File: AA

SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

OFFICIAL NAMES AND CLASSIFICATION

1. The legal name of the District is the South Middlesex Regional Vocational-Technical School District.

2. The District School Committee is known as the South Middlesex Regional Vocational-Technical School District Committee and the School is known as the Joseph P. Keefe Technical High School.

3. The School is a coeducational vocational technical high school consisting of grades nine through twelve, inclusive, and also offers a post graduate program. The Committee is authorized to establish and maintain such kinds of education as may be provided by towns under the provisions of Chapter 74 of the General Laws and acts amendatory thereof, in addition thereto or dependent thereon, including courses beyond the secondary school level in accordance with the provisions of Section 37A of said Chapter 74.

4. The District School shall be located within the geographical limits of the District and within a radius of three (3) miles from the intersection of Main and Summer Streets in Ashland.

LEGAL BASIS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

1. The authority for the establishment of a regional vocational school district is found in the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Chapter 74, Section 5A authorizes the establishment of regional vocational schools. A regional school district is established under Sections 14 and 15 of Chapter 71. Section 14B of Chapter 71 authorizes a regional district planning board to recommend a proposed agreement for the formation of a district. Section 15 of Chapter 71 provides the method for implementing and approving the agreement.

2. The Towns of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston and Hopkinton executed an agreement (the "Regional Agreement") to form a regional vocational school district pursuant to Chapter 71.

3. The Regional Agreement was signed December 5, 1966. The first meeting of the Committee was held on September 25, 1967. The Regional Agreement is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

4. By Special Act of the Massachusetts Legislature, Chapter 74 of the Acts of 1968, the action of the communities in forming a regional vocational school district was ratified and confirmed. The Act was passed into law on July 20, 1968.

5. By agreement dated November 16, 1987 (the "Natick Agreement") the Committee and the Town of Natick agreed that upon the ratification by the member towns of an amendment to the Regional Agreement, the Town of Natick would be admitted as a member of the District. Such ratification and approval was confirmed by each of the member Towns. The amendment and the Natick Agreement is incorporated herein by reference.

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

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

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

File: AB

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

The District School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

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

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

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

File: AC

NONDISCRIMINATION

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the District School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.

2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.

3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.

4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.

5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.

6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, homeless status. national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, homeless status, national origin, homelessness, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

LEGAL REFS.:
Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L.76:16
BESE regulations 603CMR 26.00 Amended 2012
BESE regulations 603CMR 28.00

CROSS REFS.:
ACA- ACE, Subcategories for Nondiscrimination
GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

Updated 4/10/2018

File: AC-R

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL, PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS

Statement

It is the role of Keefe Regional Technical School to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all its students without distinction based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. Discrimination, sexual and bias motivated harassment and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated.

It shall be a violation for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel to engage in sexual or bias-related harassment (referred to as "wrongful harassment") or violate the civil rights of any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel. Any conduct rising to level of a particularly serious infraction will result in referral to law enforcement agencies.

The School will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or bias related harassment or violations of civil rights and to take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found in violation.

Scope of Application

This notice applies to bias crimes, civil rights violations, bias incidents and bias related harassments occurring on school premises or property, or in the course of school sponsored activities, including those outside of school if there is a detrimental effect on the school or educational environment.

Commitment to Prevention

This institution is committed to prevention, re-mediation and accurate reporting of bias incidents and civil rights violations, to the end that all students can enjoy the advantages of a safe and tolerant learning environment where individual differences are respected. The school undertakes to engage in activities and programming such as training of all school personnel, intended to foster respect for diversity, civil rights and non-violence in school settings.

Low Tolerance for Known Civil Rights Violations: Required Reporting and Intervention to Stop Harassment

1. School employees must intervene in ongoing civil rights violations and episodes of wrongful harassment whenever witnessed or reported, to the extent intervention can be done safely. School employees must report a civil rights violation or episode of wrongful harassment to the building civil rights administrator. Once reported, the building civil rights administrator will prepare written documentation of the event. The building civil rights administrator must intervene in ongoing matters of civil rights violations and episodes of wrongful harassment, summoning assistance as necessary. All school bus drivers must receive training to be in compliance with state regulations and school district requirements, and mandated reporting of incidents that occur on their bus.

2. The primary objective of school intervention in a civil rights matter is to put a swift end to, and prevent any recurrence of, any wrongful conduct, so as to ensure the safety of all students and a school environment free of wrongful harassment and civil rights violations. Intervention should be undertaken immediately, as needed, on a short term basis, and more comprehensively once a civil rights violation has been found to occur. The school will take all necessary steps within its authority to implement the objective of stopping continuing civil rights violations and wrongful harassment and restoring and preserving an environment free of such conduct.

3. Effective, and if need be, escalating, measures should be used to definitively stop harassment and violence. School officials should immediately consider and use regular administrative actions to defuse a civil rights or wrongful harassment situation wherever possible. Relevant school disciplinary hearings should begin and proceed on an expedited basis where there is a threat of ongoing interference with civil rights. Disciplinary action appropriate to the offender's conduct should be taken when a violation is found. Potential criminal conduct should be reported to law enforcement and legal remedies pursued as necessary to protect civil rights.

Designation of Civil Rights Administrators

In so far as it shall be permitted by applicable law and regulation, following the acceptance of this Policy by the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District School Committee, there shall be two (2) school administrators designated by the Superintendent-Director to serve as civil rights coordinators for the School District at all times. In selecting the civil rights coordinators the Superintendent-Director shall endeavor to be indifferent to the gender of the coordinators but it is intended that they shall represent the diversity and the makeup of the student population of the School. Both of the coordinators shall be appointed by the Superintendent-Director annually and shall serve at the direction of the Superintendent-Director. Upon the reporting of any alleged civil rights violation, any investigation and findings made by the coordinators shall be free and independent from any administrative influence.

Identification of Prohibited Conduct

a. Definitions

i.)BIAS INCIDENT means any act, including conduct or speech, directed at or which occurs to a person or property because of actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexual orientation. A bias incident may or may not be a criminal act.

ii.)BIAS INDICATORS are objective facts and circumstances that suggest that an action was motivated in whole or in part by a particular type of bias.

iii.)BIAS MOTIVES recognized by Massachusetts' law as causing hate crimes include prejudice based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

iv.)CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS involve interfering by threats, intimidation or coercion, with someone's enjoyment of constitutional or statutory rights. Rights protected against interference include nondiscrimination in access to advantages and privileges of a public school education. The term "civil rights violation" also covers bias-related and sexual harassment and bias crimes.

v.) DISCRIMINATION consists of actions taken against others, which treat them unequally

because of race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender.

vi.) HARASSMENT consists of unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct targeting specific person(s), which is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive school environment, or substantially interfere with the progress of a student's education.

(1)BIAS-RELATED HARASSMENT will present bias indicators, most commonly epithets: name calling derogatory to a particular racial, religious or sexual orientation group.

(2)SEXUAL HARASSMENT covers instances of physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature, not limited to, but including, sexual advances, which foster a hostile educational environment for the victim.

vii.)HATE CRIMES include any criminal acts, as defined in M.G.L. c 22C, § 32, to which recognized types of bias motives are an evident contributing factor. Criminal bias motivated conduct entails, at a minimum, threats. Criminal conduct includes acts putting someone in fear of immediate physical harm (assaults) and actual physical violence (assault and battery), and grows most serious if a victim suffers any bodily injury.

viii.)HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT exists when a student has been or is subjected to threats, intimidation or coercion by another (or others) or is reasonably in fear for his or her safety. Whether a school environment has become hostile must be evaluated based on the totality of the circumstances. Repeated instances of bias related and sexual harassment create a hostile environment for the victim. A single act of harassment can also create a hostile or intimidating environment if sufficiently severe. A hostile environment does not necessarily entail that a student exhibits quantifiable harm, such as a drop in grades.

ix.)STALKING, as prohibited by M.G.L. c265, sec 43, consist of intentional conduct involving: (1) two or more acts directed at a specific person, (2) which would cause a reasonable person substantial distress, (3) where the perpetrator has more threats causing the targeted person fear of death or injury.

b. Common Bias Indicators:
   - i.) Bias related comments or epithets
   - ii.) Bias related markings, drawings or graffiti
   - iii.) Use of bias related symbols
   - iv.) No clear economic motive for an assault and battery
   - v.) Crime involving disproportionate cruelty or brutality
   - vi.) Offender history of crimes with similar motives and victims of the same group

c. Examples of Civil Rights Violations and Bias Incidents:
   - i.) Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on manner or speaking and negative references to racial customs (racial and color harassment)
   - ii.) Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's religion, such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious tradition or religious clothing, or religious slurs or graffiti (religious harassment)

iii.) Conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin, such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language or ethnic slurs (national origin harassment)

iv.) Conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's sexual orientation - actual, perceived, or asserted -such as negative name calling and imitating mannerisms (sexual orientation harassment)

v.) Conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as imitating manner of speech or movement, or interference with necessary equipment (disability harassment)

vi.) Physical conduct putting someone in fear of imminent harm, coupled with name calling of a bigoted nature (crime of assault)

vii.) Repeated, purposeful following of someone, coupled with evident bias against the victim's actual or perceived group status (civil rights violation or crime of stalking)

viii) Painting swastikas on walls or other public or private property (crime of vandalism)

ix.) Hitting someone because of his or her actual or perceived group status (crime of battery)

Procedures for Responding to, Investigating Incidents, and Consequences are published within the Student Handbook.

File: ACA

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

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

The District School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

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

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

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

File: ACAB

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

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

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

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

The Grievance Officer: Adrienne Bogusky, Director of Guidance and Admissions, 750 Winter Street, Framingham, MA.
The committee will annually appoint a sexual harassment grievance officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to the grievance officer. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.

2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:

    a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.

b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.

c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.

d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:

- Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.

- Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent-Director or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.

3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, they may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

4. The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle sexual harassment matters.

The Committee's policy of sexual harassment will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, homeless status, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions or disability.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

Updated 11/5/2018

File: ACE

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its accompanying regulations apply to all school systems receiving federal funds. Under this act, a school system:

1. May not discriminate against qualified handicapped persons in any aspect of school employment on the basis of handicap.

2. Must make facilities, programs, and activities accessible, usable and open to qualified handicapped persons.

3. Must provide free, appropriate education at elementary and secondary levels, including non-academic and extracurricular services and activities, to qualified handicapped persons.

4. May not exclude any qualified handicapped person on the basis of handicap from participation in any preschool education or day care program or activity, or any adult education or vocational program or activity.

5. Must provide each qualified handicapped person with the same health, welfare, and other social services that are provided to others.

The School District supports the above requirements and pledges to comply with them. Additionally, the District School Committee shall take all appropriate action to insure that:

1. There shall be no discrimination against a qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap; and

2. To the extent possible, qualified handicapped persons should be in the mainstream of life in a school community.

Accordingly, employees of the School District will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of the District School Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B: 1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 12/31/00

CROSS REFS.: Student Handbook
IGB, Support Services Programs

PROTECT Act Policy

Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Civil Law Enforcement

At Keefe Regional Technical School, we recognize the importance of all students being known and valued, and promote a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment for all students. All of our students have a right to a free public education regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, disability, or sexual orientation.

On August 5, 2026, Governor Maura Healey signed into law the PROTECT Act. It is now the law in Massachusetts that, except as required by state or federal law or as required for the Commonwealth or its subdivisions to administer a state or federally supported or funded program, civil arrests for civil law enforcement, including federal immigration enforcement, are not allowed on school grounds during school hours, student drop off and pick up windows, before- and after-school programming and school-sponsored events without a Judicial Warrant or Judicial Order.

The Superintendent shall immediately implement PROTECT Act procedures consistent with the Model Procedures and the Guidance for K-12 Schools Related to Interacting with Civil Law Enforcement issued by the Governor's Office, the Executive Office of Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on August 21, 2026. The procedures will promote schools that are safe and accessible for students, staff and residents.

The procedures shall be implemented, wherever applicable, in alignment with District Emergency Operations Plans, Medical and Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plans, and the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding.

The procedures shall include:

(i) Procedures for identifying and designating a senior administrator at the District central office to serve as the individual responsible for having primary contact with law enforcement agents engaged in civil law enforcement for the school system and the central point of contact for schools on interactions with civil law enforcement;

(ii) Procedures for identifying and designating a senior administrator at each school to serve as the individuals responsible for having primary contact with law enforcement agents engaged in civil law enforcement who arrive on site at the school or request information about students, employees, or other persons affiliated with the school;

(iii) Procedures for contacting the school district's attorney;

(iv) Procedures for contacting the senior administrator at the school and the District central office in the event law enforcement agents engaged in civil law enforcement arrive on school grounds or request information about students, employees, or other persons affiliated with the school;

(v) Procedures for documenting all interactions with law enforcement agents engaged in civil law enforcement while on school grounds;

(vi) Procedures for notifying a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or the student directly if the student is 18 years or older or emancipated, if a law enforcement agent engaged in civil law enforcement requests access to a student or student's information for any civil law enforcement purpose;

(vii) Procedures following the confirmation of law enforcement agents engaged in civil law enforcement on school grounds, including notifying parents and guardians, teachers, administrators, and school personnel;

(viii) Procedures to confirm and update students' emergency contacts, with allowance for more than one person to be listed, and alternative caregiver plans; and

(ix) A plan to share these procedures with students and families on the school district's website.

This policy and the accompanying procedures shall constitute the written emergency response plan required by the PROTECT Act.

CROSS REFS: EBC, EMERGENCY PLANS
ECA, BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY
ECAF, SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS
JIH, SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS
KI, VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS
KLG, RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

MISSION STATEMENT/EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to challenge students to demonstrate the academic, technical, and interpersonal skills necessary for successful lifelong learning.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The dual purpose of the District School is to offer students a unique opportunity for training and skill development in a particular vocational area of the student's choice that will lead to rewarding employment and to provide students with a well-rounded education that will enable them to participate in society as creative, knowledgeable and responsible citizens.

Within the limits established by the District School Committee, the School District will provide vocational education to residents of the District. An active recruitment program will be implemented to inform the community of the opportunities at the School.

Aptitude and interest tests may be utilized to assist in student selection. Test results, however, will not be the only criteria for selection, but may be used along with the demonstrated desires, needs, performance and ability of the student. The type and content of vocational programs to be offered shall be determined in large measure by obtaining information on present and future employment opportunities both locally and regionally.

A flexible and varied curriculum will be used to enable each student to develop to his/her capacity. The purpose of this curriculum will be to prepare students for maximum vocational and academic competence through the use of state-of-the-art equipment and materials. For this curriculum to succeed, all teachers must be proficient in their trade and subject areas and must be aware of and employ suitable teaching techniques.

It is the responsibility of the School District to ensure that the curriculum will encompass a wide range of student abilities, remedial to college prep—all of which will require minimum competency with the aim of bringing students to their maximum competency. These programs will foster citizenship, social awareness, self respect and a desire for lifelong learning. Parents must accept the responsibility to support the School's programs and to emphasize to their children the importance of education. It is the responsibility of the student to actively participate in education and to make its acquisition the primary goal of his/her years at the School.

As a supplement to the formal curriculum, co-curricular and extracurricular activities will be offered to students. Students will be encouraged to participate in these activities in view of the positive social behavior such programs are designed to promote.

Successful education is an ever changing, ongoing process involving students, parents, faculty, administrators and the community. Therefore, an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, courtesy and decorum must prevail in all relationships in the School.

The objectives which follow must be of paramount importance in all subject matter areas. To be successfully implemented they must be emphasized in all curriculum content settings as well as by the example of all members of the School community.

1. To provide vocational and academic programs that encourage each student to develop to the greatest extent possible his or her talents, aptitudes, skills and interests.

2. To stimulate the desire for lifelong learning and to prepare each student with the skills required to fulfill that desire.

3. To provide each student with occupational competence and marketable vocational technical skills.

4. To provide a complete and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relationship between and the roles of society and government so that the student will be able to function as a productive responsible citizen.

5. To develop social awareness and foster an understanding of and respect for the dignity of the individual.

6. To develop career and occupational awareness.

7. To encourage each student to identify and to develop a well defined set of positive social values.

8. To promote an understanding and appreciation of the political and social history of the United States including its multi-racial and multi-cultural heritage.

9. To develop the skills required to understand and communicate thoughts, ideas and concepts.

10. To develop the ability to think clearly and critically.

11. To develop an understanding of the effects of human actions on the environment and an awareness of our responsibility for its protection.

12. To develop awareness of the individual's responsibility for his/her own physical health and well being.

File: ADC

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED

Use of any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vapor devices, within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

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

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

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

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

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

BACKGROUND CHECKS

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

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

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

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

Requesting CHRI (Criminal History Record Information) checks

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

Access to CHRI

All CHRI is subject to strict state and federal rules and regulations in addition to Massachusetts CORI laws and regulations. CHRI cannot be shared with any unauthorized entity for any purpose, including subsequent hiring determinations. All receiving entities are subject to audit by the Massachusetts

Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and the FBI, and failure to comply with such rules and regulations could lead to sanctions. Federal law and regulations provide that the exchange of records and information is subject to cancellation if dissemination is made outside of the receiving entity or related entities. Furthermore, an entity can be charged criminally for the unauthorized disclosure of CHRI.

Storage of CHRI

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

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

Retention and Destruction of CHRI

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

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

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

CHRI Training

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

Determining Suitability

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

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

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

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

Relying on Previous Suitability Determination.

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

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

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

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

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

Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

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

Provide the individual with a copy of his/her CHRI used in making the adverse decision;
Provide the individual with a copy of this CHRI Policy;
Provide the individual the opportunity to complete or challenge the accuracy of his/her CHRI; and
Provide the individual with information on the process for updating, changing, or correcting CHRI.

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

If a school employer receives criminal record information from the state or national fingerprint-based background checks that includes no disposition or is otherwise incomplete, the school employer may request that an individual, after providing him a copy of said background check, provide additional information regarding the results of the criminal background checks to assist the school employer in determining the applicant's suitability for direct and unmonitored contact with children, notwithstanding the terms of General Laws chapter 151B, S. 4,(9,9 ½). Furthermore, in exigent circumstances, a school employer may, pursuant to the terms of DESE regulations (see specific regulations in legal

references), hire an employee on a conditional basis without first receiving the results of a national criminal background check. After exhausting several preliminary steps as contained in the above referenced regulation the district may require an individual to provide information regarding the individual's history of criminal convictions; however, the individual cannot be asked to provide information about juvenile adjudications or sealed convictions. The Superintendent-Director is advised to confer with legal counsel whenever he/she solicits information from an individual concerning his/her history of criminal convictions.

Secondary Dissemination of CHRI

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

The following information will be recorded in the log:

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

Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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

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

C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

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

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

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

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

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign an acknowledgement form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the department of criminal justice information services. In the event that a current employee has a question concerning the signing of the acknowledgement form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent-Director; however, failure to sign the CORI acknowledgement form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed acknowledgement forms must be kept in secure files. The District School Committee, Superintendent-Director, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under the policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

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

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

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

The Superintendent-Director shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of the employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with

children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent-Director prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

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

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

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

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

File: ADF

WELLNESS POLICY

The **South Middlesex Regional Vocational School** District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and social/emotional well-being. Therefore, it is the policy of the **South Middlesex Regional Vocational School** District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the district-wide wellness policy.

- All students in grades 9-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*

- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs.

- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

The South Middlesex Regional Vocational Schools will operate in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

The Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement Implementation Plan is available in the District Office.

LEGAL REF.: Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, P.L. 108-265, Section 204.

File: AE

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

The District School Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for all facets of school operations. Because it is accountable to residents of the District, the District School Committee will maintain a program of accountability consisting of the following elements:

- Clear statements of expectations and purpose as these relate to operations, programs, departments, and positions.
- Provisions for the staff, resources, and support necessary to achieve stated expectations and purposes, subject to financial support by residents of the District.
- Evaluation of operations and instructional and staff development programs to determine how well expectations and purposes are being met.
- Specific performance objectives to enable individuals to direct their own efforts to the goals and objectives of the District.
- Evaluation of the efforts of employees in line with stated objectives, with the first purpose of evaluation being to help each individual make a maximum contribution to the goals of the District.

Every effort will be made by the District School Committee, Superintendent-Director, and staff to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in the concept of accountability.