Dover School Committee

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

5:30 PM

Dover-Sherborn Middle School Library

Live stream via Dover-Sherborn Cable Television

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Welcome School Committee Member Laurence Migausky**
3. **Reorganization**
4. **Community Comments**

   https://meet.google.com/gre-owyp-oeu (will close after Community Comments)
5. **Dover PTO - PTO President Asema Khan**
6. **Superintendents Comments**
   - Draft District Goals 2026-2027
   - Classroom Support/Class Size Study
7. **Financial Reports**
   - Warrant Report
   - FY26 Monthly Report
8. **Discussion Items**
   - FY27 Projected Enrollment
   - 2026-27 School Improvement Plan (1st Read)
9. **Action Items**
   - Student Handbook (2nd read) **A.R.**
   - Code of Conduct (2nd read) **A.R.**
   - Restraint Policy (2nd read) **A.R.**
10. **Consent Items** **A.R.**
    - Approval of Minutes – May 12, 2026
11. **Communication for Members**
    - Subcommittee Assignments
12. **Adjourn**

NOTE: The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may, in fact, be discussed and other items not listed may also be raised for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

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The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn
157 Farm Street
Dover, MA 02030
Phone: 508-785-0036 Fax: 508-785-2239
www.doversherborn.org

Elizabeth M. McCoy, Superintendent
Denton Conklin, Assistant Superintendent
Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
Kate McCarthy, Director of Student Services

To: Dover, Sherborn, and Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committees
From: Elizabeth McCoy
Re: Draft District Goals 2026-2027
Date: May 29, 2026

DRAFT DISTRICT GOALS 2026-27

DISTRICT GOAL #1: INSTRUCTIONAL COHERENCE

Develop and implement a PK-12 system of instructional rounds, job-embedded coaching, and collaborative feedback practices aligned to a shared vision of effective practice (9 Best Practices).

- Design and implement a consistent instructional rounds model to support shared learning across classrooms and schools.
- Strengthen PK–12 instructional coaching systems to promote continuous, job-embedded professional growth.
- Clarify the distinct roles of instructional coaches and evaluators to ensure coaching remains focused on growth and support.
- Develop and share common expectations and best practices for post-observation feedback and reflective conversations.
- Promote structured peer classroom visits to encourage collaboration, reflection, and the sharing of effective instructional practices.

DISTRICT GOAL #2: DATA-INFORMED DECISION MAKING

Convene a PK-12 data team to analyze district data and further implement a culture of data-informed decision making relative to student growth and achievement within each school.

- Analyze district and subgroup data to identify trends, monitor progress, and inform instructional and systemic improvements.
- Expand the use and accessibility of data dashboards to support consistent, timely, and actionable use of student performance data at all levels.

DISTRICT GOAL #3: SAFE & SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS

Revisit, refine, and align district-wide routines, policies, and systems across all schools to ensure consistent, safe, and supportive learning environments for all students and staff.

- Strengthen administrative capacity through ongoing training on relevant laws, regulations, and district protocols.
- Continue cross-building collaboration to calibrate and align practices for greater consistency and coherence.
- Provide clear, accessible resources to families that are aligned with school-wide curricula, expectations, and priorities.

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Elizabeth M. McCoy, Superintendent
Denton Conklin, Assistant Superintendent
Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
Kate McCarthy, Director of Student Services

To: Dover School Committee & Sherborn School Committee
From: Elizabeth McCoy, Superintendent
Date: May 29, 2026
Re: Research and Review Process: Supporting Students and Teachers in Today's Classrooms

As a result of feedback from educators and families about the increasing complexity of today's classrooms, the Dover School Committee has asked for a review of district data, educational research, and comparable district practices related to classroom support and learning conditions.

The goal of this process is to identify the staffing structures, instructional supports, and behavioral systems that will best support students and educators and promote meaningful student growth.

While this review was initiated at the request of the Dover School Committee, our commitment to supporting all students, along with the regionalized nature of our secondary schools, makes it important that we examine needs, practices, and potential recommendations for both Chickering and Pine Hill Elementary Schools.

This review is intended to provide a thoughtful, data-informed, and community-centered examination of current challenges, including growing academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs, as well as potential future support and solutions.

The work will be organized into six phases running from June through October 2026.

Phase 1 - Data Collection (Early June)

District leadership will gather and analyze both internal and comparable district data related to:

- Current class sizes and staffing ratios
- Inclusion percentages and intervention supports
- Behavioral trends
- Teacher retention and attendance data
- Educational assistant assignments and push-in support models
- Comparable district class size practices and staffing structures

This phase will help establish a clear understanding of current conditions and identify patterns, strengths, and areas for further exploration.

Phase 2 - Stakeholder Input (Early June)

District leadership will seek input from educators through:

- Building-based focus groups
- An anonymous staff survey

These conversations and survey responses will focus on identifying the most significant classroom challenges, possible root causes, and the supports educators believe would have the greatest impact.

Phase 3 - Research and Benchmarking (July-August)

District leadership will review educational research and promising practices related to:

- Class size and high-needs classrooms
- Classroom support staff and intervention models
- Inclusion, co-teaching, and behavioral supports
- MTSS and intervention systems
- Teacher sustainability

Research sources will include Project STAR, John Hattie summaries, Education Endowment Foundation toolkits, PBIS resources, and staffing models from comparable districts.

Phase 4 - Analyze and Prioritize Solutions (Early September)

Using the data, stakeholder feedback, and research findings, the District leadership will identify:

- High-impact supports
- Most urgent areas of need
- Financially realistic options for consideration

Phase 5 - Draft Recommendations (Mid-September)

District leadership will develop a focused set of actionable recommendations that may include:

- Phased implementation strategies
- Clear rationale for proposed investments or changes
- Alignment with student and staff needs

Phase 6 - Final Report and Presentation (Early October)

A final report will be presented to the School Committee summarizing:

1. The objective of the review
2. Key findings
3. Stakeholder feedback themes
4. Research summaries
5. Comparisons of support models
6. Recommendations

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7. Cost considerations
8. Proposed next steps

This process is intended to help guide thoughtful long-term planning and ensure that future decisions are grounded in research, stakeholder input, student needs, and fiscal responsibility.

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Elizabeth M. McCoy, Superintendent
Denton Conklin, Assistant Superintendent

Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
Kate McCarthy, Director of Student Services

TO: Dover School Committee
FROM: Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
DATE: May 29, 2026
RE: FY26 Warrants

The following FY26 Accounts Payable Warrants were approved by one of the Committee's designated signers:

Voucher #	Date	Amount	Fund
1111	5/14/2026	$45,642.66	Circuit Breaker
1112	5/14/2026	$999.50	Title IVA
1113	5/14/2026	$61,145.14	General-OOD
1114	5/14/2026	$17,416.98	Food Service
1115	5/14/2026	$49,206.70	General-School
1117	5/28/2026	$103,363.43	Circuit Breaker
1118	5/28/2026	$102,974.74	General-OOD
1119	5/28/2026	$27,618.96	General-School

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Elizabeth M. McCoy, Superintendent
Denton Conklin, Assistant Superintendent

Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
Kate McCarthy, Director of Student Services

TO: Dover School Committee
FROM: Dawn Fattore, Business Administrator
RE: FY26 Operating Update
DATE: May 29, 2026

Attached please find:
* Status of Appropriations as of May 28, 2026

Note: As in previous years, the financial narrative will be rolling with new/updated information in ***bold****.*

Status of Appropriations

Salaries

We have encumbered the majority of salaries for FY26. There are variances in several of the line items resulting from the following:

- *SPED Administration* reflects a savings of approx. **$15,000** based on the reallocation of responsibilities for the Pre-K Director position. The oversight of the pre-k program is now incorporated into the responsibilities of the Pine Hill SPED Coordinator and not a separate position. These savings are reflected in the FY27 Budget.
- *School Leadership-Building* reflects **$26,000** in savings due to the retirement of an Administrative Assistant and the subsequent conversions of the position from 12-month to 10-month, aligning it with staffing in all other school buildings.
- *Educators, Classroom* reflects several post-FY26 staffing changes, unbudgeted lane changes and savings from leaves of absences resulting in a small positive variance versus the first reported negative variance of $47,000.
- *Educators, SPED* reflects the addition of a .6FTE Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) to the educator matrix (position converted from a contracted service position with funds budgeted in SPED Services), several post-FY26 staffing changes and unbudgeted lane changes resulting in a negative variance of $50,000.

Custodial overtime and substitute costs are expensed as incurred. We will update the committee on changes in staffing as the year progresses.

Expenditures

There are no material variances to report except as noted below.

The savings in SPED, Services reflects the movement of outside SLP services to an educator position. The FY26 heating oil bid came in at $2.225 per gallon (budget based on $2.75/per gallon) providing a positive variance in Utilities at this time.

Out-of-District

Tuition encumbrances are reflected for all out-of-district placements as of **May 28th.** We currently have 23 placements, **six (6)** more than budgeted. The total negative variance in tuition **costs** is approximately **$790,000**. This is comprised of **$460,000** from new placements and **$475,000** from known placements we opted not to include in the budget based on one-year impacts, offset by $145,000 of savings from placement changes. This could continue to fluctuate as the year progresses. Transportation costs are currently projected to be over budget based on the increase in placements. FY26 Circuit Breaker (CB) has been posted and Dover will be receiving $1.9 million. Tuition costs are being fully funded at the 75% mandated rate and transportation costs at 61% at this time.

You will note that the CB Offset has been reduced to reflect the 4th quarter of Dover's CB allocation for the Region aged placements remaining at the Region to provide potential funding for unbudgeted places as we move forward with the shift of the accounting and reporting for Dover students aged 6th grade through age 22.

We will be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have at Tuesday's meeting.

Dover Public Schools
Status of Appropriations as of May 28, 2026

SALARIES	FY26 BUDGET	EXPENDED 28-May	ENCUMBRANCES	TOTAL PROJECTED	OPERATING VARIANCE/ BUD.REMAINING	% of BUDGET
SUPERINTENDENT	$146,947	$99,586	$49,793	$149,379	(2,432)	- 1.65%
BUSINESS AND FINANCE	124,396	80,469	40,234	120,703	3,693	2.97%
DISTRICT INFO MANAGEMENT	84,029	57,752	28,876	86,628	(2,599)	- 3.09%
SPED ADMINISTRATION	257,011	188,310	59,201	247,511	9,499	3.70%
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP-BUILDING	418,626	357,865	33,716	391,581	27,045	6.46%
ACADEMIC LEADERS	39,274	37,637	3,112	40,749	(1,475)	- 3.76%
EDUCATORS, CLASSROOM	3,842,274	2,837,233	993,354	3,830,588	11,687	0.30%
EDUCATORS, SPED	1,319,875	988,137	379,924	1,368,061	(48,186)	- 3.65%
SUBSTITUTES	45,000	58,843	2,089	60,932	(15,932)	-35.40%
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS	678,289	604,952	65,310	670,262	8,028	1.18%
LIBRARIANS & MEDIA CENTER	75,723	55,336	20,387	75,723	0	0.00%
BUILDING BASED PD	16,875	20,700	0	20,700	(3,825)	-22.67%
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS	201,829	147,490	54,339	201,829	0	0.00%
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	121,289	79,557	27,884	107,442	13,847	11.42%
MEDICAL/HEALTH SERVICES	108,287	76,672	32,288	108,960	(673)	- 0.62%
CUSTODIAL SERVICES	235,982	193,588	25,844	219,432	16,550	7.01%
TOTAL SALARIES	**$7,715,707**	**$5,884,127**	**$1,816,352**	**$7,700,479**	**$15,227**	**0.20%**
EXPENDITURES						
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	$9,000	$5,323	$1,221	$6,544	2,456	27.29%
SUPERINTENDENT	18,500	19,101	0	19,101	(601)	- 3.25%
LEGAL SERVICES	9,000	5,000	2,500	7,500	1,500	16.67%
DISTRICT INFO MANAGEMENT	80,500	72,076	134	72,210	8,290	10.30%
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP-BUILDING	18,750	17,802	877	18,679	71	0.38%
SPED SERVICES/SUPPLIES	86,500	33,300	10,689	43,989	42,511	49.15%
LIBRARIANS & MEDIA CENTER	14,360	7,764	0	7,764	6,596	45.93%
COURSE REIMBURSEMENT/PD	34,900	16,004	0	16,004	18,896	54.14%
TEXTBOOKS & RELATED SOFTWARE	75,000	58,989	4,599	63,588	11,412	15.22%
LIBRARY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	7,200	6,076	0	6,076	1,124	15.61%
INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT	17,000	13,012	2,291	15,303	1,697	9.98%
GENERAL SUPPLIES	67,050	60,303	536	60,839	6,211	9.26%
GUIDANCE	3,500	5,658	0	5,658	(2,158)	-61.66%
MEDICAL/HEALTH SERVICES	1,500	1,222	0	1,222	278	18.53%
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	330,821	247,858	71,494	319,352	11,469	3.47%
CUSTODIAL SERVICES	25,000	18,761	2,100	20,861	4,139	16.56%
UTILITIES	247,500	178,424	50,651	229,075	18,425	7.44%
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING	139,500	132,374	16,053	148,427	(8,927)	- 6.40%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	**$1,185,581**	**$899,048**	**$163,145**	**$1,062,193**	**$123,388**	**10.41%**
TOTAL INDISTRICT OPERATING	**$8,901,288**	**$6,783,175**	**$1,979,497**	**$8,762,672**	**$138,616**	**1.56%**
OOD TUITION & TRANSPORTATION						
TUITION TO MA SCHOOLS	75,000	61,734	14,472	76,206	(1,206)	- 1.61%
TUITION TO COLLABORATIVES	220,000	339,061	2,425	341,486	(121,486)	-55.22%
TUITION TO NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL	1,937,000	2,430,694	174,234	2,604,928	(667,928)	-34.48%
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	$320,000	$298,742	$137,364	436,106	(116,106)	-36.28%
TOTAL OOD	**$2,552,000**	**$3,130,230**	**$328,495**	**$3,458,726**	**($906,726)**	**-35.53%**
TOTAL OPERATING	**$11,453,288**	**$9,913,406**	**$2,307,992**	**$12,221,398**	**($768,110)**	**- 6.71%**
CB Reimbursement offset *				**($1,461,181)**	**$1,461,181**	
Est.Operating Expenses/ Surplus				**$10,760,217**	**$693,071**	

** Reduced by $437,919 representing the Region's portion of the 4th Quarter CB payment that will remain at the Region for FY27*

2026-2027				
CHICKERING ENROLLMENT				
9/1/26				
Grade		**Dover**		
PreK		10		
Grade K		68		
Grade 1		84		
Grade 2		66		
Grade 3		65		
Grade 4		83		
Grade 5		92		
Dover Totals		468		

DRAFT: Chickering Elementary Improvement Plan

2026-2027 School Year

Updated May 27 2026

Goal 1: Strengthen Literacy Instruction Through High-Quality Curriculum Implementation

Goal Statement:
For the 2026–2027 academic year, Chickering will strengthen student achievement and engagement in literacy through the successful piloting, evaluation, and implementation of high-quality English Language Arts curriculum resources aligned with evidence-based instructional practices. We aim to build consistent, rigorous, and engaging literacy experiences across classrooms that support strong reading, writing, speaking, and thinking skills for all students.

Key Action Steps:

- Pilot two high-quality ELA curriculum programs to determine the strongest instructional fit for Chickering students and staff.
- Provide professional development for all educators through school-based coaching structures, curriculum coordinator, and skilled staff members.
- Establish structures for teacher collaboration both vertically within Chickering and across the elementary schools to ensure alignment in literacy instruction.
- Employ coaching structures to identify, model, and disseminate evidence-based literacy practices, including explicit instruction, vocabulary development, comprehension strategies, and authentic writing opportunities.
- Utilize PLC structures for collaborative planning to incorporate best practices into daily instruction, including small group instruction, discussion-based learning, and meaningful independent practice.
- Ensure equitable access to strong Tier 1 literacy instruction for all learners, including targeted supports and differentiation within the classroom, including high needs subgroups, and those who are ready for a challenge.

Goal 2: Strengthening Equitable Access to Comprehensive, Standards-Aligned Elementary Programming

Goal Statement:

For the 2026–2027 academic year, Chickering will continue to refine and implement a redesigned elementary programming model that promotes equitable access, high-quality instruction, and enriched learning experiences for all students.

Key Action Steps:

- Implement and monitor the revised elementary schedule structure to ensure equitable instructional opportunities across classrooms and grade levels.
- Establish PLC leader check-in cycles to monitor implementation, gather staff feedback, and make responsive adjustments throughout the year.
- Maintain access to six specialist experiences for all students, ensuring a well-rounded educational experience.
- Launch the shared Health and Wellness teacher model across Pine Hill and Chickering to support whole-child development.
- Strengthen schoolwide SEL instruction through CharacterStrong programming, counselor partnership, and staff professional development around shared language and practices.
- Fully implement Music Workshop for grades 4 and 5 as an inclusive option for students who choose not to participate in band.
- Continue reshaping and strengthening the Spanish program to ensure consistent access, quality instruction, and alignment across elementary schools.
- Expand Library and Technology instruction to address MA DESE standards for Library instruction such that all students have DESE standards based instruction in these areas.
- Evaluate programming structures through staff and student feedback to guide ongoing improvement.

Goal 3: Increase Student Engagement Through Active, Responsive Learning

Goal Statement:
For the 2026–2027 academic year, Chickering will increase student engagement by expanding active, multimodal, and student-centered instructional practices across all content areas. We aim to create dynamic classrooms where students are actively participating, collaborating, moving, creating, and thinking deeply as part of the learning process.

Key Action Steps:

- Provide professional development focused on movement-based instructional strategies that increase participation, focus, and cognitive engagement.
- Conduct an internal screen-time audit to better understand student technology use during instruction and identify opportunities for balanced learning experiences.
- Develop schoolwide expectations around purposeful technology integration that prioritizes meaningful learning over passive screen use.
- Expand teacher use of multimodal instructional approaches, including discussion, hands-on learning, movement, collaborative tasks, visual learning, and creative expression through faculty meetings.
- Utilize PLC leaders to model, support, and scale engagement strategies across grade levels and teams.
- Increase opportunities for project-based learning across grade levels, providing students with authentic, collaborative, and inquiry-driven learning experiences that deepen engagement and application of skills across content areas.
- Celebrate and share innovative instructional practices across classrooms to build internal capacity and momentum, via Professional Development and Learning Walks.

Goal 4: Strengthen Student Connection Through Community Engagement

Goal Statement:
For the 2026–2027 academic year, Chickering will deepen student engagement and sense of belonging by expanding meaningful connections between the school and the broader community. We aim to create authentic opportunities for students to learn from, collaborate with, and contribute to the diverse individuals and organizations that make up our local community.

Key Action Steps:

- Develop intergenerational learning opportunities by inviting senior citizens and community members to visit classrooms, share experiences, read with students, and participate in school events.
- Expand partnerships with local organizations, libraries, cultural institutions, and service groups to provide students with real-world learning experiences and community connections.
- Create opportunities for students to engage in service learning, leadership activities, and community-based projects that foster empathy, citizenship, and civic responsibility.
- Increase family and community participation in schoolwide events, celebrations, and classroom experiences to strengthen relationships and student pride in the Chickering community.

DISTRICT WIDE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment for all students from kindergarten through grade 12. The Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for student behavior in classrooms, on school grounds, on buses, at school-sponsored events, and in all digital spaces connected to school life.

The Code of Conduct is administered within the guidelines set forth by ~~the~~ state and federal laws and regulations with regard to due process for students. The Handbook is distributed at the beginning of every year to every student. It is the expectation of the administration and the school system that parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will read the Handbook. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for raising any questions that they may have regarding this Handbook and its provisions with the school administration. Even if the student does not sign the acknowledgement form included with the distribution of this Handbook, ~~such presumption is made~~ they are expected to comply with the rules and policies contained within.

A student's behavior off campus or anywhere in a student's digital footprint can have a serious negative impact on other students or members of the school community during the school day and at extracurricular activities. As such, if a student engages in conduct outside of school that causes a substantial disruption to the school environment, such conduct may be considered a basis for discipline.

Students are expected to be courteous, reasonable and responsible. Students will respect all staff, other students, and school property. Inappropriate attitudes and behavior will be dealt with in a manner that will encourage change. A system of warnings and procedures is built into the overall approach to changing behavior in Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.

As always, discipline cases are handled individually, respecting the rights, developmental needs and dignity of the student while taking into account the needs and best interest of the entire school community. To respect the confidentiality of all of our students and families, and in accordance with state and federal student privacy laws, we are not at liberty to discuss the disciplinary actions taken regarding students other than your own.

The district recognizes that students with disabilities may need accommodations or modifications, and any school rule, policy, or expectation can be adjusted as needed to ensure equal access and support.

Progressive Discipline

Whenever possible and practical, administrators consider an appropriate alternative to suspension before the student is ~~disciplined~~ excluded from school. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, culturally responsive behavior supports, restorative practices/justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Access to Educational Programming

Any student who is suspended from school will be given the opportunity to make up schoolwork as needed to make academic progress. Students are therefore encouraged to maintain contact with their classroom teacher via email to keep on track with classwork. In addition~~and,~~ where appropriate, the student's school counselor may contact the student during the out of school suspension to provide social emotional support. Upon completion of the suspension, the student's assistant principal/school counselor will work with the student, family, and teachers to reintegrate the student back into the school community in a positive way.

Any student who is excluded from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days will have an opportunity to receive education services in order to make academic progress through the school-wide education service plan.

Except in the case of the felony charges and statutory offenses, students may not be suspended more than 90 days in a school year.

Discipline and Due Process

Our goal is always to support positive behavior and resolve issues in ways that help students learn from mistakes. When discipline is necessary, the school follows Massachusetts laws, which outline student rights and steps for different levels of consequences. The statutory due process requirements for such consequences are detailed in Appendix A.

<u>Classroom and School-Based Consequences</u>
Teachers and administrators may use warnings, loss of privileges, detentions, or restorative practices. These consequences ~~may~~ do not require a formal hearing but families will be notified if patterns of behavior emerge.

<u>Alternatives to Suspension</u>
Prior to issuing exclusionary discipline, such as suspension, the principal or their designee shall consider the use of alternatives. The principal, head of school, superintendent, or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student:

- shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and
- shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless:
    - specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, or
    - in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

Alternative Remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (1) mediation, (2) conflict resolution, (3) restorative justice, and (4) collaborative problem solving.

This rule shall not apply to disciplinary offenses under MGL Ch. 71, Section 37H and Section 37H1/2 or emergency removals.

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year. The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. The principal's decision to issue an in-school suspension is final and not appealable to the Superintendent.

Short-Term Suspension (10 days or fewer)

Before a suspension, the principal will hold a meeting with the student and parent/guardian. Families will receive written notice describing the charges, evidence, and proposed consequences. The student and parent/guardian have the right to share information before a decision is made. The principal or designee will provide a written decision~~, and the parent/guardian may appeal to the superintendent.~~ The principal's decision to issue an in-school suspension is final and not appealable to the Superintendent.

Long-Term Suspension (more than 10 days, up to 90 school days)

The principal will hold a formal hearing, with advance written notice of the charges and rights. Students have the right to be represented by a parent/guardian or other adult, to present evidence, and to question witnesses. After the hearing, the principal will issue a written decision. Families may appeal the decision to the superintendent, whose ruling is final.

Emergency Removal

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

Suspension or Expulsion Related to a Felony Charge or Delinquency Complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Expulsion for Statutory Offenses (permanent removal from school)

By law, expulsion may only occur in limited circumstances (weapons, drugs, assault on staff, or felony charges/convictions). Expulsions require a formal hearing with due process protections. Families

have the right to appeal an expulsion to the superintendent ~~(for felony cases) or to the school committee (for 37H cases).~~

Appeal Process

Appeals must be requested in writing within five calendar days of the decision. The superintendent ~~or school committee~~ will schedule a hearing promptly and issue a written decision. We encourage families to reach out to the school office with questions about discipline procedures, rights, or supports available for students.

Violation of Another's Civil Rights

Students have the right to be free from discrimination, including verbal or physical attacks based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or homelessness. Any student who violates another student's rights to be free from discrimination will be subject to disciplinary sanctions which will vary, depending upon the seriousness of the offense, from detention up to and including expulsion. Particularly serious violations will also be referred to the police.

Potential Disciplinary Consequences

Code of Conduct violations, including but not limited to the infractions defined in this section, may result in disciplinary consequences. This section outlines the range of consequences typically issued by administrators. Please note that each disciplinary decision is made on an individual basis, and the decision maker may consider disciplinary history, severity of the conduct, multiple violations of conduct in the same incident, and other factors when determining appropriate consequences. The Administration retains the right to increase or decrease the recommended term of suspension based on aggravating / mitigating circumstances.

Inappropriate ~~Social~~ Physical Contact

School grounds are not an appropriate environment for certain types of physical contact even when consensual. Such behavior will result in referral for appropriate discipline up to and including long-term suspension depending upon the circumstances.

Physical Assault

One-sided attack: possible long-term suspension.

Assault with a weapon: possible long-term suspension. Additionally, the student will be subject to possible long-term suspension or expulsion by the principal for possession of a "dangerous weapon" pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H.

In the case of a physical assault, the Dover Police Department may be contacted, and if the case involves possession or use of a dangerous weapon, a weapons report will be filed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37L. A physical assault on school personnel will result in a possible suspension with the possibility of expulsion by the principal pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71,sec. 37H.

Fighting

First offense: a possible three (3) to five (5) day suspension (administrative decision). Police may be notified.

S*ubsequent offenses:* a possible five (5) to ten (10) day suspension (administrative decision). Police may be notified of all occasions of fighting~~, and charges may be brought for disturbance of a public assembly and disorderly conduct. The School Committee will be notified.~~ Any student involved in a fight who fails to cease or desist at the request or intervention by a staff member may be suspended for five (5) to ten (10) days (administrative decision). Any student who strikes or causes bodily harm or injury to a staff member who is attempting to intervene will be considered to have physically assaulted the staff member and will be subject to expulsion by the Principal under c.71, sec. 37H.

Provoking a Fight

Any student who, by word or action, is determined to have provoked or instigated a fight may receive a possible 1-5 day suspension.

Alcohol and Other Drug Policy

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools strive to provide a healthy, safe and supportive school environment for all students, staff and visitors. Since under Massachusetts's law it is illegal for any individual under the age of 21 to use or possess alcoholic beverages and, regardless of age, to use or possess an illicit drug, acceptance of illegal and unhealthy activity is prohibited.

The Dover and Sherborn Police Departments will be notified in all cases of actual possession, sale and distribution of alcohol or other drugs. The principal will turn over all drugs or contraband to the police before the close of the school day.

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools will continue to provide, without penalties, assistance to students who are voluntarily seeking alcohol and other drug treatment or advice and will continue to protect the due process rights of all students.

Sanctions for Violations of the Alcohol and Other Drug Policy:

Pursuant to Section 37H of chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance as defined in Dover-Sherborn Regional Schools follow the guidelines as outlined in M.G.L. c.94C. Massachusetts Chapter 94C, known as the Controlled Substances Act, is the state law that regulates the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, and use of controlled substances within Massachusetts. ~~It classifies drugs into five schedules (highly addictive substances, marijuana, prescription drugs, alcohol, etc) based on their potential for abuse and accepted medical use, mirroring the federal system. The law establishes penalties for unlawful possession, trafficking, and distribution, with enhanced consequences for offenses involving minors,~~

~~schools, or large quantities. It also governs prescriptions, record-keeping by pharmacies and healthcare providers, and allows for certain exceptions, such as medical use under specific regulations. The act aims to balance public safety with legitimate medical and scientific needs.~~

Depending on the offense committed, students are subjected to school-based disciplinary action that can range from a removal from school programs, to a multi-day suspension, and in some ~~offenses~~ cases expulsion from school.

Other Offenses

~~*Minor Infractions*~~
~~For minor infractions students are generally required to meet with a teacher or administrator which may lead to a restorative practice response or result in detention, loss of privileges and/or parent/guardian notification. Restorative practices or detentions may occur during lunch, after school, afternoon of early release days, or other agreed-upon times at the discretion of the administration.~~

~~Minor infractions may include the following:~~

The following is a list of conduct that is explicitly prohibited by the District and will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to restorative practices, detention, loss of privileges, parent/guardian notification, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension in accordance with Massachusetts law and District policies.

- Discipline referrals from faculty or staff
- Violations and/or disregard of the school policies
- Plagiarism
- Behavior in the corridors, cafeteria, bus and common areas, which does not adhere to the established expectations for conduct
- Tardiness/Truancy/Cutting of class
- Violation of the electronic devices expectations of the school
- Bringing inappropriate non-school-related items to school
- Possession of item resembling a dangerous weapon
- Knowingly making false claims
- Profanity/inappropriate language
- *Dress Code violations*
- AI Policy violation (add link)
- Acceptable Technology Use Violation
- Violation of Responsible Use Policy - Grades K-5
- Violation of Responsible Use Policy - Grades 6-12

~~*Major Infractions*~~
~~Infractions of the nature described in the following examples will result in disciplinary action which could include short-term or long-term suspensions (up to 90 days). Should any of the aforementioned infractions rise to a higher degree, they may be identified as a major infraction.The administration will determine the consequences for major infractions of the Code of Discipline.~~

~~Major infractions may include the following:~~

- Repeated minor infractions or habitual disregard of school policies
- Behavior that is dangerous to self or others, destructive to property, or disruptive to the learning environment.
- Destruction or defacement of school property (ie: Vandalism)
- Unsafe physical behavior/ aggression
- Disorderly conduct/ disruptive behavior to the learning environment
- Assault (includes not only harmful or offensive touching of another person, but also the immediate threat of such touching)
- Threats or intimidation to any student or school department personnel
- Safety Threats/ false alarms
- Fire setting/ arson
- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (See also, M.G.L. ch. 71, §37H at page 38)
- Theft
- Violations of the District's Policy Prohibiting Hazing
- Violations of the District's Policy Prohibiting Bullying, including cyber bullying, and/or retaliation
- Use of slurs, hate speech, or derogatory language referencing gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability
- Harassment of other students and staff because of their gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability
- Any behavior not listed above that is harmful and/or dangerous to the school community

<u>Investigation Process</u>

Interviews and Searches

Under Dover Sherborn School Committee policy, school administrators have the authority, as deemed necessary, to interview students regarding matters that are relevant to the school environment. In addition, school administrators may search students and their personal belongings on school property when the administrator has a reasonable basis for believing that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated a school rule or a state or federal law. Lockers, desks, and similar areas assigned to students remain the property of the school and are therefore subject to inspection by the school administration at any time.

Video Camera Use

Video cameras may be in use in some public areas of school property, such as hallways, the gymnasium, cafeteria and exterior locations of the school building. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken for misconduct that is recorded or observed from that security system.

Protocols related to camera use are:

- Live monitoring may be utilized at any time, particularly during any emergency protocol or situation.

- In cases of serious incidents, such as violence, theft, or vandalism, the principal (or designee), school resource officer, or superintendent (or designee) may view the electronic file captured by the web-based camera system.
- A notice that video surveillance may take place on school property will be posted at the main entrance. The principal also has the option of posting such notices at other locations in the building, at their discretion.

Considerations

Consequences are not automatic and administrators use their discretion in determining what consequences are appropriate given the violation and circumstances surrounding the violation. The infractions and consequences are intended to give both students and parent/guardian a clear understanding of administration's expectations for conduct and consequences that will be considered in making discipline decisions. In addition whenever possible and appropriate a restorative approach will also be applied.

~~Below is a list of potential behaviors and resulting consequences. Consequences will escalate if behavior is repeated. Please note that this is only a **partial list**. Any behavior that is dangerous or harmful to our school community will be addressed as such.~~

Consequences

Depending on the offense committed, students are subjected to school-based disciplinary action that can range from a removal from school programs to a multi-day suspension. In some offenses, this may result in expulsion from school.

In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be contacted to pick up a student or in the event that a parent/guardian refuses to pick up a student if requested to do so, the administration will notify the police department.

Educational Services Plan

Ability to Make Progress
Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Removal from School
Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting

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.

<u>The school's educational service plan options are:</u>

A. Online course enrollment; or
B. Tutoring with coursework provided by the student's classes; or
C. A combination of both A and B.

Please contact the building principal in order to learn more about the available options and arrange for educational services. The student's attendance in educational services and academic progress will be tracked by the district during the period of removal.

If the student is eligible for special education, please contact the Special Education Department or the special education administrator listed on the student's IEP in order to arrange for the provision of any special education services the student's IEP Team has determined the student requires in order to make educational progress during the disciplinary removal.

<u>Considerations for students with disabilities</u>

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)

When a student who is identified as having a disability or who is suspected of having a disability faces a suspension of 10 days or more during a single school year (whether consecutive or cumulative), the Team will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to determine if the behavior that led to the disciplinary action was a "manifestation" of the student's disability or suspected disability.

The MDR Team must answer two questions:

1. Was the conduct in question caused by, or did it have a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability?
2. Was the conduct in question the direct result of the Local Education Agency's (LEA)/district's failure to implement the IEP?

MDR Outcome: Behavior is a Manifestation ("YES" to either question)

- The student cannot be removed from the current educational placement (except in special circumstances, see below).
- The IEP Team must:
  - Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) (if one hasn't been done).
  - Develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), or review and revise an existing BIP to address the behavior.
- The student must be returned to the placement from which they were removed, unless the parent and the district agree to a change in placement as part of the revised BIP.

MDR Outcome: Behavior is NOT a Manifestation ("NO" to both questions)

- The school may apply the same disciplinary procedures to the student as it would to a non-disabled student (e.g., suspension/expulsion).
- However, even if disciplined like a non-disabled student, the district's responsibility to provide FAPE continues.

Provision of Services (FAPE)

After a student with a disability has been removed from their current placement for a total of more than 10 school days in the same school year, the district must provide services to the extent necessary to enable the child to:

- Continue to appropriately progress in the general curriculum.
- Continue to progress toward achieving their IEP goals.

Continuation of Services:
Even if a student with a disability is suspended or expelled, schools must continue to provide educational services that allow the student to make progress in the general curriculum and toward IEP goals.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES):
In cases involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, schools may place a student in an alternative setting for up to 45 school days, even if the behavior is determined to be related to the disability. The team determines the IAES.

Discipline and Students Not Yet Found Eligible:
If a student hasn't yet been found eligible for special education but the school had knowledge that the student might have a disability, similar protections may apply. This includes situations where parents have made a written referral, requested an evaluation, or expressed concerns to staff. A student facing discipline may assert the same procedural safeguards and disciplinary protections as a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the district is deemed to have had "knowledge" of a suspected disability.

Appendix A.

Further descriptions of suspension processes are outlined below

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal ~~or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ or an in-school suspension,~~ the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out of school suspension prior to removal. Parents shall be provided an opportunity to be heard ~~at hearing, and the opportunity~~ and to participate at the hearing.

Notice shall set forth in plain language:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;
3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

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

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

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

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

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

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances

surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

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

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

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

Principals Hearing

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

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of their determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination.

If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

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

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

1. 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;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

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

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to School;

4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or their designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal. If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

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

Appeal of Long-Term Suspension

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant. The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue their written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

Emergency Removal

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal. During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

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

Suspension or Expulsion for Disciplinary Offenses under MGL Ch. 71, Sections 37H & 37H1/2

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

Possession of a dangerous weapon, Possession of a controlled substance, or Assault of staff, MGL Ch. 71, Section 37H

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

The principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in their discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion.

A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint, MGL Ch. 71, Section 37H ½

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension ~~(prior to such suspension taking effect)~~, and the right to appeal. The principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the superintendent.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

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

Guilt or Delinquency, MGL Ch. 71, Section 37 H ½

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

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

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

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

Dover-Sherborn Public Schools



District Handbook

2026-2027

Translation: If you need this information translated, please copy and paste it into Google Translate. The link to Google Translate is http://translate.google.com/. You can also translate using Google Drive. Here's how. The District Website translates all documents and information.

Revised 4/28/26

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1) Introduction

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Dear Families,

Welcome to a new school year! Whether your child is joining us at the elementary, middle or high school level at Dover-Sherborn Public Schools, we're excited to partner with you in supporting your child's growth, learning, and success.

Our schools are proud to be part of communities that value strong academics, social-emotional development, and a positive, inclusive learning environment. While each school has its own unique traditions and culture, we share a common goal: to create safe, supportive, and engaging spaces where every student can thrive.

This handbook is designed to be a helpful resource for students and families. Inside, you will find important information about school policies, procedures, and daily routines, as well as guidance on how to stay connected and involved in school life. We encourage you to review it carefully and reach out with any questions along the way.

We're looking forward to a year of learning, discovery, and connection and we're so glad to have you with us on the journey.

Sincerely,

Dover-Sherborn Administration Team

Our Vision

We will distinguish ourselves through innovative teaching and learning experiences that inspire all students to pursue their individual passion for learning and excellence while we continue to be a nationally-recognized school system.

Our Mission

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools share the mission to inspire, challenge, and support all students as they discover their full potential.

Our Core Values

- Commitment to Community
- Equity and Experience
- Respect and Dignity
- Climate of Care

School Information

29 Cross Street Dover, MA 02030 **508-785-0480**	10 Pine Hill Lane Sherborn, MA 01770 **508-655-0630**	155 Farm Street Dover, MA 02030 **508-785-0635**	9 Junction Street Dover, MA 0203 **508-785-1730**
School Hours: 7:50am-2:15pm Early Release: 7:50am-11:15am		School Hours: 8:35am-3:10pm Early Release: 8:35am- 12:10pm	

School Website Links

- Pine Hill Elementary School
- Chickering Elementary School
- Dover-Sherborn Middle School
- Dover-Sherborn High School

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2) Academic Calendars and Important Dates

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Dover-Sherborn Public Schools maintain a District Calendar to help families plan for the year ahead. This calendar includes key dates such as the first and last days of school, early release days, vacation weeks, professional development days, and districtwide events. Each school also maintains its own school-specific calendar with information tailored to its building based events, including school-based events, performances, meetings, and deadlines. We encourage families to check both calendars regularly, as they are updated throughout the year. All calendars are linked below.

The district also recognizes the importance of religious and cultural observances. Key dates for major religious holidays are noted on the district calendar to help families plan and to ensure our school community is respectful and inclusive of all traditions.

- 2026-27 Academic Calendar with Early Release Days
- Chickering School Calendar

- Pine Hill School Calendar
- Middle School Calendar
- High School Calendar

25-26 Religious/Cultural Holiday Guidelines (will update with new link)

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3) Academic Programs

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The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools is committed to providing all students with the highest quality education which includes rigorous coursework, high standards, and the development of essential skills for students during their time in Dover-Sherborn and beyond. Guiding our academic programming is the Dover-Sherborn Portrait of a Graduate, which focuses on students' development of the following competencies:

- Empathy: seeks to understand the perspectives and experiences of others and respect human differences.
- Communication: listens to, synthesizes and expresses thoughts and ideas in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Collaboration: works with others to accomplish a shared goal and values the contributions of each team member.
- Critical Thinking: evaluates and analyzes multiple forms of information to generate new ideas.
- Creativity: uses imagination and knowledge to design and create original products and solutions.
- Perseverance: welcomes challenges, embraces setbacks, and sees obstacles as an opportunity to grow and learn.
- Engage Citizenship: uses knowledge and skills to engage with both the local and global communities.

In order to help students obtain the Portrait of a Graduate competencies, the District has developed 9 Best Practices that we believe create meaningful and relevant learning experiences for all students.

Curriculum information for the district is available on the district website and can be accessed through the following links:

- Elementary Teaching and Learning
- Middle School Teaching and Learning
- Will add link to Middle School Program of Studies when available.
- High School Teaching and Learning
- High School Program of Studies

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals,

regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Grade Reports

Report Cards are issued at the end of each semester, with an Interim Report issued in the middle of each semester. These reports will be accessible via the parent/guardian portal. To access the login page of the portal, please go to the school home page and click on “Aspen Family Portal Login” located under “Quick Links”.

Title 1 Support

Dover-Sherborn Public Schools receives federal Title I funding to support student learning. Title I provides additional resources to low income students to help ensure that all children are able to meet challenging academic standards. Families are important partners in this work and each year, the District offers informational meetings and/or individual appointments with families who are interested in learning more about Title I supports and services.

- Elementary Title I Handbook
- Secondary Title I Handbook

Departments/Programs

Additional information, including department/program-specific resources, can be found through the links listed below:

- Athletics
- Athletics Handbook
- Clubs and Organizations (Middle School) (Link Coming Soon)
- 2025 Club and Activities at DSHS (Will update Link When Available)
- Food Services
- Guidance
- Health Services
- Homeschooling
- METCO
- Multilingual Learners
- Special Education
- Technology

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4) Enrollment and Attendance Policies

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The following section outlines key policies that guide the operations and expectations of our school community. We encourage families to review this section carefully to ensure a clear understanding of the standards that support student success.

Enrolling Students in Dover-Public Public Schools

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools welcome resident students and are committed to providing a high-quality, inclusive education for all. To enroll, families must provide proof of residency within the towns of Dover or Sherborn, along with required student records such as a birth certificate, health/immunization documentation, and prior academic records.

Enrollment is open to all students in grades PreK–12, consistent with district policy and Massachusetts state law. Student placement is determined by school administration, based on grade level, educational needs, and available programs. Families are encouraged to stay informed and engaged from the start, as strong home–school partnerships help ensure each student is placed in the setting that best supports their success.

Enrollment paperwork for each building can be found at the links below:

- Chickering (Dover) New Student Registration
- Pine Hill (Sherborn) New Student Registration
- Dover-Sherborn Middle School New Student Registration
- Dover-Sherborn High School New Student Registration

Attendance Policies

The legal standard interprets “reasonable absences” as no more than seven full school days, or fourteen half-days, within a six-month period (see MGL Chapter 76, Section 2). A minimum of one hundred and eighty days of student school attendance is called for each year. Accommodations may be made for reasons related to health, religion, emergencies, disabilities and special education.

Parents/guardians and school administrators have an obligation to be sure that students are in attendance each day. The school will be monitoring attendance and sending out letters when students’ unexcused absences/tardies are of concern. If a student under the age of 16 is absent (unexcused) for 8 or more days, school officials may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition which could result in a hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge.

Vacations during school time should be avoided and are not considered excused absences. For absences due to non-school related events (including family vacations), the student/family possesses the sole responsibility to obtain the information needed to maintain appropriate performance in school. Teachers have no obligation to prepare material that the student will miss during their absence prior to the student’s departure.

An Excused Absence/Tardy includes:

- Documented illness or injury or medical visit
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observations
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of the principal)

An Unexcused Absence/Tardy is any absence or tardy that is not covered by the aforementioned definition of "Excused Absence/Tardy." Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to:

- Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
- Cutting class (suspendable offense)
- Truancy
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations

For further information around tardy and attendance procedures, please refer to school websites.

Attendance Supports

If a student is experiencing attendance difficulties due to chronic illness, mental health struggles, or financial hardship, the school ~~can~~ may partner with families to provide support as appropriate, such as:

- Flexible scheduling or partial days when medically necessary
- Home or hospital tutoring for students who cannot attend school for health reasons for 14 or more
- Access to counseling services and school adjustment counselors
- Collaboration with outside providers (doctors, therapists, social workers) to support attendance plans
- Assistance connecting with community resources for housing, food, or financial needs
- Transportation support when lack of reliable transportation is a barrier
- Individualized attendance plans developed with families and staff
- Special education or Section 504 accommodations when a disability impacts attendance

Make-Up Work

For absences due to non-school related events (including family vacations) the student possesses the sole responsibility to obtain the information needed to maintain appropriate performance in school. Teachers have no obligation to prepare material that the student will miss during their absence prior to the student's departure. Students are encouraged to follow Google classroom or contact a peer to keep abreast of what is happening in each class.

- School Attendance (Chapter 76 General Law)
- Applicable Laws Regarding Attendance
- Absenteeism Graphic

Region Athletics/Extracurricular Attendance Requirements

It is important to note that when a student is absent due to an unexcused absence, they will not be allowed to practice or represent Dover-Sherborn in a school sponsored activity (i.e. sports events, drama/musical productions, dances, math meets, etc.) as a participant or spectator on that day. To be considered present, for participation/spectator purposes, a student must arrive by 9:30 am (the start of period 2) and stay until the close of the school day. Students needing to arrive after 9:30 am can request administrative approval and/or will need supportive documentation (medical note, etc.) before participating or being a spectator in a school sponsored activity that day.

If a student is absent on a Friday, due to an unexcused absence, they cannot represent Dover-Sherborn on Saturday or Sunday without the written permission of a doctor and/or school administration. If a student reports after 9:30am or is out on a Friday and they do not have supportive documentation they must obtain administrative approval in order to participate in extracurricular activities.

Students Enrolled in Non-School Programs by Parent/Guardian Choice

Students attending events or enrolling in programs (i.e. ski school, theater, equestrian event) that take them from school for two weeks or more will be required to withdraw from the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools. Students who are returning to the District within the same school year are advised to follow the curriculum to the best of their ability. Students will not have access to curricula and academic materials, such as Google Classroom, for the duration of this alternative setting. If the student will have formal classes and instruction, the student will enroll there. If the student is going to be accessing a less formal academic program, a Home School plan needs to be filed with the District. The following steps are recommended:

- Upon completion of the program the student must re-enroll via our enrollment process. Any transcripts or proof of classwork must be provided.
- A re-entry meeting with the student's counselor must be scheduled prior to starting back.
- Students will not be able to access Google Classroom, Gmail or receive work to complete while away.
- Dover-Sherborn will not be responsible for providing books, curriculum maps, scope and sequences or units of study to the student or school.
- Any class/grade level placement recommendations needed for the following school year will be determined in June before leaving for the summer.

Grades for students whose parents/guardians elect an alternative, approved program will not be integrated with the grades from Dover-Sherborn High School and will be listed separately on the student's high school transcript. Additionally, a Dover-Sherborn grade point average will not include grades for courses taken in these elected programs outside of Dover-Sherborn High School.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence have the same rights and access to a free, appropriate public education as their peers. This includes the right to enroll immediately in school, remain in their school of origin if it is in the student's best interest, and receive transportation and support services. If you believe your family may qualify, please contact the school office or our district's Homeless Education Liaison (the Director of Student Services) for assistance.

Homeschooling

Families may choose homeschooling as an alternative to traditional public education. Each homeschool plan must be submitted for review, and parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the assistant superintendent for guidance and approval. The District provides resources and support to ensure compliance with Massachusetts state laws, which require local district approval of homeschool plans. While public school curricular and extracurricular offerings are robust, families who opt for homeschooling must develop and follow an approved independent instructional plan.

- Homeschooling Information

Withdrawal from Dover-Sherborn High School

Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 76, §1, students who are of mandatory school age must attend school. When students who are not of mandatory school age withdraw from school, parents/guardians must authorize any student withdrawal by signing a completed "Withdrawal Form" and meeting with the building principal or designee prior to the withdrawal.

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5) Behavioral Expectations/Code of Conduct

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Our behavioral expectations and code of conduct are grounded in the belief that every student deserves to learn in a safe, respectful, and caring environment. These expectations are designed to promote equity by applying expectations fairly and consistently across all students. We encourage responsible behavior, personal growth, and academic excellence while recognizing each student's unique needs and experiences. By upholding respect and dignity for all, we help build a school community where students feel seen, supported, and valued. Together, we create a climate of care that fosters both individual success and collective well-being. The Code of Conduct outlines the behavioral expectations for all students Pre-K through Grade 12 in Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.

Technology Policies

In today's rapidly changing world, where students have increased access to digital tools and online information, it is essential to prioritize safe and respectful technology use. Our Responsible Use Policies are designed to guide students in making thoughtful choices, protect their privacy, and promote a secure and supportive digital learning environment. These expectations help ensure that technology is used in ways that enhance learning while maintaining safety, respect, and integrity. Policy Information for the district is available on the district website and can be accessed through the following links:

- Responsible Use Policy - Grades K-5
- Responsible Use Policy - Grades 6-12

Elementary Personal Device Expectations:

All personal electronic devices, for example, cell phones, or smart watches, are not to be used at school during the regular school day. If your child brings a device to school, it must be turned off and placed in their backpack for the duration of the school day. Students who require devices for health, accessibility, or communication purposes may be granted an exception to this policy.

Middle School Personal Device Expectations

- Dover-Sherborn Middle School Personal Technology Policy

High School Personal Device Expectations

- PDF Dover-Sherborn High School Personal Device Expectations

Elementary Lunch & Recess Rules

- Follow Adult Directions: Listen carefully and follow directions from all staff. Show respect at all times.
- Use Kind Words and Actions: Speak kindly to others. No teasing, bullying, or excluding others.
- Be Safe Outside: Use playground equipment correctly and safely. Stay in designated play areas.
- Keep Hands and Feet to Yourself: No pushing, rough play, or physical contact.
- Share and Take Turns: Be fair and include everyone who wants to play.
- Report Problems: If someone is hurt or there's a problem, tell an adult right away.
- Dress for the Weather: Come prepared for outdoor play—bring coats, boots, hats, as needed.
- Line Up Quickly and Quietly: When the signal is given, stop playing and walk to your line calmly.
- Eat Respectfully: Use good table manners. Stay seated while eating and raise your hand if you need help.
- Take Care of Your Space: Clean up after yourself. Throw away trash and recycle when possible.

Consequences will be determined based on the nature, severity, and frequency of the behavior. While some incidents may result in a reminder or reflection, others—especially those that involve unsafe or

disrespectful behavior—may lead to more serious disciplinary action. School administration will use discretion and professional judgment when determining appropriate responses to behavior incidents. Possible consequences may include:

- Loss of recess time or play privileges
- Reflection sheet or written apology
- Recess or lunch support plan
- Parent/guardian contact
- Recess alternative - temporary or long-term
- Additional support or reteaching

Bullying

Bullying and harassment violations are serious offenses that go against the values of respect, dignity, and care that our school community is built upon. These actions create harm and undermine the inclusive, supportive environment we strive to maintain for every student. When such behaviors occur, we follow deeper, well-defined processes to ensure a thorough investigation, appropriate response, and protections for those impacted. Our goal is not only to address the behavior but also to repair harm, restore safety, and uphold the rights of all individuals. The definitions, forms, processes and frequently asked questions can be found below:

- Bullying Policy and Reporting
- Bullying FAQ

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that ensures all students have equal access to school programs, activities, and athletics, regardless of sex. It also protects students from sexual harassment, assault, and gender-based discrimination.

If you or your child ever have a concern related to Title IX, please contact the school principal or the District's Title IX Coordinator. The Coordinator makes sure concerns are taken seriously, investigated fairly, and that students are supported.

District Title IX Coordinator:
Kate McCarthy
Director of Student Services
508-785-0036
mccarthyk@doversherborn.org

- Title IX Policies, Grievance Procedures and Forms

Civil Rights Grievance Procedures (forthcoming)

6) Health and Safety

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Health Office

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools are committed to fostering a healthy and safe learning environment for all students. Our Health Services team, led by compassionate and skilled school nurses, provides comprehensive care, administers first aid, manages chronic conditions, and promotes student wellness. The link below outlines essential procedures for illness, injury, medication administration, and maintaining overall student health:

- Health Services

Food Celebrations

To comply with the expectations outlined in Massachusetts General Law c 111 223 "An Act Relative to School Nutrition," foster student safety, and promote equitable student experiences in all classes, no food is allowed in classrooms other than students' individual snacks and lunches. Please review the following expectations around food and celebrations:

- No food in classrooms except for each student's own snack and lunch.
- No food or snacks may be brought in for birthdays or classroom celebrations.
- Non-food items (books, games, trinkets) are encouraged for celebrations.
- Teachers will share birthday recognition guidelines at Fall Back-to-School Night and in their first newsletter.

Student Safety and Emergency Procedure Planning

The safety and well-being of every student, faculty member, and staff member is the highest priority at Dover-Sherborn Public Schools. We are committed to providing a secure and supportive learning environment where all individuals feel safe and can thrive. This section outlines our comprehensive approach to student safety and our established procedures for various emergencies.

At Dover-Sherborn Public Schools, safety is an ongoing commitment woven into our daily operations and long-term planning. We believe in:

- Proactive Planning: Continuously assessing potential risks and developing detailed plans to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.
- Collaboration: Working closely with local law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, and community partners to ensure coordinated and effective responses.
- Training and Drills: Regularly conducting drills and training exercises for students and staff to ensure familiarity and proficiency with emergency procedures.
- Communication: Maintaining open and timely communication with students, families, and staff before, during, and after an emergency.

- Continuous Improvement: Regularly reviewing and updating our safety protocols based on best practices, feedback, and evolving circumstances.

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7) Special Education and Student Services

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At Dover-Sherborn Public Schools, we are committed to fostering an educational environment that is inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the unique needs of every learner. Our mission is to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, are supported in achieving their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. Grounded in the core values of respect, collaboration, and high expectations, we believe that inclusive practices enrich the entire school community. We strive to provide individualized support in the least restrictive environment, enabling students with disabilities to participate meaningfully in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible.

School Special Education Pages

- Pine Hill Special Education Staff
- Chickering Special Education Staff
- Middle School Special Education Staff
- High School Special Education Staff
- Special Education Department

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8) Family Engagement

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We believe strong home-school communication is essential to student success and a positive school experience. We value connecting with families in the way that feels most comfortable to them, whether that is by phone, email, written notes, or other agreed-upon methods. During the school day, staff may have limited availability to talk directly, as their priority is attending to students' needs. However, all messages will be returned as soon as possible, and families are encouraged to reach out at any time.

Translation

If you need documents translated or would like to request a translator for a meeting, please contact your student's assistant principal. Information sent out via Parentsquare is automatically translated based on the language the parent/guardian specified in Aspen. The District website includes a dropdown menu at the top to select your preferred language (Translation Services - Dover Sherborn District). Alternatively, families may utilize online platforms like Google Translate if they wish to translate something independently.

ParentSquare

Our primary communication tool is ParentSquare, a secure platform used for sharing important announcements, school updates, and classroom information. We encourage all families to download the app and enable notifications to stay informed and engaged. Please find further information regarding ParentSquare below:

- Parent Square FAQ

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATION

Productive, respectful communication between home and school plays a vital role in promoting student learning, growth, and well-being. As partners in education, families and educators share the responsibility of fostering clear, consistent, and compassionate communication.

These guidelines reflect Dover-Sherborn's core values - Commitment to Community, Equity & Excellence, Respect & Dignity, and a Climate of Care - and aim to ensure that every interaction is respectful, productive, and student-centered. **At all times, each party is committed to acting in the best interest of the student(s).**

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Email and other digital tools are powerful resources for clear and timely communication. This guidance applies to all members of the Dover-Sherborn community—**students, families, and staff**—and is designed to support respectful, effective interactions. At the core, all electronic communication should:

- Be respectful, honest, and foster productive dialogue
- Embody the district's values of care and collaboration
- Support our strategic goals of building a welcoming and safe environment
- Uphold the same level of civility and professionalism expected in person

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Please remember that emails to and from District staff are not private and ~~fall under~~ may be subject to Public Records Law—~~they can be requested and shared publicly~~ the District may be required to disclose emails in a redacted form or in their entirety in response to a Public Records request. When composing or sending emails:

- Follow standard rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- Avoid using ALL CAPS, which can be interpreted as shouting
- Be mindful that messages can be forwarded without your knowledge or consent
- Use "reply all" sparingly
- Limit use of CC (carbon copy) unless necessary; avoid using it to escalate or apply pressure
- Use BCC (blind carbon copy) when emailing large groups to protect privacy
- To minimize miscommunication, keep messages concise, clear, and professional—ideally no more than 100 words.

- Avoid using email to address topics that are emotional, sensitive, or potentially divisive. In those cases, it's better to request a meeting or phone call.
- If a conversation begins to feel tense or emotionally charged, shift the dialogue to a phone or in-person conversation instead of continuing over email.
- Urgent matters—those that involve the safety of students or staff—should be addressed by calling the school directly. If it is before/after school hours, contact the appropriate emergency service.
- For time-sensitive matters such as student dismissals, please call the school office to ensure your message is delivered promptly. Staff members are focused on students during the school day and may not check email immediately.
- For non-urgent matters, allow 1-2 school days for a reply, not including weekends.
- Students in grades 6–12 should use their **@doversherborn.org** email address when writing to teachers and send messages to the staff's school email address.
- School email accounts should not be used for unrelated activities such as political advocacy, advertising, or personal fundraising.

Since educators do not receive school-issued mobile phones, texting should not be used as a communication method between parents/guardians/caregivers, students and staff—unless specifically arranged and approved by a supervisor.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR MEETINGS AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS

Whether held in person or over the phone, meetings are opportunities to build trust, solve problems, and strengthen the partnership between families and educators.

All conversations should:

- Promote open, respectful, and solution-focused dialogue
- Reflect mutual commitment to student growth, equity, and shared responsibility
- Foster a welcoming environment where all voices are heard and valued
- Maintain the professionalism, empathy, and dignity expected of all Dover-Sherborn community members

In cases where conversations become emotionally charged, participants may request a pause or reschedule the meeting for a later time. Everyone benefits when communication remains grounded in mutual respect and the shared goal of supporting student success.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR MEETINGS AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS

- **Prepare in advance:** If possible, come to meetings with a clear understanding of the purpose and key points you wish to discuss. If necessary, request an agenda ahead of time.
- **Respect time and scheduling:** Arrive on time for meetings and allow for others' schedules by ending promptly. If you need to reschedule, provide advance notice. Please note that

administrators/educators are engaged with students and other responsibilities before/during/after the school day and are not available for drop-in visitors.

- **Practice active listening:** Allow all participants to share their perspective without interruption.
- **Maintain a respectful tone:** Speak calmly and respectfully, even when discussing difficult topics. Avoid sarcasm, blame, or accusatory language.
- **Focus on shared goals:** Keep the student's best interests at the center of the conversation. Collaborate on finding constructive solutions.
- **Seek clarification:** If something is unclear or concerning, ask questions respectfully rather than assuming intent.
- **Maintain privacy:** Do not record conversations or take photographs during meetings unless all parties have given explicit permission.
- **Follow up when needed:** After a meeting, summarize key decisions or next steps in writing to avoid misunderstandings and to keep everyone on the same page.
- **Use appropriate channels:** For urgent issues involving the safety of students or staff, contact the school office directly. Avoid approaching educators during arrival, dismissal, or class transition times. If it is before/after school hours, contact the appropriate emergency service.

DOVER-SHERBORN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSPIRE ● CHALLENGE ● SUPPORT

Contacting Dover-Sherborn Public Schools

To ensure effective communication, please reference this chart to direct your questions or concerns. Start with the person most directly involved; if you need more help, we'll guide you to the next level of support.



Class-Based Communication
Connect directly with you student's teacher to discuss...

- Questions about student academic progress
- Questions about student social emotional growth and well-being
- Questions about homework or other assignments



School-Based Communication
Connect directly with a building administrator to discuss....

- School discipline or safety matters
- Questions about programs and staffing
- Questions or concerns about school policies
- Questions or concerns classroom teachers cannot address



District-Based Communication
Connect directly with Central Office administrators to discuss...

- Issues related to: district policy, curriculum and assessment, student services, employment opportunities, human resources, business or facilities, food services and transportation

District Communication Channels	Website	ParentSquare	Technology Support
	www.doversherborn.org Find calendars, School Committee information, curriculum updates, important links and more	Classroom newsletters, school newsletters, staff directory, District announcements (emergencies & snow days)	familysupport@doversherborn.org

Family Member Volunteers

There will be a variety of volunteer opportunities for parents/guardians/caregivers to support classroom activities, school events, and community-building efforts. These opportunities will be shared at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as needs arise. The guidelines for any volunteer are outlined below:

•All volunteers must have successfully completed a Criminal Records background check (CORI)
•All volunteers must sign-in at the main office and obtain the appropriate colored "Visitor" badge for that day
•Volunteers are requested to keep all information regarding the students and staff in the school confidential

•Volunteers should use the adult bathrooms while at school. Please ask school personnel where the nearest adult bathroom is located

Please bring up any questions or concerns you have about volunteer issues with the faculty or staff with whom you are working. If a question or concern still exists, please feel free to contact the principal.

Field Trip Information

Throughout the school year students may participate in field trips that enhance the curriculum. Classroom teachers will communicate with families in regard to the details and purpose of the field trip. A release form for local field trips along with a medical form will be sent home for families to complete and return to the classroom teacher. Should the cost of a field trip pose a financial hardship, please contact the principal who ~~will~~ may be able to make arrangements to cover costs.

Fundraising Information

Fundraising activities or requests for contributions must have prior approval of the principal. This policy applies to all classrooms, organizations, and groups within the school community. At the principal's discretion, a financial report may be required.

Gifts from Students and Families

Parents/guardians/caregivers and students wishing to express their appreciation to individual faculty and staff members may do so through a donation to the school library or the classroom. Small hand-made gifts, cards, or notes from the student are also appropriate. Staff members may not accept a gift from an individual family valued at more than $50.00. Room parents/guardians/caregivers may organize group gifts for faculty and staff during the holiday season and at the end of the school year.

School Events

We look forward to welcoming families into our buildings for back-to-school nights and parent-teacher conferences. These events provide valuable opportunities to connect with teachers, learn more about your child's learning experience, and build strong partnerships between home and school. Additional building-based activities and performances are offered and will be detailed in the school websites and school calendar. We're grateful for your partnership and look forward to working together to support your child's growth and success.

Use of Pictures

Special events are frequently covered by the local press, including the taking of photographs of children. Parents/guardians will not be notified each time this occurs. Parents/guardians who wish their child to be excluded from publicity photos should indicate so on the student verification form.

Family Resources

The following links provide quick access to important family resources:

- Challenge Success
- High School Important Forms
- Interface Counseling Referral Service
- Mental Health Emergency service
- MySchoolBucks
- ParentSquare
- Translation Services - Dover Sherborn District

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9) Transportation, Parking and Facility Use

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Transportation

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools provide school bus transportation at no cost to all students. Our goal is to ensure safe and reliable transportation each day. Families who have questions about bus routes or transportation concerns may contact Tracey DeFlaminio at 508-785-0036 or by email at deflaminiot@doversherborn.org.

Dover-Sherborn Bus Behavioral Expectations:

The bus is an extension of the school day; all school rules are applicable to a student's time on the bus. Below are examples of behavioral expectations while riding the bus:

- Follow the Driver's Directions: The bus driver is in charge. Listen carefully and always show respect.
- Stay Seated: Stay in your seat while the bus is moving. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before standing up.
- Keep the Aisle Clear: Keep backpacks, instruments, and other belongings out of the aisle. Large items must fit on your lap or between your legs.
- Use Kind Words and Actions: Be respectful to everyone. No bullying, teasing, pushing, or rough play.
- Use a Quiet Voice: No yelling or loud noises.
- No Food or Drinks: For everyone's safety—especially those with allergies—no eating, drinking, candy, or gum is allowed on the bus. Keep everything packed away.
- Hands and Objects Inside: Keep hands, arms, and all items inside the bus at all times. Do not open windows or doors without the driver's permission. The emergency exit is only for emergencies.
- Find a Seat Quickly: Two or three students per seat. No saving seats. Seats may be assigned at any time.
- Keep the Bus Clean: Take care of the bus and throw trash away properly.

Consequences will be determined based on the nature, severity, and frequency of the behavior. While some incidents may result in a warning and parent/guardian communication, others—especially those that compromise safety—may lead to immediate disciplinary action, including loss of bus privileges. School administration will use discretion and professional judgment when determining appropriate responses to behavior incidents. Possible consequences may include:

- Assigned seat
- Reflection sheet or written apology
- Bus behavior support plan
- Parent/guardian contact
- Temporary or permanent suspension of bus privileges
- High School Student Parking Rules and Regulations

Bus Transportation

Students are expected to ride only their assigned bus to and from school each day. Riding a bus other than the one to which a student is assigned is not permitted without prior approval from school administration.

Requests for alternate bus transportation must be submitted in advance and authorized by an administrator. Unauthorized bus changes may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of bus riding privileges.

E-Bikes and Motorized Bicycles

Electric bicycles (e-bikes) are permitted on school grounds for transportation purposes only and must be operated in accordance with Massachusetts law and school safety expectations. Massachusetts recognizes the following classifications:

Class 1 is a low-speed electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to assist when the bicycle reaches 20 miles per hour.

Class 2 is a low-speed electric bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor that can propel the bicycle without pedaling but ceases to assist at 20 miles per hour.

The law does not define Class 3 e-bikes, a term commonly used in other jurisdictions and the bicycle industry to refer to pedal-assist e-bikes that operate up to 28 miles per hour with a speedometer. Because Massachusetts does not codify Class 3 e-bikes, any e-bike exceeding the power or speed thresholds of Class 1 or Class 2 may instead be considered a “motorized bicycle” under G.L. c. 90, § 1, subject to registration, license, and helmet requirements; accordingly, Class 3 e-bikes and any non-compliant motorized bicycles are not permitted on school property.

All permitted e-bikes must be operated safely at all times, yield to pedestrians, and travel at reduced speeds in congested areas. E-bikes are not permitted inside school buildings or on sidewalks unless

specifically authorized, and must be parked only in designated bicycle areas and secured when not in use.

Reckless or unsafe operation may result in loss of campus riding privileges and/or disciplinary action. The principal or designee reserves the right to restrict or suspend e-bike use on campus if safety concerns arise.

Facility Use

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools welcome the responsible use of school facilities by community groups and organizations, when such use does not interfere with school operations or student programming. Any interested individual that would like to use the facilities after school hours should contact the main office administrative assistants to begin the process.

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10) Policies and Legal Information

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The School Committee is responsible for establishing policies that guide the operation of the school district. These policies serve as the governing framework for decision-making and ensure consistency, equity, and legal compliance across all schools. All policies are made publicly available, and transparency in the process helps ensure that the school district's operations align with its mission, values, and community expectations.

Additional information, including full policy language and updates, can be found through the links listed below:

- Policy Manual - Dover Sherborn District
- Non-Discrimination Policy (Section AC)
- School Committee - Dover Sherborn District (policy subcommittee information)

Student Records

Student records are maintained in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These laws protect the confidentiality of student information and give parents/guardians (and students age 14 and older or in 9th grade and above) certain rights, including:

- The right to inspect and review student records.
- The right to request corrections if information is inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent (in most cases) before information is shared outside the school.
- The right to file a complaint if you believe your rights under these laws have been violated.

Temporary records (such as test results and evaluations) are kept for at least five years, and no more than seven years, after a student leaves the district. Permanent records (basic information such as

name, address, courses, grades, and attendance) are kept for at least sixty years. If you would like to review your child's records or have questions, please contact the school office.

Restroom and Locker Room Access

Students may use restrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity. Any student seeking additional privacy may request access to a single-user restroom or private changing area. All students are expected to respect the privacy and rights of others; misuse of facilities or harassment will be addressed under school policies.

For additional information, please see DESE's Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment.

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11) Links and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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All Links

School Website Links

- Pine Hill Elementary School
- Chickering Elementary School
- Dover-Sherborn Middle School
- Dover-Sherborn High School

Calendars

- District 2026-2027 School Year Calendar
- Chickering School Calendar
- Pine Hill School Calendar
- Middle School Calendar
- High School Calendar
- 25-26 Religious/Cultural Holiday Guidelines (Link updated when available)

Teaching and Learning

- Elementary Teaching and Learning
- Middle School Teaching and Learning
- High School Teaching and Learning
- High School Program of Studies

Departments

- Athletics
- Athletics Handbook
- 2025 Club and Activities at DSHS (Link updated when available)
- Food Services
- Guidance

- Health Services
- Homeschooling
- METCO
- Multilingual Learners
- Special Education
- Technology

Title I Handbooks

Elem Title I Handbook 23-24

DSMS & DSHS Title 1 Handbook 23-24

Enrollment Links

- Chickering (Dover) New Student Registration
- Pine Hill (Sherborn) New Student Registration
- Dover-Sherborn Middle School New Student Registration
- Dover-Sherborn High School New Student Registration

Attendance Regulations

- School Attendance (Chapter 76 General Law)
- Applicable Laws Regarding Attendance
- Absenteeism Graphic

Code of Conduct and Policies

- *Code of Conduct*
- Responsible Use Policy - Grades K-5
- Responsible Use Policy - Grades 6-12
- Dover-Sherborn Middle School Personal Technology Policy
- Dover-Sherborn High School Personal Device Expectations
- High School Student Parking Rules and Regulations
- Policy Manual - Dover Sherborn District
- Non-Discrimination Policy (Section AC)
- School Committee - Dover Sherborn District

Family Resources

- Challenge Success
- High School Important Forms
- Interface Counseling Referral Service
- Mental Health Emergency service
- MySchoolBucks
- ParentSquare
- AI Guidance
- Translation Services - Dover Sherborn District

Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ section is designed to provide helpful answers to common questions about our school district, programs, policies, and procedures. We recognize that new questions and situations arise over time, so this is a living document that will be updated regularly as new topics emerge. Our goal is to offer clear, accessible information to support students, families, and staff.

- FAQ's Dover-Sherborn Handbook

File: JKAA

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS IN DOVER-SHERBORN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

~~Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools (the "Schools"). Further, students of the Schools 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 self-injury or from injuring another student or school community member, a teacher, employee or agent of the Schools may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.~~

~~It is the policy of the Schools to~~ The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools (the "Schools") comply with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ("DESE") regulations governing the use of physical restraint, which can be found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. (the "Regulations"). ~~According to their terms,~~ These Regulations apply not only ~~at school~~ on school property but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property.

Methods and Conditions for Implementation

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 Regulations do not prevent a teacher, employee or agent of the Schools may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm or from restraining students as otherwise provided in the Regulations.

Definitions

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, and include the following:

- 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 escort shall mean a temporary touching 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 to walk to a safe location. A physical escort is NOT considered a physical restraint, except in cases where the student requires a backwards escort or in cases where the student needs to be carried to the designated safe location through approved safety techniques.

- Prone restraint shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.
- Mechanical restraint shall mean the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.
- Medication restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.
- Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area, with or without adult supervision, from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02. Seclusion also does not include:
    - A classroom or school environment where all students must ask permission to leave;
    - Monitored separation of a student in an unlocked setting for calming purposes;
    - Placement in a separate location within the classroom with continued access to instruction.
- Time-out shall mean a behavioral support strategy ~~developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1)~~ in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During a time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member in an unlocked setting from which the student is permitted to leave. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for a time-out ~~must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming~~ will comply with any regulatory requirements for safety, sanitation, and/or purpose. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.
- Emergency seclusion: In extremely rare circumstances, a type of seclusion may be used only as a last resort once other forms of intervention have failed or were deemed inappropriate under the circumstances, and only when:
    - There is imminent threat of assault or risk of serious physical harm;
    - The student has a history of repeatedly causing serious injuries to themselves or others;
    - There is written documentation from a licensed mental health professional and physician;
    - There is written consent from the parent/guardian and, when appropriate, the student;
    - It is approved in writing by the principal; and
    - A staff member who is appropriately trained is continuously and actively monitoring the student in person and is using de-escalating and calming strategies, unless it is unsafe or counterproductive.

Emergency seclusion is only for the purpose of calming and will cease once the student is no longer exhibiting behavior that poses a threat of assault or immediate serious physical harm to themselves or others, or if they are observed to be in severe distress.

Environmental Requirements

Any room or area used for time-out or emergency seclusion must:

- Be clean, safe, and sanitary;
- Be appropriate for the purpose of calming, including appropriate size for the student's age and needs;
- Be properly lighted, ventilated, and temperature-controlled;
- Be free of inherently dangerous objects or fixtures; and
- Meet local fire and building codes and any other standards set by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Prohibitions

The use of mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion is prohibited, except as noted in the emergency exception described above.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/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.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of discipline or punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when 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.

Physical restraint is prohibited 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.

~~The use of "time-out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion" restraint.~~

Procedures and Training

The Superintendent will develop written procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements, including but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent/guardian of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents/guardians in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner

inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00;

- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time-out exceeding 30 minutes.

~~Each~~ At the beginning of each school year, 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.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, 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.

Administration of Physical Restraints:

1. 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.

2. 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 OR the principal's designee. 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.

(e) After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall implement follow-up

procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Reporting Requirements and Follow-Up:

1. Staff shall report the use of any physical restraint. The 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 for review. The principal 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.

2. The principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to 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. 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.

3. Contents of report. The written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(2) and (3) shall include all information required pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(4).

Review and Oversight

1. Individual student review. The principal OR designee 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 the 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 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.

2. Administrative review. 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.

3. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or staff member, the school 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.

4. The Schools shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding the use of physical restraints.

Review and Complaint

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents/guardians of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

~~Any student, parent/guardian, teacher or staff member may report a complaint concerning restraint practices under the procedures established by the Superintendent for receiving, investigating, and responding to such complaints~~.
Any parent/guardian, student, or staff member may notify the principal of any concerns regarding restraint practices and procedure. When a staff member other than the principal receives a complaint or concern, they shall notify the principal within the school day. The principal shall notify the Superintendent within 24 hours of receiving a complaint or concern. The Superintendent may order an investigation at his/her discretion.

LEGAL REF:	M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37G 603 CMR 46.00
FIRST READING:	April 26th, 2026
SECOND READING:	
ADOPTED:	Previously adopted January 19, 2021 Previously adopted by Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee January 19, 2021 by Dover School Committee January 19, 2021, and by Sherborn School Committee January 19, 2021.
SOURCE:	MASC and DESE

Prevention of Physical Restraint Procedures

1. There are a variety of appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. These alternative methods should be used first when seeking to prevent suicide, student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. Physical restraints only should be used as a last resort in emergency situations after these other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

2. The following strategies and groups provide school wide and incisive supports in order to reduce the need for physical restraint:
    1. Responsive Classroom Practices
    2. Trauma Sensitive Training for Staff
    3. Zones of Regulation
    4. Child Study Teams
    5. Safety Care Teams
    6. Collaborative Problem Solving
    7. Social Skill Groups
    8. Individual Counseling
    9. Individual Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Support Plans

3. If a student engages in challenging behaviors, staff should contact the following people in the building: administrators, school psychologist, adjustment counselor, board certified behavior analyst, special educator or safety care team members. They would seek this assistance to develop behavioral supports in a goal to reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviors.

4. School staff will engage parents and students in discussions regarding physical restraint by posing the restraint policy on the website.

5. Principals will conduct weekly and monthly reviews of restraint data using the attached checklist.

Grievance Procedures

Parents will notify principal or designee of any concerns regarding restraint practices and procedure. If a designee receives a complaint or a concern, that the designee shall notify the principal within the school day. Principal shall notify the Superintendent within twenty-four hours of receiving a concern. The Superintendent of School Committee shall at his/her or its discretion order an investigation.

DRAFT

Dover School Committee
Meeting of May 12, 2026

Members Present:	Goli Sepehr
	Kate Cook
	Jessica Hole
	Kevin Bielke
	Martha Castle
Also Present:	Beth McCoy, Superintendent
	Denny Conklin, Assistant Superintendent
	Dawn Fattore, Business Manager

1) **Call to Order**

Goli Sepehr called the meeting to order 6:00 pm.

2) Superintendent Comments - Superintendent McCoy gave an update on negotiations and recent hires.

- Elementary Literacy Pilot Program - Denny Conklin reviewed the process to determine which programs to pilot next year which will be McGraw Hill Emerge and Fishtank ELA.
- Technology Use at the Elementary Level - The Administration will be forming two committees (one for the Elementary and one for the Secondary level) to determine guidelines for technology use both by teachers and students. The goal is to have technology used intentionally and interactively with an emphasis on high value for students.

3) Financial Reports

- Warrant Report
- FY26 Monthly Report
  - Salaries - SPED Administration reflects a savings of approximately $15,000 based on the reallocation of responsibilities for the Pre-K Director position and School Leadership-Building reflects $26,000 in savings due to the retirement of an Administrative Assistant and adjustment of the job to a 10-month position.
  - Expenses - there are no material variances since the last report
  - Out-of-District - tuition encumbrances are reflected for all OOD placements as of May 8th. There are currently 23 placements, six more than budgeted. The total negative variance in tuition costs is approximately $789,000: $460,000 from new placements and $475,000 from known placements not included in the budget based on one-year impacts, offset by $145,000 of savings from placement changes.

4) Discussion Items

- Student Handbook (1st read) - Restroom and Locker Room Access policy was included by request and dates were updated as necessary.
- Code of Conduct (1st read)
- Restraint Policy (1st read) - changes made in accordance with MGL requirements/guidelines.

5) Action Items

- Annual School Committee Vote on MA School Choice Law

Martha Castle made a motion to not participate in School Choice for the 2026-27 school year. Kevin Bielke seconded.
26-04 VOTE: 5 - 0 via roll call

6) Consent Items

- Approval of Minutes: February 3, February 10, February 24, March 5, and March 31, 2026

Jessie Hole made motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Kate Cook seconded.
26-05 VOTE: 5 - 0 via roll call

7) Informational Items

- Civil Rights Grievance Procedure
- Regional School Committee Minutes - February 2, 2026
- Enrollment update -

8) Community Comments - a few parents spoke in favor of hiring additional teachers to keep class sizes as small as they were this year.

9) Items for June 2, 2026 - class size policy discussion

10) Recognition - Goli Sepehr thanked Martha Castle for her years of service on the school committee.

11) Adjournment at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Davis

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE (updated DATE)	
	2026-27
Chair	
Secretary	
Subcommittees	
Superintendent's Evaluation *Coordinates evaluation of the superintendent per DESE guidelines*	
Union #50 *Three voting members (from each of the Dover and Sherborn School Committees) responsible for employment of the superintendent*	
Budget *Supports financial planning and oversight*	All Committee Members
Warrants *Signs accounts payable and payroll warrants*	
Personnel *Reviews and approves sick bank requests*	
Negotiations *Participates in the collective bargaining process with the Dover Sherborn Educational Association (2 members)*	
Search Committees *Participates in search committees for administrative positions as needed*	
Policy *Revises and proposes policies as needed for joint review by the school committees; conducts periodic policy manual reviews; identifies required policy review cycles*	
Buildings & Facilities *Collaborates with the Business Administrator and Director of Facilities on annual approval of the Capital Plan*	
Liaisons *Serves as the key point of contact with each organization; attends meetings as requested*	
Chickering PTO (meets monthly; contact PTO President)	

School Advisory Council (meets monthly; contact Deb Reinemann)	
Challenge Success (meets monthly; contact Ellen Chagnon)	
METCO (meets as needed; contact Monique Marshall-Veale)	
SEPAC (meets monthly; contact Kate McCarthy)	
Wellness (meets annually; contact Kate McCarthy)	
Task Forces	
Communication	
Sheriff's Task Force on Juvenile Substance and Mental Health	