M

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committees to the School Committee

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The 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 way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication and made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal 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 remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed[4], a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, progressive discipline, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to the student and parent(s) in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

Emergency Removal

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

[4] Except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy.

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

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension – Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 Days

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student 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 also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the 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 the short-term suspension takes effect.

Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)
The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

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

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; 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 required by law and regulation;

Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for 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.

If the 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 the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Hearing

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

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent 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 in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the 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 shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion
Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Academic Progress
Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is 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.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten
(10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent 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 if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, S. 37H or 37H1/2. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H3/4; 76:17;
603 CMR 53.00

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents/guardians.

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

LEGAL REF.: Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act of 2022
https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2116/text
M.G.L. 71:83

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents/guardians the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school including at the school bus stop. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with procedures approved by the School Committee.

Specific Codes of Conduct are published in the Student Handbook.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Within the school setting, students will enjoy the constitutional rights of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

Student publications will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

Distribution of Literature

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:82

GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises at individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

PROHIBITION OF HAZING

No student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Principal, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 269:17, 18, 19

HAZING

CH. 269, S.17. HAZING; ORGANIZING OR PARTICIPATING; HAZING DEFINED

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S.18. FAILURE TO REPORT HAZING

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

CH. 269, S.19. COPY OF SECTIONS 17 TO 19; ISSUANCE TO STUDENTS AND STUDENT GROUPS, TEAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS; REPORT

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy

of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

BULLYING PREVENTION

The School Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of electronic medium in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents/guardians and families are expected.

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

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;

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

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district if the act or acts in question:

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

Prevention and Intervention Plan

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

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

Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred they shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

Retaliation

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

Target Assistance

The school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

LEGAL REFS.:	Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 603 CMR 26.00 M.G.L. 71:37O; 265:43, 43A; 268:13B; 269:14A
REFERENCES:	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
CROSS REFS.:	AC, Nondiscrimination ACAB, Sexual Harassment JIC, Student Discipline JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Verbal Screening

- The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

- Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

- All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

CROSS REFS.: ADC, Tobacco Products on School Premises Prohibited
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy
GBED, Tobacco use on School Property by Staff Members Prohibited
IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee recognizes that the use of technology is an important part of students being prepared for adult life. As such, the student use of technology part of their education is to be encouraged, as teaching students appropriate use of technology is part of the responsibility of the district.

Annually, all students must agree to and sign an appropriate digital use form developed by the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology; this form must also be signed for the parent or guardian for students under the age of 18.

Students shall utilize digital resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Students are required to abide by the district Code of Conduct in their use, both on and offline, of district digital resources, which should be regarded as an extension of the classroom.

Students are reminded that there is no expectation of privacy in the use of district digital resources.

Failure to abide by district policies and procedures regarding the use of district digital resources will be met with consequences.

LEGAL REF: 47 USC § 254

CROSS REF: ACAB SEXUAL HARRASSMENT
JICFB BULLYING PREVENTION
JK STUDENT CONDUCT
INJD ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES
INJDC ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Harassment of students by other students, employees, vendors and other third parties will not be tolerated in the Avon Public Schools. The alleged harassment must involve conduct that occurred within the school's own program or activity, such as whether the harassment occurred at a location or under circumstances where the school owned, or substantially controlled the premises, exercised oversight, supervision or discipline over the location or participants, or funded, sponsored, promoted or endorsed the event where the alleged harassment occurred, against a person in the United States. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school sponsored activities.

Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion pursuant to disciplinary codes. Employees who have been found to violate this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including, termination of employment, subject to contractual disciplinary obligations.

Employee-to-Student Harassment means conduct of a written, verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.

Student- to-Student Harassment means conduct of a written, verbal, or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students, when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Written, verbal, or physical (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by others.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment through designation of Title IX Coordinator or building based employees, who may include principals or their designees. The superintendent will recommend, in consultation with the principals, opportunities to the designated recipients for appropriate training. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally appropriate disciplinary, restorative and/or corrective action.

The District will respond promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of sexual harassment through designation of the Title IX Coordinator or building based employees 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 District will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally- appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020
Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 -
https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117

CROSS REF.: AC, Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

PREGNANT STUDENTS

The School Committee wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The school district does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:84
Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681
34 CFR § 106.40(b)

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Searches by Staff

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own property and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

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

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or their designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.

2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will observe that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, are followed by the law enforcement officials.

USE OF DRUG AND BOMB SNIFFING DOGS

Use of a drug sniffing dog may be conducted under the following conditions:

The drug sniffing dog employed for such purposes shall be a law enforcement dog trained for such purposes and the search shall be conducted by law enforcement personnel.

In the absence of a warrant granted by the appropriate authorities to the law enforcement agency(s) or the existence of exigent circumstances by the law enforcement agency(s), the determination to conduct the search shall be made solely by the school administration and not members of law enforcement.

The scope of the administration determined search shall be all school owned properties (including desks and lockers) and all public areas of the buildings.

While belongings in the legitimate areas searched shall be subject to evaluation in this manner, no person shall be subject to evaluation in this manner.

If the evaluation by the drug sniffing dog determines the possibility of the existence of drugs, that shall constitute the level of reasonable suspicion to allow the school administration to continue the search of the specific item(s). Such continuation shall be consistent with this policy.

Use of a bomb sniffing dog may be conducted when it is so determined by law enforcement and the school administration that such a search is warranted for the safety of individuals and school property. The scope of the search shall be determined by the law enforcement agency and the school administration.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well-conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students--and their parents and/or guardians, who believe that a student has received unfair treatment, may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

CROSS REF.: JIC Student Discipline
JIB, Student Involvement in Decision Making

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities to be determined by the school, the parents, and the student. This should be a shared responsibility.

2. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.

3. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

4. The Principal 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 remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:47; 76:5
603 CMR 26.00

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Organizations

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they met the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building Principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the board.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school system or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate District administrator for review of the Principal's decision.

LEGAL REFS. 603 CMR 26.06

CROSS REF: JICF, Gang Activities/Secret Societies

STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

While the School Committee recognizes that fundraising activities have become a part of the school environment at all levels, the Committee wishes to ensure that students are not exploited by the process. The Committee further recognizes that families have different resources; those differences should, as much as possible, not be highlighted by school activities, including fundraising.

The Committee supports student involvement in the sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events, school dramatic and musical performances, and other school events where sales are required. Also, student publications which require the sale of advertising to sustain themselves and serve the student body and/or the community may involve students in such sales.

Charitable fundraising activities, especially those that are part of a community service event or program are encouraged provided such proposals are submitted to and approved by the building Principal.

Other fundraising activities that would involve students in the fundraising process shall be submitted to the Principal for approval.

For safety reasons door-to-door sales are prohibited.

No money collections of any kind may be held in the schools without the specific consent of the Principal.

Fund Raising Deposits:

All funds raised shall be deposited in the school's Student Activity Account in the appropriate individual class or organization sub-account. Funds raised may only be disbursed by the Principal in accordance with the purpose as previously recommended by the Principal and approved by the Superintendent. In this regard, should the funds raised exceed the cost of the previously approved purpose of the fundraiser, any remaining balance is to be retained in the organization's sub-account for subsequent disbursement as authorized by the Principal.

Fund Disbursement – Guidelines

The primary responsibility for the disbursement of funds from the Student Activity Account rests with the Principal. To guide the Principal in this regard, the Committee considers it appropriate to disburse funds for social activities, presentations, programs, related field trips, and the like.

CROSS REFS.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Student funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations. Student activity funds are considered a part of the total fiscal operation of the District and are subject to policies established by the School Committee and the Office of the Superintendent. The funds shall be only for the benefit of students and managed in accordance with sound business practices, which include accepted budgetary, accounting, and internal control practices. The Superintendent shall ensure that, annually, all Principals and student organizations receive a copy of this policy as well as a copy of established procedures for control of receipts and expenditures that meet or exceed DESE guidelines.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law, the School Committee:

1. Authorizes the Principals to accept money for recognized student activity organizations, which currently exist, or as from time to time may be revised. All funds received for student activities must be deposited into the Student Activity Agency Account and no funds shall be directly deposited to a Student Activity Checking Account except from the Student Activity Agency Account.

2. Authorizes the Town or District Treasurer to establish and maintain a Student Activity Agency Account(s) which is to be audited as part of the Town's annual audit. The interest that is earned on such accounts shall be maintained in the Agency Account and distributed annually among the Student Activity Checking Accounts as directed by the procedures established by the Superintendent.

3. Authorizes Student Activity Checking Accounts for use by the Principals with specific maximum balances established annually for each school by vote of the School Committee. Payments for expenditures shall be made, whenever possible, by check, debit, or EFT directly from the Student Activity Checking Account. Reimbursements to personal credit card holders shall require the prior authorization of the Superintendent. Signatory authorization for Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be restricted to the Principal and (Superintendent or Treasurer). Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be audited annually in accordance with DESE guidelines.

4. Directs Principals to provide the Treasurer with a bond in an amount agreeable to the Treasurer.

5. Shall annually, prior to the start of each school year, vote to establish or change the maximum balance that may be on deposit in each Student Activity Checking Account.

For accounts with maximum balance limits that exceed $25,000.00, the School Committee shall consider, in accordance with DESE guidelines, that an audit be conducted by an outside audit firm every three years

Graduating Class Funds

Funds held on behalf of graduating classes are to be held within the Student Activity Checking Account for the High School. Such funds shall be designated by the class' Year of Graduation.

Once a class has graduated from High School, their funds should be removed from the High School Student Activity Checking Account no later than two years from the date of graduation. It is the responsibility of the class officers to arrange for these funds to be removed from the High School Activity Checking Account. When requested, and once all outstanding financial obligations of the graduating class have been met, the remaining balance should be removed from the fund by check transfer payable to the Class of XXXX. Checks payable to individual members of the graduating class are not permitted.

Should the class officers not request to have their funds removed from the Student Activity Checking Account within two years of their graduating, the funds will be forfeited by the class and transferred into the General Sub-fund portion of the Student Activity Agency Account. These funds will then be allocated by a vote of the School Committee.

Class officers should be given a copy of this policy during the course of their senior year to ensure their knowledge of their obligations to perform under this policy.

Inactive Student Activities

When a student activity ceases to be active for a period of three years or more the Principal or other authorized administrator shall require the following actions:

1. obtain written notice from the faculty advisor or student officer that the activity will cease to be a viable account. If unable to obtain such notification the Principal shall request action to close the account from the School Committee.

2. Identify in writing all assets of the student activity. The disposition of any assets shall be determined by the School Committee and may not benefit specific individuals.

3. Annually notify all students of the required actions if an activity ceases to exist.

Student Activity Deficits

Individual student activity accounts are not permitted to be in a deficit position. Whenever a deficit exists that is not the result of timing, the Superintendent shall recommend remedial action to the School Committee in a timely manner.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:47

CROSS REFS: JJA, Student Organizations
DIE, Audits

STUDENT LATE NIGHT OR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

School sponsored field trips and/or any travel by students that is off campus shall be subject to administrative approval except in the following cases where School Committee approval will be required:

1. All students' trips sponsored by the Avon Public Schools that are planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M. and/or any overnight travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving safety of transportation, accommodation arrangements, and fundraising efforts. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

This policy includes athletic travel which must be approved by School Committee when travel requires an overnight stay and/or is planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M. (#1.).

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The School Committee will only review for approval school- sanctioned trips. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

LEGAL REFS.: CHAPTER 346 OF THE ACTS OF 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002
M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N

STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS

1. Transportation

The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI and/or background checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and School Committee Policy.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory". FMCSA ratings are available at https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SMS/ .

The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

2. Trip Scheduling

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered "optional school programs" and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (Refer to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide)

Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

3. Fundraising

The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.

Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.

If students are charged individual fees for participation, every effort should be made to provide scholarships where needed.

Additional Resources

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
www.fmcsa.dot.gov

United Motorcoach Association – Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide (includes "Motorcoach Safety Checklist)
www.uma.org/consumer/student-transportation/

Department of Defense's approved list of motor carriers
www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/BusAgreementPOCs.pdf

CROSS REFS.:	IJOA, Field Trips ADDA Background Checks
LEGAL REFS.:	M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N; 71:38R 603 CMR 27.00

ATHLETIC AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY
(Grades 6-12)

The School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in the self- discipline and team effort made possible through participation in extra curricular activities.

For interscholastic athletic participation, students in grades 6 – 12 must meet M.I.A.A. requirements. In addition, ALL students in grades 6 – 12 must obtain a minimum grade point average (G.P.A.) of 2.0 in Avon Public School-sponsored clubs and organizations, or to hold class office. For the purpose of determining eligibility for Fall athletic and extra-curricular activities, the final G.P.A. from the preceding school year, rather than fourth-term G.P.A., will be considered.

The following will also apply:

1. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.

2. A student who repeats work, upon which he/she has once received credit, cannot count that subject for a second time for eligibility.

3. An Avon student receiving services under Chapter 766 in a setting other than in the Avon Public Schools (i.e., collaborative, hospital schools, etc.), may be declared academically eligible by the principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met.

4. Students who have office and/or teacher detentions may not participate in an interscholastic sport or extra-curricular activity until the detention obligation has been met for the day upon which the activity is to take place.

5. Students are required to meet school attendance policies as contained in the student handbooks.

6. Students who are absent from school for the purpose of making college visitations may participate in interscholastic athletics and extra-curricular activities on those days, providing that these visitations do not exceed three (3) per semester.

7. Students who are absent from school for the purpose of religious observance on recognized religious holidays may participate in interscholastic athletics and extra- curricular activities on those days at their parents'/guardians' prerogative. Students who are eighteen years of age or older may exercise their own prerogative in this regard.

8. The Principal 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.

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities[5] including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: game officials, coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the

[5] Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheer leading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be “fine” on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 111:222
105 CMR 201.000

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION REGULATIONS

Section I. What is a Concussion?

A concussion is defined as a transient alteration in brain function without structural damage, but with other potentially serious long-term ramifications. In the event of a concussion, the brain sustains damage at a microscopic level in which cells and cell membranes are torn and stretched. The damage to these cells also disrupts the brain at a chemical level, as well as causing restricted blood flow to the damaged areas of the brain, thereby disrupting brain function. A concussion, therefore, is a disruption in how the brain works; it is not a structural injury. Concussions are difficult to diagnose because the damage cannot be seen. A MRI or CT Scan cannot diagnose a concussion, but they can help rule out a more serious brain injury to a student athlete. Because concussions are difficult to detect, student athletes must obtain medical approval before returning to athletics following a concussion.

Section II. Mechanism of Injury:

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. Any force that causes the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull can cause a concussion. A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body can be caused by either indirect or direct trauma. The two direct mechanisms of injury are coup-type and contrecoup-type. Coup-type injury is when the head is stationary and struck by a moving object such as another player's helmet, a ball, or sport implement, causing brain injury at the location of impact. Contrecoup-type injury occurs when the head is moving and makes contact with an immovable or slowly moving object as a result of deceleration, causing brain injury away from the sight of impact. Indirect forces are transmitted through the spine and jaw or blows to the thorax that whip the head while the neck muscles are relaxed. Understanding the way in which an injury occurred is vital in understanding and having a watchful eye for athletes who may exhibit symptoms of a concussion so these student athletes can receive the appropriate care.

Section III. Signs and Symptoms:

Signs (what you see):

- Confusion
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent
- Altered coordination
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Slow response to questions
- Forgets events prior to injury (retrograde amnesia)
- Forgets events after injury (anterograde amnesia)
- Loss of consciousness (any duration)

Symptoms (reported by athlete):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision/ blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)
- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering
- Trouble with sleeping/ excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Sadness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/ glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

If any of the above signs or symptoms are observed after a suspected blow to the head, jaw, spine or body, they may be indicative of a concussion and the student athlete must be removed from play immediately and not allowed to return until cleared by an appropriate allied health professional.

Section IV. Management and Referral Guidelines:

A. Exclusion from Play
   A. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
   B. The student shall not return to practice or competition unless and until the student provides medical clearance by a duly licensed Physician.
   C. The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The coach also must provide this information to the parent in writing by using the REPORT OF HEAD INJURY form by the end of the next school day.
   D. The coach or his or her designee shall communicate with the Athletic Director before the start of the next school day that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.
   E. The coach or his or her designee shall communicate, by the end of the school day, with the school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.

Section V. Gradual Return to Play Protocol:

Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Athletic Director, unless another person is specified in school policy or procedure, a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (Medical Clearance and Authorization Form), or school-based equivalent, prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals as authorized by 105 CMR 201.011(A). The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate.

A. Only the following individuals may authorize a student to return to play:
   1. A duly licensed physician;
   2. A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
   3. A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
   4. A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

Final Medical Clearance

A. Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the School Nurse a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (Medical Clearance and Authorization Form) which may be found on school website under Athletics. This form must be completed by a physician prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity.

Section VI. School Nurse Responsibilities:

1. Participate and complete the CDC training course on concussions. A certificate of completion will be recorded by the nurse leader yearly.
2. Complete symptom assessment when student athlete enters Health Office (HO) with questionable concussion during school hours. Repeat in 15 minutes.
3. Observe students with a concussion for a minimum of 30 minutes.
4. If symptoms are present, notify parent/guardian(s) and instruct parent/guardian(s) that student must be evaluated by an MD.
   a. If symptoms are not present, the student may return to class.
5. If symptoms appear after a negative assessment, MD referral is necessary.
6. Allow students who are in recovery to rest in HO when needed.
7. School nurse will notify teachers and guidance counselors of any students or student athletes who have academic restrictions or modifications related to their concussion.
8. Educate parents and teachers about the effects of concussion and returning to school and activity.
9. If injury occurs during the school day, inform administrator and complete accident/incident form.
10. Enter physical exam dates and concussion dates into the student information system.

Section VII. School Responsibilities:

1. Review and, if necessary, revise, the concussion policy every 2 years.
2. Once the school is informed of the student's concussion, a contact or "point person" should be identified (e.g. the guidance counselor, athletic director, school nurse, school psychologist or teacher).
3. Point person to work with the student on organizing work assignments, making up work and giving extra time for assignments and tests/quizzes.
4. Assist teachers in following the recovery stage for student.
5. Decrease workload if symptoms appear.
6. Recognize that the student's ability to perform complex math equations may be different from the ability to write a composition depending on the location of the concussion in the brain.
7. Educate staff on the signs and symptoms of concussions and the educational impact concussions may have on students.
8. Include concussion information in student handbooks.
9. Develop a plan to communicate and provide language-appropriate educational materials to parents with limited English proficiency.

Section VIII. Athletic Director Responsibilities:

1. Provide parents, athletes, coaches, and volunteers with educational training and concussion materials yearly.
2. Ensure that all educational training programs are completed and recorded.
3. Ensure that all students meet the physical exam requirements consistent with 105 CMR 200.000 prior to participation in any extracurricular athletic activity
4. Ensure that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activity have completed and submitted their pre-participation forms, which include health history form, concussion history form, and MIAA form.
5. Ensure that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.
6. Ensure that all head injury forms are completed by parent/guardian(s) or coaches and reviewed by the coach, athletic trainer, school nurse, and school physician.
7. Inform parent/guardian(s) that, if all necessary forms are not completed, their child will not participate in athletic extracurricular activities.
8. The Athletic Director shall participate in the development and biannual review of the policies and procedures required by 105 CMR 201.006 for the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries within the school district or school.
9. The Athletic Director shall complete the annual training as required by 105 CMR 201.007.
10. Reporting annual statistics to the Department in accord with 105 CMR 201.017.

Section IX. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

1. Complete a Pre-participation Form.
2. Complete and return concussion history form to the athletic department.

3. Inform school if student sustains a concussion outside of school hours. Complete new concussion history form following new injury.
4. If student suffers a concussion outside of school, complete head injury form and return it to the school nurse.
5. Complete a training provided by the school on concussions and return certificate of completion to the athletic department.
6. Watch for changes in your child that may indicate that your child does have a concussion or that your child's concussion may be worsening. Report to a physician:
   A. Loss of consciousness
   B. Headache
   C. Dizziness
   D. Lethargy
   E. Difficulty concentrating
   F. Balance problems
   G. Answering questions slowly
   H. Difficulty recalling events
   I. Repeating questions
   J. Irritability
   K. Sadness
   L. Emotionality
   M. Nervousness
   N. Difficulty with sleeping
7. Encourage your child to follow concussion protocol.
8. Enforce restrictions on rest, electronics and screen time.
9. Reinforce recovery plan.
10. Request a contact person from the school with whom you may communicate about your child's progress and academic needs.
11. Observe and monitor your child for any physical or emotional changes.
12. Request to extend make up time for work if necessary.
13. Recognize that your child will be excluded from participation in any extracurricular athletic event if all forms are not completed and on file with the athletic department.

Section X. Student and Student Athlete Responsibilities:

1. Return required concussion history form prior to participation in athletics.
2. Participate in all concussion training and education and return certificate of completion to the athletic department prior to participation in athletics.
3. Report all symptoms to athletic trainer and/ or school nurse.
4. Follow recovery plan.
5. REST.
6. NO ATHLETICS.
7. BE HONEST!
8. Keep strict limits on screen time and electronics.
9. Don't carry books or backpacks that are too heavy.
10. Tell your teachers if you are having difficulty with your classwork.

11. See the athletic trainer and/or school nurse for pain management.
12. Return to sports only when cleared by physician and the athletic trainer.
13. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
14. Report any symptoms to the school nurse and parent(s)/guardian(s) if any occur after return to play.
15. Return medical clearance form to physician prior to return to play.
16. Students who do not complete and return all required trainings, testing and forms will not be allowed to participate in sports.

Section XI. Coach & Band Instructor Responsibilities:

1. Participate in Concussion Education Course offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) on a yearly basis. Complete certificate of completion and return to the athletic department.
2. Ensure all student athletes have returned concussion history and health history form prior to participation in athletics.
3. Complete a head injury form if their player suffers a head injury and the athletic trainer is not present at the athletic event. This form must be shared with the athletic director and school nurse and the parent/guardian.
4. Ensure all students have completed a concussion educational training and returned their certificate of completion prior to participation in athletics.
5. Remove from play any student athlete who exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion.
6. Do not allow student athletes to return to play until cleared by a physician.
7. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
8. Refer any student athlete with returned signs and symptoms back to physician.
9. Any coach, band instructor, or volunteer coach for extracurricular activities shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student athlete, including using a musical instrument, helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

Section XII. Post Concussion Syndrome:

Post Concussion Syndrome is a poorly understood condition that occurs after a student athlete receives a concussion. Student athletes who receive concussions can have symptoms that last a few days to a few months, and even up to a full year, until their neurocognitive function returns to normal. Therefore, all school personnel must pay attention to and closely observe all student athletes for post concussion syndrome and its symptoms. Student athletes who are still suffering from concussion symptoms are not ready to return to play. The signs and symptoms of post concussion syndrome are:

- Dizziness
- Headache with exertion
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Fatigue
- Irritability

- Frustration
- Difficulty in coping with daily stress
- Impaired memory or concentration
- Eating and sleeping disorders
- Behavioral changes
- Alcohol intolerance
- Decreases in academic performance
- Depression
- Visual disturbances

Section XIII. Second Impact Syndrome:

Second impact syndrome is a serious medical emergency and a result of an athlete returning to play and competition too soon following a concussion. Second impact syndrome occurs because of rapid brain swelling and herniation of the brain after a second head injury that occurs before the symptoms of a previous head injury have been resolved. The second impact that a student athlete may receive may only be a minor blow to the head or it may not even involve a hit to the head. A blow to the chest or back may create enough force to snap the athlete's head and send acceleration/deceleration forces to an already compromised brain. The resulting symptoms occur because of a disruption of the brain's blood autoregulatory system which leads to swelling of the brain, increasing intracranial pressure and herniation.

After a second impact a student athlete usually does not become unconscious, but appears to be dazed. The student athlete may remain standing and be able to leave the field under his/her own power. Within fifteen seconds to several minutes, the athlete's condition worsens rapidly, with dilated pupils, loss of eye movement, loss of consciousness leading to coma and respiratory failure. The best way to handle second impact syndrome is to prevent it from occurring altogether. All student athletes who incur a concussion must not return to play until they are asymptomatic and cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

Section XIV. Concussion Education:

It is extremely important to educate coaches, athletes and the community about concussions. On a yearly basis, all coaches must complete the online course called "Concussion In Sports: What You Need to Know". This course is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Student athletes also need to understand the importance of reporting a concussion to their coaches, parents, athletic trainer and other school personnel. Every year student athletes and parents will participate in educational training on concussions and complete a certificate of completion. This training may include:

- CDC Heads-Up Video Training, or
- Training provided by the school district

The school district may also offer seminars, speakers, and discussion panels on the topic of concussions. Seminars offer an opportunity for a certified athletic trainer, athletic director and nurse leader to speak about concussions on the field at practices and games and to discuss the protocol and policy that the district has enacted. Providing education within the community will offer the residents and parents of athletes an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns on the topic of brain injury and concussions. When it comes to concussions, everyone needs to be aware of the potential dangers and remember that a concussion is a brain injury. Whenever anyone has a doubt about a student athlete with a concussion, SIT THEM OUT and have them see the appropriate healthcare professional!

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring themself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02.

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

(a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
(b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

Use of Restraint

Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion shall be prohibited in public education programs.

Prone restraint shall be prohibited in public education programs except on an individual student basis, and only under the following circumstances:

1. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
2. All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;

3. There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
4. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
5. The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the principal; and,
6. The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b) 1 - 5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

All physical restraints, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

Physical restraint shall not be used:

(a) As a means of discipline or punishment;
(b) When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
(c) As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
(d) As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Referral to law enforcement or other state agencies. Nothing in these regulations prohibits:

(a) The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual;
(b) Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or

(c) The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to G.L. c. 119, § 51A. 603 CMR 46.00 shall not be used to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

The Superintendent will develop and monitor procedures identifying:

(a) Methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student;

Methods for Preventing Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide Prevention/De-Escalation Techniques

Prevention includes using positive steps taken before a behavioral crisis occurs.

a. Interrupting
Interrupting is the first thing to do when trying to break a chain of behaviors, distracting the individual to another topic or something in the environment.

b. Ignoring
Ignoring is used during the early stages of negative behavior to which the behavior is not visibly responded, in order to avoid inadvertently reinforcing it. It does not mean that early danger signs are truly ignored and does not mean that dangerous behaviors are ever ignored.

c. Redirecting
Redirecting is used to manage a potentially dangerous behavior by deflecting or redirecting the behavior, and then reinforcing a more appropriate behavior by rewarding the individual for displaying the more appropriate behavior.

Prevention also involves assuring staff has training; appropriate staffing; policies/procedures in place including behavioral support plans; appropriate programming; ability to recognize individuals strengths, weaknesses and triggers.

Crisis Planning:

1. Follow-up Response to Threats of Violence Or Suicide
Threats of violence or self-injury, made by a student or group of student(s) should be reported to the school principal and reviewed with the school psychologist or school crisis team, regardless of whether a student's behavior resulted in the use physical restraint. Based on the situation, the school crisis team may recommend or require that the student(s) undergo a Risk Assessment, or if the student is in obvious crisis, a referral to the local hospital will be made.

Protocol for Student Suicidality:

When a teacher or staff member becomes aware of any student experiencing at-risk behavior (verbal statements, writing, report from peers, parents etc.) they will report immediately to counseling staff and/or crisis team.

At risk for self-injury/suicide is defined as: Any student who indicates through actions speech or writings that they may be at risk of harming themself physically.

SCT: Student Crisis Team. A predefined group of district staff who will be familiar with response guidelines for students in crisis. SCT may include:

Principal
Assistant Principal
BCBA
School Psychologist
School Nurse
School Adjustment Counselor
Guidance Counselor

Protocol: The identified child will be directly supervised by a member of the SCT throughout the process.

1. Upon observation of at-risk behaviors or suspicion of risk for self-injury, the school staff member will immediately contact a school administrator.
2. The identified child will be accompanied by an adult to the office of the school Counselor (School Adjustment Counselor, Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist).
3. The child will then be interviewed by the school psychologist and/or school adjustment counselor and/or an administrator. The child's level of risk will be assessed.
4. If the child is thought to be at imminent risk of self-injurious behavior, the SCT members shall follow protocol for a medical emergency, call an ambulance and/or Mobile Crisis Services and have the child evaluated at an emergency room.
5. Parents/guardians will be contacted.
6. If the risk is not thought to be imminent, the child's parents will be contacted and they will be asked to immediately pick up the child and bring them to an appropriate professional (i.e. the child's pediatrician, psychotherapist, mental health counselor) for further evaluation and intervention.
7. The identified child's re-entry to the district will follow the re-entry protocol for students at risk for self-injurious behavior.

De-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior:

General guidelines for de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior include:

1. Remain calm -To possibly help prevent the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior use a neutral and level tone of voice, control one's facial expressions and use a supportive non-threatening body language.
2. Obtain Assistance - Whenever possible, school personnel should immediately take steps to notify school administrators, the school's administrative response team and/or other school personnel of a potentially dangerous situation and to obtain additional assistance.
3. One Person Speaks - In order to minimize the likelihood of confusion and/or the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior having one person providing overall direction to the response and the follow up procedures is advisable. This often may be either the first trained staff person on the scene or the staff person with the most information about the particular situation.
4. Remove Student If Possible - The feasibility of having a student experiencing distress leave an area with other students and move to another more private and safe area in order to de-escalate should be considered.
5. Remove Other Students - If it is not feasible to have a student experiencing distress move to a more private and safe area in order to de-escalate, consider the feasibility of having other staff assist and monitor the removal of other students to another area within the school until the student de-escalates.

(b) Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;

Methods for Engaging Parents and Students

(a) Avon Public Schools will have the physical restraint policy and procedures available to students and parents in the student handbooks.
(b) Any parent/guardian with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within Avon Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or Director of Pupil Services to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure described below.
(c) A description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint and method of physical restraint in emergency situations;

Alternatives to Physical Restraint in emergency situations

There are a variety of appropriate responses or interventions that should be used first when seeking to prevent challenging behaviors, student violence, self-injurious behaviors, or to de-escalate potentially dangerous or disruptive behavior among groups of students or with an individual student.

The following are examples of strategies that the district uses to support students prior to exhibiting challenging behaviors or as alternative to physical restraint when students begin exhibiting agitation:

Positive behavioral interventions: The district employs a variety of services and strategies to address the social, emotional and behavioral well-being of all our students.

a. Anti-bullying curriculum is provided throughout the district utilizing developmentally appropriate lessons and activities
b. Counseling services are available for all students across the district and provided by licensed, certified staff including school psychologists, school adjustment counselors, guidance counselors. Counseling is provided in small group and individualized settings
c. Reentry meetings are scheduled for all students returning to school from psychiatric hospital programs
d. District has established a working relationship with several community agencies

Verbal redirection

1. Active listening
2. Use of calm, non-threatening tones and language
3. Offering the student(s) a choice
4. Discussing options or possible resolutions with the student(s)
5. Verbal directive to cease behavior

Opportunity for a break

Loss of earned tokens/rewards/privileges Physical Escort

A physical escort is a temporary touch or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated or upset to walk to a safe location. Physical Escorts must be brief in nature.

Staff Training Requirements

All staff will be trained on the program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used. Such training shall occur within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment.
Training shall include information on the following:

(a) The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;

(b) The program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;

(c) Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;

(d) When behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;

(e) Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and

(f) Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(3) in the use of physical restraint.

In-Depth Training Requirements

At the beginning of the school year, the building Principal or their designee will identify those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.

Designated staff members shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually.

In-depth training will include:

a. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
b. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
c. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
d. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
e. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
f. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint

(1) Trained personnel. Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

(2) Use of force. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

(3) Safest method. A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.043(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.

(4) Duration of restraint. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

(5) Safety requirements. Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:
   (a) No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
   (b) Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
   (c) If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
   (d) Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.

Follow-Up Procedures

After a student is released from a physical restraint, staff shall implement follow-up procedures, including:

1) Reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the physical restraint;
2) Reviewing the incident with the staff member(s) who administered the physical restraint to ensure proper restraint procedures were followed; and
3) Consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the physical restraint, if any.

Physical Restraint Reporting Requirements

Program staff shall report the use of any physical restraint as specified in 603 CMR 46.06(2).

: The program staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the principal for review of the use of the restraint. If the principal has administered the restraint, the principal shall prepare the report and submit it to an individual or team designated by the superintendent or board of trustees for review. The principal or director or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Department upon request.

. The principal or director of the program or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and shall notify the parent by written report sent either within three school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. If the school or program customarily provides a parent of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the parent in that language. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

. The written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(2) and (3) shall include:

(a) The name of the student; the names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, as applicable, the name of the principal or designee who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant to 603 CMR 46.05(5)(c).
(b) A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
(c) A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.
(d) Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
(e) Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, and any other related matter.

Report all physical restraints to the Department. Every program shall collect and annually report data to

the Department regarding the use of physical restraints. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

Report all restraint-related injuries to the Department. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(4) to the Department postmarked no later than three school working days of the administration of the restraint. The program shall also send the Department a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the principal pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. The Department shall determine if additional action by the program is warranted and, if so, shall notify the program of any required actions within 30 calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s).

Periodic review of data and documentation

. The principal shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

(a) review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
(b) analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
(c) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;
(d) agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

. The principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

Grievance Procedures

This grievance procedure is established to ensure procedures are in place for receiving and investigating complaints regarding physical restraint practices. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may file a complaint by utilizing this procedure:

i. The complaint must be submitted in writing to the Director of Pupil Services
ii. The Director of Pupil Services will meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint.
iii. A thorough investigation will be conducted which may include interviewing witnesses, staff involved and/or the student; reviewing all written documentation leading up to and pertaining to the incident and all reports filed with the Director of Specialized Services and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
iv. A written report will be developed by the Director of Pupil Services and provided to the complainant.

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave their assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents/guardians or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents/guardians, District personnel, and the community.

Student Safety

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment; and
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

Fire Drills and Reporting

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The Principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the Principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The Principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:37L; 148:2A

CROSS REFS.: EB, Safety Program
EBB, First Aid

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parent/guardian(s) have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parent/guardian(s) shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a family member or other individual to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

- Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;

- Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parent/guardian(s). Requests made by parent/guardian(s) for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;

- Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate administrator of education immediately;

- Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee of any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up the student.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent/guardian cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:53;54;54A;54B;55;55A;55B;56; 57; 69:8A

CROSS REF.: EBB, First Aid
EBC, Emergency Plans
JLCD, Administration of Medications to Students

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined once in each school year for screening in sight/hearing/BMI, and for other physical problems as provided in the laws. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

Every student will provide evidence of or will be given a general physical examination four times: upon entering school and upon admittance to the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

Every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of parent or guardian in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school Principal.

The school physician will make a prompt examination of all children referred to him/her by the school nurse. He/she will examine school employees when, in his opinion, the protection of the student's health may require it. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

Whenever the school nurse finds a child suffering from any disease or medical problem, the situation will be reported to the parent or guardian in writing, or by personal visit if remedial treatment is recommended. A copy of the report will be filed at school.

The school nurse will make a monthly report to the Superintendent of the number of students examined, the number excluded; and the number recommended for treatment or special adjustment of work. In all cases of exclusion or recommendation, the causes will be included in the report.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:53; 71:54; 71:56; 71:57
105 CMR 200

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS

Students registering in the district, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent/guardian.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:15

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases.

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a disabled child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). If a student has been approved for self-administration, a student who needs medication during the school day may be reminded to take the medicine by the school nurse or other individual designated by the school nurse in the student's medical administration plan. This provision only applies when the school nurse has a medical administration plan in place for the student. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

Exceptions:

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, the School Committee shall vote to approve such training and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.
4. Students with life threatening allergies may possess and administer epinephrine.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:54B
Dept. of Public Health Regulations:
1 05 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR 3.00

PROCEDURES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE IN SCHOOLS

The Avon School Committee, in consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Health, approves the following policies governing administration of medications in school programs under its jurisdiction.

I. Management of Medication Administration Program

A. The Avon Public Schools designated school nurse shall be the supervisor of the medication administration program for Avon Public Schools programs.

B. The school nurse, the consulting school physician, and the administrative team shall develop and propose to the Avon School Committee policies and procedures relating to the administration of medications.

C. Medication Orders/Parental Consent:

1. The school nurse shall ensure that there is a proper medication order from a licensed prescriber which is renewed as necessary, including at the beginning of each academic year. A telephone order or an order for any change in medication shall be received only by the school nurse. Any such verbal order must be followed by a written order within three school days. Whenever possible, the medication order shall be obtained, and the medication administration plan shall be developed before the student enters or re-enters school.

   a) In accordance with standard medical practice, a medication order from a licensed prescriber shall contain:

      1) the student's name;
      2) the name and signature of the licensed prescriber and business and emergency phone numbers;
      3) the name of the medication;
      4) the route and dosage of medication;
      5) the frequency and time of medication administration;
      6) the date of the order and expected discontinuation date;
      7) diagnosis and any other medical
      8) condition(s) requiring medication, if not a violation of confidentiality or if not contrary to the request of a parent,
      9) guardian or student to keep confidential;
      10) specific directions for administration.

   b) Every effort shall be made to obtain from the licensed prescriber the following additional information, if appropriate:

1) any special side effects, contraindications and adverse reactions to be observed;

2) any other medications being taken by the student;
3) the date of the next scheduled visit, if known.

c) Special Medication Situations

1) For short-term medications, i.e., those requiring administration for ten school days or fewer, the pharmacy-labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order; if the nurse has a question, she may request a licensed prescriber's order.
2) For "over-the-counter" medications, i.e., non-prescription medications, the school nurse shall follow the Board of Registration in Nursing's protocols regarding administration of over-the-counter medications in schools, i.e., a prescription is required.
3) Investigational new drugs may be administered in the schools with (a) a written order by a licensed prescriber, (b) written consent of the parent or guardian; and (c) a pharmacy-labeled container for dispensing. If there is a question, the school nurse may seek consultation and/or approval from the school physician to administer the medication in the school setting.

2. The school nurse shall ensure that there is a written authorization by the parent or guardian which contains:
   a) the parent or guardian's printed name, signature and an emergency phone number;

   b) a list of all medications the student is currently receiving, if not a violation of confidentiality or contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or student that such medications not be documented;

   c) approval to have the school nurse or school personnel designated by the school nurse administer the medication;

   d) persons to be notified in case of a medication emergency, in addition to the parent or guardian and licensed prescriber.

D. Medication Administration Plan:

1. The school nurse, in collaboration with the parent or guardian whenever possible, shall establish a medication administration plan for each student receiving a medication. Whenever possible, a student who understands the issues of medication administration shall be involved in the decision-making process and his/her preferences respected to the maximum extent possible. [The Department of Education Guidelines for special education require student consent for the 18-21 age group and student participation in planning after age 14, if

appropriate.] If appropriate, the medication administration plan shall be referenced in any other health or educational plan developed pursuant to the Massachusetts Special Education Law (Individual Education Plan under Chapter 766) or Federal laws, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

2. Prior to the initial administration of the medication, the school nurse shall assess the child's health status and develop a medication administration plan which includes:

   a) the name of the student;

   b) an order from a licensed prescriber, including business and emergency telephone numbers;

   c) the signed authorization of the parent or guardian, including home and business telephone numbers;

   d) any known allergies to food or medications;

   e) the diagnosis, unless a violation of confidentiality or the parent, guardian or student requests that it not be documented;

   f) the name of the medication;

   g) the dosage of the medication, frequency of administration and route of administration;

   h) any specific directions for administration;

   i) any possible side effects, adverse reactions or contraindications;

   j) the quantity of medication to be received by the school from the parent or guardian;

   k) the required storage conditions;

   l) the duration of the prescription;

   m) the designation of unlicensed school personnel, if any who will administer the medication to the student in the absence of the nurse, and plans for back-up if the designated persons are unavailable;

   n) plans, if any, for teaching self administration of the medication;

   o) with parental permission, other persons, including teachers, to be notified of medication administration and possible adverse effects of the medication;

p) a list of other medications being taken by the student, if not a violation of confidentiality or contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or student that such medication not be publicly documented;

q) when appropriate, the location where the administration of the medication will take place;

r) a plan for monitoring the effects of the medication;

s) provision for medication administration in the case of field trips and other short-term special school events. The school nurse may delegate medication administration to another responsible adult. Written consent from the parent or guardian for the named responsible adult to administer the medication shall be obtained. The school nurse shall instruct the responsible adult on how to administer the medication to the child.

E. The school nurse shall develop a procedure to ensure the positive identification of the student who receives the medication.

F. The school nurse shall communicate significant observations relating to medication effectiveness and adverse reactions or other harmful effects to the child's parent or guardian and/or licensed prescriber.

G. In accordance with standard nursing practice, the school nurse may refuse to administer or allow to be administered any medication, which, based on her/his individual assessment and professional judgment, has the potential to be harmful, dangerous or inappropriate. In these cases, the parent/guardian and licensed prescriber shall be notified immediately by the school nurse and the reason for refusal explained.

H. For the purposes of medication administration, the Licensed Practical Nurse functions under the general supervision of the school nurse who has delegating authority. (Medication administration is within the scope of practice for the Licensed Practical Nurse under M.G.L. Chapter 112.)

I. The school nurse shall have a current pharmaceutical reference available for her/his use, such as the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR) or U.S.P.DI (Dispensing Information), Facts and Comparisons.

J. Delegation/Supervision:

The Avon School Committee, in consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, authorizes that the responsibility for the administration of medication may be delegated to the following categories of school personnel, according to criteria delineated in CMR 210.004 (B)(2):

* Administrative Staff
* Licensed Health Personnel

* Supervising Teacher(s)
* Health Aides
* Secretaries

For the purpose of administering emergency medication to an individual child, including parenteral administration (i.e. by injection) of medication pursuant to 210.004(B)(2), the school nurse may identify individual school personnel or additional categories. Said school personnel shall be listed on the medication administration plan and receive training in the administration of emergency medication to a specific child.

1. The school nurse, in consultation with the Avon Public Schools' consulting physician, shall have final decision-making authority with respect to delegating administration of medications to unlicensed personnel in school systems registered with the Department of Public Health.

2. When medication administration is delegated by the school nurse to unlicensed school personnel, such personnel shall be under the supervision of the school nurse for the purposes of medication administration.

3. A school nurse shall be on duty in the Avon Public Schools while medications are being administered by designated unlicensed school personnel, and available by telephone should consultation be required.

4. The administration of parenteral medications may not be delegated, with the exception of epinephrine or other medication to be administered in a life-threatening situation where the child has a known allergy or pre-existing medical condition and there is an order for administration of the medication from a licensed prescriber and written consent of the parent or guardian.

5. Medications to be administered pursuant to p.r.n. ("as needed") orders may be administered by authorized school personnel after an assessment by or consultation with the school nurse for each dose.

6. For each school, an updated list of unlicensed school personnel who have been trained in the administration of medications shall be maintained. Upon request, a parent shall be provided with a list of school personnel authorized to administer medications.

7. Supervision of Unlicensed Personnel:

   Authorized unlicensed personnel administering medications shall be under the supervision of the school nurse. The Avon School Committee, where appropriate, shall provide assurance that sufficient school nurse(s) are available to provide proper supervision of unlicensed school personnel. Responsibilities for supervision at a minimum shall include the following:

   a) After consultation with the principal or administrator responsible for a given school, the school nurse shall select, train and supervise the specific individuals, in those categories of

school personnel approved by the School Committee, in consultation with the Board of Health when appropriate, who may administer medications. When necessary to protect student health and safety the school nurse may rescind such selection.

b) The number of unlicensed school personnel to whom responsibility for medication administration may be delegated is determined by:

   1) the number of unlicensed school personnel the school nurse can adequately supervise on a weekly basis as determined by the school nurse;
   2) the number of unlicensed school personnel necessary, in the nurse's judgment, to ensure that the medications are properly administered to each student.

c) The school nurse shall supervise the training of the designees consistent with the Department of Public Health's requirements in CMR 210.07 of the Regulations Governing the Administration of Prescription Medications in Public and Private Schools.

   1) The school nurse shall document the training and evidence of competency of unlicensed personnel designated to assume the responsibility for medication administration.
   2) The school nurse shall provide a training review and informational update, at least annually, for those staff authorized to administer medications.

d) The school nurse shall support and assist persons who have completed the training to prepare for and implement their responsibilities related to the administration of medication.

e) The first time that an unlicensed school personnel administers medication, the delegating nurse shall provide supervision at the work site.

f) The degree of supervision required for each student shall be determined by the school nurse after an evaluation of the appropriate factors involved in protecting the student's health, including, but not limited to the following: (i) health condition and ability of the student ; (ii) the extent of training and capability of the unlicensed school personnel to whom the medication administration is delegated; (iii) the type of medication; and (iv) the proximity and availability of the school nurse to the unlicensed person who is performing the medication administration.

g) Personnel designated to administer medications shall be provided with the names and locations of school personnel who have documented certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Schools should make every effort to have a minimum of two school staff members with documented certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation present in each school building throughout the day.

h) For the individual child, the school nurse shall:

1) determine whether or not it is medically safe and appropriate to delegate medication administration;
2) administer the first dose of the medication, if (i) there is reason to believe there is a risk to the child as indicated by the health assessment, or (ii) if the student has not previously received this medication in any setting;
3) review the initial orders, possible side effects, adverse reactions and other pertinent information with the person to whom medication administration has been delegated;
4) provide supervision and consultation as needed to ensure that the student is receiving the medication appropriately. Supervision and consultation may include record review, on-site observation and/or student assessment;
5) review all documentation pertaining to medication administration every two weeks or more often as necessary.

II. Self Administration of Medications

"Self administration" means that the student is able to consume or apply medication in the manner directed by the licensed prescriber, without additional assistance or direction. A student may be responsible for taking his/her own medication after the school nurse has determined that the following requirements are met:

A. The student, school nurse and parent/guardian, where appropriate, enter into an agreement which specifies the conditions under which medication may be self administered.

B. The school nurse, as appropriate, develops a medication administration plan which contains only those elements necessary to ensure safe self administration of medication.

C. The student's health status and abilities have been evaluated by the school nurse who then deems self administration safe and appropriate. As necessary, the school nurse shall observe initial self administration of the medication.

D. The school nurse is reasonably assured that the student is able to identify the appropriate medication, knows the frequency and time of day for which the medication is ordered.

E. There is written authorization from the student's parent or guardian that the student may self medicate, unless the student has consented to treatment under M.G.L. c. 112, s. 12F or other authority permitting the student to consent to medical treatment without parental permission.

F. The licensed prescriber must provide a written order for self administration.

G. The student follows a procedure for documentation of self administration of medication. The student's self administration is monitored based on his/her abilities and health status. Monitoring may include teaching the student the correct way of taking the medication, reminding the student to take the medication, visual observation to ensure compliance, recording that the medication was taken, and notifying the parent, guardian or licensed prescriber of any side effects, variation from the plan, or the student's refusal or failure to take the medication.

H. With parental/guardian and student permission, as appropriate, the school nurse may inform appropriate teachers and administrators that the student is self-administering a medication.

III. Handling, Storage and Disposal of Medications

A. A parent, guardian or parent/guardian-designated responsible adult shall deliver all medications to be administered by school personnel or to be taken by self-medicating students.

1. The medication must be in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container.

2. The school nurse or other responsible person receiving the medication shall document the quantity of the medication delivered.

3. In extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school nurse, the medication may be delivered by other persons; provided, however, that the nurse is notified in advance by the parent or guardian of the arrangement and the quantity of medication being delivered to the school.

B. All medications shall be stored in their original pharmacy or manufacturer labeled containers and in such manner as to render them safe and effective. Expiration dates shall be checked.

C. All medications to be administered by school personnel shall be kept in a securely locked cabinet used exclusively for medications, which is kept locked except when opened to obtain medications. The cabinet shall be substantially constructed and anchored securely to a solid surface. Medications requiring refrigeration shall be stored in either a locked box in a refrigerator or in a locked refrigerator maintained at temperatures of 38 to 42 degrees Fahrenheit.

D. Access to stored medications shall be limited to persons authorized to administer medications and to self-medicating students. Access to keys and knowledge of the location of keys shall be restricted to the maximum extent possible. Students who are self-medicating shall not have access to other students' medications.

E. Parents or guardians may retrieve the medications from the school at any time during regular school hours.

F. No more than a thirty (30) school day supply of the medication for a student shall be stored at the school.

G. Where possible, all unused, discontinued or outdated medications shall be returned to the parent or guardian and the return appropriately documented. In extenuating circumstances, with parental consent when possible, such medications may be destroyed by the school nurse in accordance with any applicable policies of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Food and Drugs. All medications should be returned at the end of the school year.

IV. Documentation and Record-Keeping

A. Each school where medications are administered by school personnel shall maintain a medication administration record for each student who receives medication during school hours.

1. Such record at a minimum shall include a daily log and a medication administration plan, including the medication order and parent/guardian authorization.

2. The medication administration plan shall include the information as described in Section 210.005 (E) of the Regulations Governing the Administration of Prescription Medications in Public and Private Schools.

3. The daily log shall contain:

   a) the dose or amount of medication administered;
   b) the date and time of administration or omission of administration, including the reason for omission;
   c) the full signature of the nurse or designated unlicensed school personnel administering the medication. If the medication is given more than once by the same person, he/she may initial the record, subsequent to signing a full signature.
   d) An electronic signature is acceptable if health records are computerized.

4. The school nurse shall document in the medication administration record significant observations of the medication's effectiveness, as appropriate, and any adverse reactions or other harmful effects, as well as any action taken.

5. All documentation shall be recorded in ink or via electronic signature and shall not be altered.

6. With the consent of the parent, guardian, or student where appropriate, the completed medication administration record and records pertinent to self administration shall be filed in the student's cumulative health record. When the parent, guardian or students where appropriate, objects, these records shall be regarded as confidential medical notes and shall be kept confidential.

B. The school district shall comply with the Department of Public Health's reporting requirements for medication administration in the schools.

C. The Department of Public Health may inspect any individual student medication record or record relating to the administration or storage of medications without prior notice to ensure compliance with the Regulations Governing the Administration of Prescription Medications in Public and Private Schools.

V. Reporting and Documentation Errors

A. A medication error includes any failure to administer medication as prescribed for a particular student, including failure to administer the medication:

1. within appropriate time frames; (The appropriate time frame should be addressed in the medication administration plan.)

2. in the correct dosage;

3. in accordance with accepted practice;

4. to the correct student.

B. In the event of a medication error, the school nurse shall notify the parent or guardian immediately. (The school nurse shall document the effort to reach the parent or guardian.) If there is a question of potential harm to the student, the nurse shall also notify the student's licensed prescriber or school physician.

C. Medication errors shall be documented by the school nurse on the accident/incident report form. These reports shall be retained in the Avon Public Schools' files and/or the student health record. They shall be made available to the Department of Public Health upon request. All medication errors resulting in serious illness requiring medical care shall be reported to the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Family and Community Health. All suspected diversion of, or tampering with, drugs shall be reported to the Department of Public Health, Division of Food and Drugs.

D. The school nurse shall review reports of medication errors and take necessary steps to ensure appropriate medication administration in the future.

VI. Response to Medication Emergencies

Medication emergencies may result from accidental over dosage, accidental omission, or allergic reaction. If a medication emergency is suspected, assessment of the situation should take place, followed by the appropriate response:

A. Life-Threatening/Extremely Urgent

1. Assessment: Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction), which may result in airway obstruction, swelling of the tongue, difficulty breathing, increased respiratory rate, cool/clammy skin, dizziness.

2. Action: The school nurse or another adult will remain with the student, monitoring vital signs, and administer CPR as necessary. The Emergency Medical System (EMS) (telephone call to 911) will be activated by another staff member and the student will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital. The parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible.

B. Non-Life-Threatening/Urgent

1. Assessment: Severe stomach cramping, nausea/vomiting, not feeling "right", vital signs within normal limits, no difficulty breathing or swallowing.

2. Position for comfort, monitor vital signs. Notify parent/guardian to transport student to medical facility for observation and treatment.

C. Documentation of any medication emergency should include the pertinent medical history leading up to the emergency and any steps taken to resolve the situation. If an allergic reaction to a medication has occurred, the student's medical record should be clearly marked identifying the allergy and the student's prescribing physician should be made aware of the allergic reaction. (See also Section V, part C.)

VII. Dissemination of Information to Parents or Guardians Regarding Administration of Medication

Such information shall include an outline of these medication policies and shall be available for parents' and guardians' review upon request.

VIII. Resolving Questions Between the School and a Parent Regarding the Administration of Medication

A. Initially the parent/guardian may arrange to speak with the school nurse in an attempt to clarify any questions. An appointment may be arranged through contacting her/him during school hours.

B. If the parent is not satisfied with the results of the meeting; a conference may be arranged with the building principal, the school nurse, and the consulting school physician.

C. If, after conferring with the building principal, the parent feels that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, the parent may then bring this matter to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools.

D. If, after discussing the matter with the Superintendent the parent feels the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, the parent may then bring this matter to the attention of the School Committee.

IX. Policy & Procedure Review and Revision

Review and revision of the policy and procedures shall occur as needed, but at least every two years

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS – FORMAL AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH

The Avon School Committee recognizes that, on occasion, individuals, groups and/or organizations may determine it desirable to establish a scholarship to benefit Avon students. In order to effectively manage the scholarship process, it shall be the policy of the Avon school committee that a formal agreement shall be entered into between the Committee and the respective benefactor(s).

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. While no student will be denied access due to an inability to pay fees, all students will be required to remit charges and fines.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon Committee approval. The schools, however, may:

- Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.

- Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment (including computers and technology devices).

Students, on a case-by-case basis, may request a waiver from paying fees. However, students granted a waiver are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the denial of participation in extra class activities and graduation exercises and activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school district to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations. The temporary record of each student will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent/guardian of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following their graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school district.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school district are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
P.L. 93-380, Amended
P.L. 103-382, 1994
M.G.L. 66:10; 71:34A, B, D, E, H
603 CMR 23.00

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents/guardians on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.
- Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.
- Provide a service to parents/guardians and students.
- Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30B:1(b)(31)

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that the District is an integral part of the community, and that community support is necessary for the District's operation and achievement of excellence. The School Committee and District staff members recognize that community support is based on a mutual exchange, a dynamic process in which the District contributes to the community's success and, in turn, benefits from the community's resources.

In order to maintain productive relationships with the community, the District is committed to sustaining:

- To keep local citizens regularly and thoroughly informed through all available channels of communication on the policies, programs, problems, and planning of the school system, and to carry out this policy through its own efforts, those of the Superintendent, and such information officers as may be appointed.

- To solicit the studied counsel of the people through advisory committees selected from the community and appointed to consider problems that vitally affect the future of our children.

- Effective, accurate, and meaningful communications that facilitate dialogue, encourage involvement in District programs, and create community advocacy for its public schools.

- Volunteer programs that provide mutually enriching experiences for our students, staff, and community volunteers.

- Recognition programs that publicly honor the contributions of our students, employees, and community partners and express pride in our individual and collective accomplishments.

- Community service efforts that enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community.

SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents/guardians, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents/guardians are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents/guardians regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of student conduct.

Additionally, involvement of parents/guardians in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

(b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to regulation.

(c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.

(d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in regulation.

(e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

(f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to law, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H
603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents
20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

To enhance communications between parents/guardians and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations, including booster organizations, at each school building. For this purpose, the Committee will officially recognize parent organizations. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations will be officially recognized upon request by the building Principal who will file a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent.

2. A vote, open to all parents/guardians of children enrolled, will designate the organization to be recognized if more than one organization with the same purpose makes the request.

3. All parent organizations shall obtain 501C3 status and file appropriate paperwork with state authorities and make proof of such status available to school district administration.

4. All parent organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders.

LEGAL REFS: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

CROSS REFS: ACA – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect, and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsible, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and judgments about the schools to the school administration, to the staff, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents, who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, people may be invited by the committee to act as advisors, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgments in arriving at decisions.

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

In accordance with state law, all grants and gifts to the District shall be reviewed and accepted by the School Committee before expenditure or use. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school district. Any gift of cash, regardless of donor intent, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee kept separate from the general fund, and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:53A, 71:37A

CROSS REFS.: DD, Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects
GBEBD, Online Fundraising and Solicitation--Crowdfunding

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other legally confidential matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

All commonly available public record documents of the School District shall be posted on the district's website. The length of time such records shall remain posted on the district website shall be in accordance with the Municipal Record Retention Manual. In addition, the official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent/guardian.

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents/guardians and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes
GBJ, Personnel Records
JRA, Student Records

COMMUNITY USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

On recommendation of the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology, the district shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access, including the use of wireless internet access, systems will be available to the community.

Those using the district systems as a member of the community must abide by the district's procedures regarding responsible use.

All guests will be prompted to, and must accept the district's digital use form before accessing the district network.

The Superintendent or designee may revoke such access at any time.

CROSS REF: INJD ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES
INJDC ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

DISTRICT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The School Committee wishes to ensure accurate delivery of information, and as such, the Avon Public Schools will maintain a district website and such district and school social media accounts as authorized by the Superintendent. All such online platforms will be maintained by district staff, acting in their professional capacities.

In order for public communication with the School Committee and district personnel to be responded to in a timely manner, in line with the legal requirements for public communication, commenting on all district and school sites will be turned off. Every school and district site will clearly indicate this policy and will direct those wishing to contact the school and district personnel to the appropriate venues to do so.

Unauthorized use of district or school name is prohibited.

A high priority will be placed on such platforms being accessible, frequently updated, and user friendly.

LEGAL REF:	Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Declaration of Rights, Article 16 Constitution of the United States of America, Amendment 1 MGL Ch. 66 MGL Ch. 30A
REF:	A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (Secretary of the Commonwealth)
CROSS REF:	BEDH - PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS GBEE - PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY BHE - USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the successes, challenges, programs, planning, and activities of the school district.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school district publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.

2. News releases that are of a district-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.

3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school district.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit their complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:5
603 CMR 26.00

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

It is the School Committee's desire that maximum use of school property be enjoyed by the townspeople. It is the Committee's intent that such use will maintain safe conditions and preserve the property for school program use.

Use of school buildings and other facilities by organizations will be permitted only when a worthy educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served; or a substantial group of citizens from the community will be benefited.

School facilities will be used according to the regulations and rental fee schedules recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Permission for the use of facilities must be obtained through the office of the Superintendent of Schools, where applications are available for this purpose.

Smoking within the building is not permitted. Permission for the possession and sale of alcoholic beverages may be granted to a nonprofit organization, which is properly licensed, only by the School Committee.

Eligibility

School facilities will be available for the following:

1. Public school activities
2. Parent-teacher activities
3. Official town public hearings and political activities
4. Meetings and activities sponsored by the School Committee and school personnel
5. Parks and playgrounds activities
6. Local nonprofit and noncommercial organization activities
7. Metropolitan civic, educational, social, and religious organization activities if a substantial portion of the members are residents of the town
8. The activities of other organizations when approved by the School Committee

School and Town Preference

The priority given requests for use of school facilities will be as follows:

1. School activities
2. Town meetings and elections over other community activities
3. Parks and playgrounds

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:71; 71:71B; 272:40A

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The use of school buildings, grounds, equipment, and facilities will be authorized by the Superintendent in conformity with the following regulations, which have been approved by the School Committee.

1. Requests for the use of school facilities will be made at the office of the Superintendent at least 14 days prior to the date of use.

2. School facilities may not be used for individual, private, or commercial purposes.

3. Requests for school facilities must be cleared with the building Principal or the Superintendent or both, should the nature of the request so justify.

4. School-related groups will be permitted reasonable use of school facilities without charge.

5. All activities must be under competent adult supervision approved by the Superintendent and the Principal of the building involved. In all cases, an assigned school employee will be present. The group using the facilities will be responsible for any damage to the building or equipment.

6. Groups receiving permission are restricted to the dates and hours approved and to the building area and facilities specified, unless requested changes are approved by the Superintendent.

7. Groups receiving permission are responsible at all times for the observance of fire and safety requirements.

8. Smoking within the building is not permitted. Permission for the possession and sale of alcoholic beverages may be granted to a nonprofit organization, which is properly licensed, only by the School Committee.

9. Proper liability insurance will be required of all groups given permission to use school facilities.

10. The Committee will approve and periodically review a fee schedule for the use of school facilities.

11. In situations where there is no cost factor to the school district, or in situations where a mutual exchange of facilities is possible between the school district and the organization, rates may be modified or eliminated by the Superintendent. In situations where extended usage for a long period of time is required, rates may be set at a contract price.

12. The School Committee reserves the right to cancel any permission granted.

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fundraising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system should provide students, parents/guardians, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund- raising organizations.

2. The school system should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.

3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and causes loss of instructional time.

4. No fund-raising activities shall be conducted by any organization on the premises of the schools except as approved in advance by the Avon School Committee.

Following these guiding statements, the superintendent and principals may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without School Committee permission.

2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without School Committee permission.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA (or similar groups) and groups representing school system employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitation.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 44:53A

CROSS REFS.: GBEBC, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee may grant permission for advertising of commercial products or services in school buildings or on school property under guidelines or regulations it may approve. Otherwise, no advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school property. Publications of the school system will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school system to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

CROSS REFS.: JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee encourages parents/guardians and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals.

Visits by parents/guardians to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental/guardian requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.

2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.

3. For security purposes it is required that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.

4. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.

5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

CROSS REF.: IHBAA, Observations of Special Education Programs

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make to the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

SECTION L

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

LA	**EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS**
LB	**RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
LBC	**RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS**
LDA	**STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS**

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the Committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.

2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The School Committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision making.
6. Provide enrichment opportunities in the areas of athletics and the arts.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for children to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the School Committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy, the superintendent will include in reports to the committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48; 71:71D; 71B:4; 74:4 through 74:7A; 76:1

RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

In accordance with state law, the School Committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the school equals that of the municipality's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

All of the following steps are required for approval of a private school:

1. The school submits a letter of application to the Superintendent of Schools.
2. The school completes all items on the "Checklist for Approval of a Private School" and submits required documentation.
3. The Superintendent or designee reviews the submitted materials.
4. The Superintendent or designee visits the school.
5. The school makes a presentation to the School Committee.
6. The Superintendent makes a recommendation to the School Committee.
7. The School Committee takes formal action on the recommendation.
8. The school is notified of the School Committee's decision.

The School Committee will act reasonably and in good faith to carry out its statutory approval function.

If substantial changes are made in the private school's program, the school must seek renewed approval.

The School Committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when law does not expressly prohibit this cooperation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48 and 71D; 71B:4; 74:4-7A; 76:1

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The Committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system. All initial arrangements with the colleges and universities will be subject to Committee approval.

The Committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school system will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will ensure there are procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet the requirements of the sending institution and fit with the Committee's policies.