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## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, ethnicity, English language proficiency, disability, homelessness, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical and intellectual differences, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law, which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, ethnicity, English language proficiency, disability, ancestry, homelessness, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, access to counseling, extracurricular and athletic activities. Counseling includes pursuit of programs or study, participation in extracurricular activities, participation in intramural and interscholastic sports, counseling in the language a student best understands, and pursuit of nontraditional programs for a student's gender.

New Bedford Public Schools will also regularly review the counseling process and counseling materials—including scholarships, prizes and awards sponsored or administered by NBPS—to ensure that counseling and information is free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, English language proficiency, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, homelessness, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, and that counseling and materials are provided to students in the language they best understand.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964  
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972  
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375  
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972  
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)  
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00  
BESE regulations 603 CMR 28.00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

9-10-2012

SOURCE: New Bedford

Revised: June 11, 2018

## **STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT**

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the New Bedford Public Schools. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of New Bedford Public Schools, on school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by New Bedford Public Schools includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, creed, gender identity, gender expression, English proficiency, ancestry, homelessness, religion, color, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs, or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student, or;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

New Bedford Public Schools will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

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

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A  
Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended  
BESE regulation 603 CMR 26.00

REFS.: "*Words that Hurt*," American School Board Journal, September 1999  
National Education Policy Network, NSA

## **ATTENDANCE AREAS**

Attendance areas for the various schools of the town will be drawn up by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. The primary considerations that govern the establishment of a school attendance area are school capacity and transportation considerations. Generally, students will attend the school in the attendance area in which they live.

In establishing an attendance area, the following general guidelines will also be applied:

1. Use of safe walking conditions consistent with the Committee's transportation policies; where possible, major traffic thoroughfares and natural barriers will be used for boundaries.
2. Honoring community of interest; where possible, school attendance zones will incorporate community patterns.

From time to time an overcrowded condition in an existing school, the development of new residential areas, or the opening of a new school may require the establishment or change of previously established school attendance areas.

The Committee's primary basis for judgment will be equality of educational opportunity for all students rather than the personal desires of any one group.

The Superintendent is authorized to make exceptions to attendance lines for individual children in the best interests of the student and/or the school.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37C; 71:37D; 71:37I; 71:37J

Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8 of Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities and Magnet Educational Programs, adopted 2/25/75

Board of Education Regulations Pursuant to Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, adopted 9/10/74

Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to the Preparation of Racial Balance Plans which Involve Redistricting, adopted 4/24/73

CROSS REF.: JCA, Assignment of Students to Schools

## **ENTRANCE AGE**

In an attempt to permit children to enter kindergarten or first grade at the time most appropriate for them individually, the School Committee establishes the following policy on entrance age:

1. Children who will be five years of age before September 1 of the school year during which they wish to enroll will be eligible to enter kindergarten in September.

The admission of children whose birthdays fall after September 1 will be solely at the school's discretion.

2. Initial admission of children to the first grade (or other grades) will involve a consideration of both chronological age and the readiness of the children to do the work of those grades.
  - The admission of children whose birthday falls on or after September 1 will be solely at the district's discretion. Criteria for this decision will include, but not be limited to, current reports from previous schooling including data regarding social and academic performance and district assessment results.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G  
Board of Education Regulations for Entrance to First Grade and Kindergarten,  
adopted 7/20/71

## **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

All children of school age who reside in the town will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency of legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A  
603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REFS.: JLCA, Physical Examination of Students  
JLCB, Inoculations of Students  
JFBB, School Choice

## **ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS**

The school district will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter 12, Section 11 of the Acts of 2010

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES**

### **Foster care language**

To the extent practical and as required by law, New Bedford Public Schools will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

SOURCE: MASC/New Bedford

LEGAL REFS.: Title I, Part C; No Child Left Behind Act, 2002

Adopted: 01/12/2015

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

In an effort to facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents/guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The School Committee believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of their parents'/guardians' frequent moves and deployment.

### Definitions

**Children of military families** means school aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, in the household of an active duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve serving on active duty.

**Deployment** means the period one month before the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after return to their home station.

**Education(al) records** means official records, files, and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school including, but not limited to, records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder.

The requirements, applicable to eligible students, which must be fulfilled, are listed below. Eligible students are those who are children of active duty personnel, active duty personnel or veterans who have been severely injured and medically discharged, and active duty personnel who die on active duty within one year of service. Students are not eligible for the provisions of the Compact if they are children of inactive Guard or Reserves, retired personnel, veterans not included above or U.S. Department of Defense personnel and other federal civil service employees and contract employees.

The District's responsibilities to eligible children include the following:

- Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students and District receiving schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.
- Simultaneously, the receiving school must request official records and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.
- Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).

- Receiving schools must initially honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school. These include, but are not limited to, Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational-technical, and career pathway courses if those courses are offered in the receiving school and space is available. The receiving schools must also initially honor placement of like programs to those of the student in the sending state, including, but not limited to, Gifted and Talented programs, and English as a Second Language programs. Receiving schools are not precluded from performing subsequent evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.
- In compliance with federal law, special education students must be placed by the existing IEP with reasonable accommodations in the receiving school.
- The District will exercise, as deemed appropriate, the right to waive prerequisites for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, as deemed appropriate.
- Students of active duty personnel shall have additional excused absences at the discretion of the District for visitations relative to leave or deployment.
- An eligible student living with a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis shall be permitted to attend the school in which he or she was enrolled while living without the custodial parent/guardian without any tuition fee imposed.
- The District high school will accept exit or end-of-year exams required from the sending state, national norm-referenced tests, or alternate testing instead of testing requirements for graduation in the District (receiving state.) If this is not possible, the alternative provision of the Interstate Compact shall be followed in order to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student in accordance with Compact provisions.

LEGAL REFS: M.G. L. [15E](#);

#### Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Adopted: 12/10/2018

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care and their equal access to the same free and appropriate public education through high school graduation as provided to other students as required by law. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the School Committee is committed to supporting district and community efforts to ensure that students in foster care have access to high-quality, stable educational experiences.

The law requires that foster care students continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which a foster care provider or facility is located (if different). The law also requires that when it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the student is immediately enrolled and attending in a new school district, even if records normally required for enrollment cannot be quickly produced. Additionally, the law requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the school district to designate points of contact; and also that the district collaborate with DCF to ensure that students will receive transportation to the school of origin if needed.

### **Best Interest Determination**

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. Under the law, to promote educational stability, students should continue to attend their schools of origin while best interest determinations are being made.

### **Transportation**

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

## **Immediate Enrollment**

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be enrolled in school in the local school district immediately. To minimize disruption of the student's education, the law requires the district to enroll the student in a new school right away, without waiting to receive the typical student enrollment documentation (other than emergency contact information). The enrolling school must immediately contact the child's school and district of origin to obtain the relevant records and documentation, and the school and district of origin should immediately transfer those records.

To facilitate enrollment, DCF representatives will present the district with a form that indicates that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge, when enrolling students.

LEGAL REFS: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act)

Adopted: 12/10/2018

## **SCHOOL CHOICE**

It is the policy of this school district to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Inter-district School Choice Law (M.G.L. 76:12B.) This decision must be reaffirmed annually prior to June 1st by a vote of the School Committee following a public hearing. In the event the New Bedford School Committee votes to participate, the following local conditions would apply:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, a public hearing will be held to review participation in the school choice program.
3. That resident students be given priority placement in any classes or programs within the district.
4. That the selection of non-resident students for admission when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces be in the form of a random drawing. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place during the last week of the current school year but no later than July 1st. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.
5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the district until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
6. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special need, academic performance, proficiency in the English language, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.

LEGAL REFS:           M.G.L. 71:6; 71:6A; 76:6; 76:12; 76:12B  
                              BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00

Amended: June 11, 2018

## **INFORMING SCHOOL LEAVERS OF ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES**

New Bedford Public Schools will send a written notice, in English or the language requested, annually to former students who have not earned their competency determination and who have not transferred to another school to inform them of the availability of publicly funded post-high school academic support programs and to encourage them to participate in these programs. The notice is sent by first class mail to the last known address of each such student who attended high school in New Bedford within the past two years, highlighting the importance of the student and the parent/guardian keeping their contact information current with New Bedford Public Schools.

## **NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY**

Learning and achievement are the highest priorities in the New Bedford Public Schools. Attendance is a major factor that influences student learning. Students cannot learn if they are absent. Regular school attendance can be achieved through a partnership between students, parents and the school.

Student attendance is the number one factor affecting the overall achievement of students. Teaching students the discipline that they need in order to survive in the 21st century work place is one of our main jobs, and we must help students understand the consequences of poor attendance throughout their educational career. In fact, good attendance is the number one issue that employers identify as making a good employee.

**This attendance policy is designed to foster a culture of learning at New Bedford Public Schools.**

This policy:

- Establishes firm expectations that on-time school and class attendance are important in sustaining the learning environment and in meeting individual learning needs.
- Provides significant flexibility and opportunities to accommodate legitimate absence or lateness with a minimum of administrative procedure.
- Assures timely flow of information from parents to school, and from school to parents about attendance at school and in class so that both can work to improve a situation before a student's education suffers.
- Clearly defines the responsibilities of students, educators, and parents regarding absences, tardiness and dismissals.
- Employs a tiered model of supportive interventions which focus on the needs of the "whole child", a productive partnership between home and school, and the utilization of juvenile court as a last resort effort to ensure students and parents adhere to state attendance laws.

### **Massachusetts General Laws Related to Attendance**

Chapter 76 Section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) states that children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. Students as well as parents/guardians can be charged with a CRA petition if a student has seven or more unexcused absences in a six month (or semester) period.

Chapter 119 Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) provides for the "Protection and Care of Children, and Proceedings Against Them." The section defines Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) as:

\* A child below the age of seventeen who persistently runs away from the home of his parents or legal guardian, or persistently refuses to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of his parents or legal guardian, thereby resulting in said parent's or guardian's inability to adequately care for and protect said child, or a child between the ages of six and sixteen who persistently and willfully fails to attend school or repeatedly violates the lawful and reasonable regulations of his school.

### **The Role of the Attendance Officer**

According to MGL Chapter 76 Section 1, "the school committee of each town shall provide for and enforce the school attendance of all children actually residing therein in accordance herewith."

The New Bedford Public Schools employs Attendance Officers at the elementary, middle and high school levels. These staff has the responsibility to monitor and investigate school-wide attendance trends as well as individual student attendance. Attendance officers frequently communicate with parents/guardians through written notification, phone calls, and home visits. They also work closely with teachers and administration to develop plans and intervene if a student develops a pattern of chronic attendance. Following supports and interventions provided by the New Bedford Public Schools, if a student continues to fail to attend school regularly or a parent/guardian fails to send their child to school, it is the Attendance Officer's responsibility to protect the rights of the child and file a complaint with the juvenile court system. If at any time an Attendance Officer (mandated reporter) believes a child to be in danger they must file a 51A complaint with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

### Definitions

#### EXCUSED ABSENCE:

While the school recognizes "legitimate" reasons for an interruption in a student's education, the casual "day off" will not be recognized as an excused absence. The following list of circumstances, all of which require official written verification or documentation, would constitute an excusable absence/tardy:

- Medical appointments/illness verified in writing by a professional health care provider or the school nurse
- Death of a family member
- Observance of a major religious holiday
- School related absence (i.e., dismissals for field trips, suspensions, ASA, sports events, etc.)
- Legal obligations
- Verified post high school visitation
- Absence approved by the Headmaster
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If a student is absent for one of the above reasons, he/she will provide their homeroom teacher with the appropriate documentation.

\* Students are responsible for make-up work associated with ALL excused absences.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: When in school, students are expected to attend all classes unless excused by an administrator or the nurse.

- If a student is in school, fails to attend a class, and does not have such an excuse, the absence from class is unexcused.
- If a student arrives to class beyond the halfway point without a valid excuse and corresponding pass, the tardy will be considered an unexcused absence for that class.
- If a parent fails to provide written documentation indicating a valid reason for an absence, the school will classify the absence as unexcused (please refer to the list of excusable absences above).

#### TARDINESS:

If a student is not present in his/her classroom/homeroom at the bell, the student will be marked tardy; a student attending less than half a school day is considered absent. A written excuse (as described earlier) is required.

Please Note: Being tardy to school or class may result in the assignment of appropriate disciplinary actions by the housemaster, which may include, parental contact, Detentions, In-School Suspension, and Saturday Alternative to Suspension days. Failure to comply may result in further disciplinary actions.

DISMISSAL:

A student wishing to be dismissed during a session must present a signed note from the parent or guardian to the Housemaster. It must include the student's full name, reason, date and time for dismissal, and a telephone number where the Housemaster can reach the parent or guardian for verification and approval.

SUSPENSION:

Students who are absent due to out-of-school suspension will be marked absent and will be expected to make up missed assignments, homework and tests.

TRUANCY:

Truancy is defined as being absent from school without the permission of a parent or guardian. Any student who is found to be truant may be required to return to school accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please Note: A parent's note cannot excuse truancy if the absence does not meet the criteria of an excused absence.

CHRONIC ABSENCE:

Missing 10% (18 days) or more of a school year.

**Documentation Requirements**

Written documentation is required from a parent or guardian for any and all absences, tardiness and dismissals in Grades K-8.

The note must list the date(s) of absence(s); the student's full name and it must clearly state the reason for the absence. Recommended documentation includes, but is not limited to:

- Doctors' or Dentists' notes
- Court/legal documentation for the legal obligation of the student (not family and friends)
- College or verified post high school visit documentation, etc.
- The student will submit the documentation indicating the reasons for his/her absence to the homeroom teacher. All notes will be verified and kept on file.
- The document must include the date absent, the reason for the absence, a working phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached and the parent or guardian's signature.
- A copy of an obituary or verification of religious affiliation may be requested by the Housemaster or Attendance Officer.
- Should a school official become aware that written documentation for any absence(s) has been fabricated, the absence(s) will not qualify as "approved" and will not be allowable for the Buy Back option.

Please Note: The New Bedford Public Schools' district policy does not recognize family vacations as an excused absence.

### **Attendance Requirements & Procedures**

Students will not receive full credit for a course (regardless of the grade received) when a student exceeds the following:

- 5 unexcused absences in a class that meets daily in a semester
- 2.5 unexcused absences in a class that meets on alternating days in a semester
- 10 unexcused absences in a full year

This in turn may place the student in jeopardy of attaining the required Units and/or Courses necessary for graduation.

### **Parent/Student Notification**

- The New Bedford Public Schools automated call system will inform the primary contact number when a student is absent or tardy.

Please Note: It is the responsibility of the students' parent/guardian to provide an updated valid working phone number to the school at all times.

- Parents, guardians and age of majority students will be notified that a student is in danger of not receiving full credit through issuance of a warning notice.

### **Dropout Prevention**

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Headmaster or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

## **EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

### Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

- Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;
- Failure to meet the requirements of age by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;
- Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;
- Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B  
603 CMR 26:00

## **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING**

As appropriate to the age of students, class or school organizations and school government organizations, such as student councils, may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expression of students' ideas and opinions.

The Committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

Students will be welcomed at Committee meetings and granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

### Student Advisory Committee

As required by state law, the Committee will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee, which is composed of five students elected by the high school student body. The chair of the student advisory committee shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the School Committee without the right to attend executive sessions unless such right is expressly granted by the School Committee.

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

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE and shall have each Principal sign a document acknowledging receipt thereof, which shall be placed in their personnel file.

### **Suspension**

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed<sup>1</sup>, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

### **Notice of Suspension:**

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

### **Emergency Removal**

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

<sup>1</sup> Except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy.

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

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

### **In School Suspension – not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively**

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

### **Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

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

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

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

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

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

### **Superintendent's Hearing**

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

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

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

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

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

### **Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); 71:37H <sup>¾</sup>; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

**NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, S. 37H or 37H<sup>½</sup>. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.**

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students shall rest with individual students and parents.

They have the right to determine how the student shall dress providing that such attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not interfere with the educational process. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This right of the individual may not be restricted, even by a dress code arrived at by a majority vote of parents or students.

The above policy does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that a student shall not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as his dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth in paragraph two.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

The School Committee will at least annually review their support of student publications, and encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views subject to the limitations as contained in this policy.

Student publications will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

### Distribution of Literature

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:82

## **GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES**

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

### Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

### Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

## **SECRET SOCIETIES**

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

## **PROHIBITION OF HAZING**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 269:17, 18, 19

## HAZING

### CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

### CH. 269, S.18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

### CH. 269, S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

SOURCE: MASC

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

New Bedford Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- wire
- radio
- electromagnetic
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the \_\_\_\_\_ public schools;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the \_\_\_\_\_ school district if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

#### Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

#### Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

### Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

### Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying, shall be prohibited.

### Target Assistance

The \_\_\_\_\_ Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

### Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

### Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the New Bedford Public Schools website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended  
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission  
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972  
603 CMR 26.00  
M.G.L. 71:37O; 265:43, 43A; 268:13B; 269:14A

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.:      AC, Nondiscrimination  
                         ACAB, Sexual Harassment  
                         JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment  
                         JIC, Student Discipline  
                         JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing

## **ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED**

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians of students in grades 7 and 9 shall be notified of the verbal screening tool prior to or at the opening of school each year and of their right to decline to have their student screened. Students in grades 7 and 9 shall be notified of the verbal screening tool prior to the screening and have the right to opt out of the screening prior to or at the time of the screening. The district shall provide each parent/guardian with a district form for the purpose of indicating the parent's/guardian's decision to permit or decline the screening. Notices to parents, guardians, and students, and forms shall be in the primary language of the parent/guardian/student.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

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

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

CROSS REFS.: IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

Amended: June 11, 2018

## **USE OF CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

New Bedford Public Schools promotes the use of Technology as an effective environment for learning. However, given the degree to which unregulated use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices may interfere with teaching and learning, regulations will apply as follows:

1. Electronic devices may be used if necessary for special programs and educational needs as outlined in an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P) or as authorized.
2. Cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and not visible during the school day in all academic areas or during academic programs unless authorized.

It is the expectation of the School Administration that all students will comply with these guidelines. Students not adhering to guidelines of this policy will be subject to consequences outlined in the student handbook.

New Bedford Public Schools is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices under any circumstances.

SOURCE: New Bedford

Adopted: 12/10/2018

## **PREGNANT STUDENTS**

The New Bedford Public Schools wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The New Bedford Public Schools does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.:       M.G.L. 71:84  
                          Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681  
                          34 CFR § 106.40(b)

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community.

The traditional "open door" policy in the public school system will be continued. Students--and their parents and/or guardians--who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance. Appeals of individual disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings and reviews of student grievances. In general, procedures will begin with the authority imposing the penalty (for example, Principal or teacher) and may ultimately be referred to the Superintendent and on to the School Committee if applicable.

Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any legitimate grievance in a friendly and informal manner.

CROSS REF: JIC Student Discipline

## **CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. The schools will observe a complementary relationship to the home and community, planning activities with due regard for the widespread and rich facilities already available to students.
2. The assistance of parents in planning activity programs will be encouraged.
3. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities to be determined by the school, the parents, and the student. This should be a shared responsibility.
4. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.
5. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

LEGAL REF.:           M.G.L. 71:47; 76:5  
                          603 CMR 26.00

## STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

### Student Organizations

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building Principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the board.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy (see also Policy JICF).

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school system or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

### Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate District administrator for review of the Principal's decision.

LEGAL REF.:           M.G.L. 76:5  
                              603 CMR 26.00

## **STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES**

In general, the Committee discourages of fund-raising in the community by students for school activities. Especially discouraged is the sale of goods produced by companies for profit, such as magazines, candy, and similar items.

Exceptions to this policy will be:

1. Sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events and school dramatic and musical performances.
2. Sale of advertising space in school publications.
3. A fund-raising activity approved by the Superintendent.
4. Proposals to raise funds for charitable purposes or for benefit of the school or community (for example: American Field Service activities, United Nations, or scholarship funds) provided such proposals have been individually approved by the building Principal and Superintendent.

No money collections of any kind may be held in the schools without the specific consent of the Principals.

CROSS REFS.:       JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations  
                          KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

## STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Student funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations. Student activity funds are considered a part of the total fiscal operation of the District and are subject to policies established by the School Committee and the Office of the Superintendent. The funds shall be only for the benefit of students and managed in accordance with sound business practices, which include accepted budgetary, accounting, and internal control practices. The Superintendent shall ensure that, annually, all Principals and student organizations receive a copy of this policy as well as a copy of established procedures for control of receipts and expenditures that meet or exceed DESE guidelines.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 47, the School Committee:

1. Authorizes the Principals to accept money for recognized student activity organizations, which currently exist, or as from time to time may be revised. All funds received for student activities must be deposited into the Student Activity Agency Account and no funds shall be directly deposited to a Student Activity Checking Account except from the Student Activity Agency Account.
2. Authorizes the Town or District Treasurer to establish and maintain a Student Activity Agency Account(s) which is to be audited as part of the Town's annual audit. The interest that is earned on such accounts shall be maintained in the Agency Account and distributed annually among the Student Activity Checking Accounts as directed by the procedures established by the Superintendent.
3. Authorizes Student Activity Checking Accounts for use by the Principals with specific maximum balances established annually for each school by vote of the School Committee. Payments for expenditures shall be made, whenever possible, by check, debit, or EFT directly from the Student Activity Checking Account. Reimbursements to personal credit card holders shall require the prior authorization of the Superintendent. Signatory authorization for Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be restricted to the Principal and (Superintendent or Treasurer). Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be audited annually in accordance with DESE guidelines.
4. Directs Principals to provide the Treasurer with a bond in an amount agreeable to the Treasurer.
5. Shall annually, prior to the start of each school year, vote to establish or change the maximum balance that may be on deposit in each Student Activity Checking Account.

For accounts with maximum balance limits that exceed \$25,000.00, the School Committee shall consider, in accordance with DESE guidelines, that an audit be conducted by an outside audit firm every three years

### **Graduating Class Funds**

Funds held on behalf of graduating classes are to be held within the Student Activity Checking Account for the High School. Such funds shall be designated by the class' Year of Graduation.

Once a class has graduated from High School, their funds should be removed from the High School Student Activity Checking Account no later than two years from the date of graduation. It is the responsibility of the class officers to arrange for these funds to be removed from the High School Activity Checking Account. When requested, and once all outstanding financial obligations of the graduating class have been met, the remaining balance should be removed from the fund by check transfer payable to the Class of XXXX. Checks payable to individual members of the graduating class are not permitted..

Should the class officers not request to have their funds removed from the Student Activity Checking Account within two years of their graduating, the funds will be forfeited by the class and transferred into the General Sub-fund portion of the Student Activity Agency Account. These funds will then be allocated by a vote of the School Committee.

Class officers should be given a copy of this policy during the course of their senior year to ensure their knowledge of their obligations to perform under this policy.

### **Inactive Student Activities**

When a student activity ceases to be active for a period of three years or more the Principal or other authorized administrator shall require the following actions:

1. Obtain written notice from the faculty advisor or student officer that the activity will cease to be a viable account. If unable to obtain such notification the Principal shall request action to close the account from the School Committee.
2. Identify in writing all assets of the student activity. The disposition of any assets shall be determined by the School Committee and may not benefit specific individuals.
3. Annually notify all students of the required actions if an activity ceases to exist.

### **Student Activity Deficits**

Individual student activity accounts are not permitted to be in a deficit position. Whenever a deficit exists that is not the result of timing, the Superintendent shall recommend remedial action to the School Committee in a timely manner.

SOURCE: MASC July 2018

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:47](#)

CROSS REFS: [JJA](#) - Student Organizations

Revised: 12/10/2018

**NOTE: DESE audit guidelines for Student Activity Checking Accounts require an annual audit. In regional districts these accounts may be a part of the annual audit by a third party auditor. In municipal districts the audits may be conducted by a district or municipal employee but not by the Principal, Treasurer, Superintendent, or any authorized signatory on the accounts. Districts with large numbers of schools may rotate the schools through the audit process.**

## STUDENT OVERNIGHT TRAVEL REGULATIONS

### 1. Transportation

The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 38R.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of “conditional” or “unsatisfactory”. FMCSA ratings are available at <https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/CompanySnapshot.aspx>

The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor’s qualifications.

### 2. Trip Scheduling

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered “optional school programs” and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (Refer to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide)

Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

### 3. Fundraising

The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students’ obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.

Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.

If students are charged individual fees for participation, every effort should be made to provide scholarships where needed.

Additional Resources

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>

United Motorcoach Association – Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide (includes “Motorcoach Safety Checklist)

<https://www.uma.org/consumer/student-transportation/>

Department of Defense’s approved list of motor carriers

[www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/BusAgreementPOCs.pdf](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/BusAgreementPOCs.pdf)

APPROVED: March 10, 2004  
LEGAL REFS.: Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002

M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N; 71:38R  
603 CMR 27.00

CROSS REFS.: IJOA, Field Trips

## **INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

The School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in inter-school sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics will be subject to approval by the School Committee and will be in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition will include a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire. Additionally, intramural athletic activities will be offered as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education.

The Athletic Director will provide a seasonal report (three (3) times annually) to the School Committee and the Administration outlining the number of approved Grade 8 waivers by sport.

The School Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that "away games" be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:47; 71:54A; 76:5  
603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination (and subcodes)

Amended: June 11, 2018

## ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities<sup>1</sup> including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine

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<sup>1</sup> Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheer leading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be “fine” on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 111:222; 105 CMR 201.000

## **ATHLETIC CONCUSSION REGULATIONS**

### **Section I. What is a Concussion?**

A concussion is defined as a transient alteration in brain function without structural damage, but with other potentially serious long-term ramifications. In the event of a concussion, the brain sustains damage at a microscopic level in which cells and cell membranes are torn and stretched. The damage to these cells also disrupts the brain at a chemical level, as well as causing restricted blood flow to the damaged areas of the brain, thereby disrupting brain function. A concussion, therefore, is a disruption in how the brain works; it is not a structural injury. Concussions are difficult to diagnose because the damage cannot be seen. A MRI or CT Scan cannot diagnose a concussion, but they can help rule out a more serious brain injury to a student athlete. Because concussions are difficult to detect, student athletes must obtain medical approval before returning to athletics following a concussion.

### **Section II. Mechanism of Injury:**

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. Any force that causes the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull can cause a concussion. A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body can be caused by either indirect or direct trauma. The two direct mechanisms of injury are coup-type and contrecoup-type. Coup-type injury is when the head is stationary and struck by a moving object such as another player's helmet, a ball, or sport implement, causing brain injury at the location of impact. Contrecoup-type injury occurs when the head is moving and makes contact with an immovable or slowly moving object as a result of deceleration, causing brain injury away from the site of impact. Indirect forces are transmitted through the spine and jaw or blows to the thorax that whip the head while the neck muscles are relaxed. Understanding the way in which an injury occurred is vital in understanding and having a watchful eye for athletes who may exhibit symptoms of a concussion so these student athletes can receive the appropriate care.

### **Section III. Signs and Symptoms:**

#### **Signs (what you see):**

- Confusion
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent
- Altered coordination
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Slow response to questions
- Forgets events prior to injury (retrograde amnesia)
- Forgets events after injury (anterograde amnesia)
- Loss of consciousness (any duration)

#### **Symptoms (reported by athlete):**

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision/ blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)

- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering
- Trouble with sleeping/ excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Sadness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/ glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

If any of the above signs or symptoms are observed after a suspected blow to the head, jaw, spine or body, they may be indicative of a concussion and the student athlete must be removed from play immediately and not allowed to return until cleared by an appropriate allied health professional.

#### **Section IV. Management and Referral Guidelines:**

1. When an athlete loses consciousness for any reason, the athletic trainer will start the EAP (Emergency Action Plan) by activating EMS; check ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation); stabilize the cervical spine; and transport the injured athlete to the appropriate hospital via ambulance. If the athletic trainer is not available, the coach should immediately call EMS, check ABCs and not move the athlete until help arrives.
2. Any athlete who is removed from the competition or event and begins to develop signs and symptoms of a worsening brain injury will be transported to the hospital immediately in accordance with the EAP. **Worsening signs and symptoms requiring immediate physician referral include:**
  - A. Amnesia lasting longer than 15 minutes
  - B. Deterioration in neurological function
  - C. Decreasing level of consciousness
  - D. Decrease or irregularity of respiration
  - E. Decrease or irregularity in pulse
  - F. Increase in blood pressure
  - G. Unequal, dilated, or unreactive pupils
  - H. Cranial nerve deficits
  - I. Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
  - J. Mental-status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, agitation
  - K. Seizure activity
  - L. Vomiting/ worsening headache
  - M. Motor deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
  - N. Sensory deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
  - O. Balance deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
  - P. Cranial nerve deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
  - Q. Post-Concussion symptoms worsen
  - R. Athlete is still symptomatic at the end of the game

3. After a student athlete sustains a concussion, the athletic trainer will use the Standardized Assessment for Concussion (SAC) to assess and document the student athlete's concussion. The athletic trainer will also report on the student athlete's signs and symptoms by using the Signs and Symptoms Check-List. On the signs and symptoms checklist, the athletic trainer will also check pulse and blood pressure of each student athlete with a suspected concussion. After the initial evaluation of a concussion, all signs and symptoms will be tracked on the computer using the ImPact Test.
4. Any athlete who is symptomatic but stable is allowed to go home with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) following the head injury.
  - A. If the head injury occurs at practice, parent(s)/guardian(s) will immediately be notified and must come and pick up the student athlete and talk to the certified athletic trainer in person.
  - B. If the injury occurs at a game or event the student athlete may go home with the parent/guardian(s) after talking with the certified athletic trainer.
  - C. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive important information regarding signs and symptoms of deteriorating brain injury/function prompting immediate referral to a local emergency room as well as return to play requirements. Parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as student athletes, must read and sign the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form and bring it back to the certified athletic trainer before starting with the return to play protocol.

#### **Section V. Gradual Return to Play Protocol:**

1. Student athletes, with the consent of their parent(s)/guardian(s), will start taking the ImPact Test (**or other approved test identified by the School District**). The ImPact Test is a tool that helps manage concussions, determine recovery from injury, and is helpful in providing proper communication between coaches, parents and clinicians. The ImPact Test is a neurocognitive test that helps measure student athletes' symptoms, as well as test verbal and visual memory, processing speed and reaction time. It is **mandatory** for all student athletes to take the ImPact Test for a baseline score in accordance with Massachusetts State Law. The law states that all public schools must develop safety protocols on concussions and all public schools must receive information on past concussion history. The ImPact Test appears to be a promising tool in monitoring a student athlete's prior concussions, as well as any future concussions.
2. Each student athlete will complete a baseline test at the beginning of their sport season. **All student athletes and club cheerleading members will undergo ImPact testing.** Student athletes will be re-tested every other year. If a student athlete plays more than one sport during the academic year, their test will remain valid. For example, if a soccer student athlete also plays basketball in the winter, the student athlete will not have to take the ImPact Baseline Test again in the winter. If a student athlete posts scores below the norm, the student athlete will be re-tested at another time with either the certified athletic trainer or school nurse. Student athletes cannot begin practice until a valid baseline score is obtained during their designated time to take the test.

- A. At the beginning of every sport season, student athletes are required to complete a concussion history form and return it to the athletic department. This information will be recorded in the student information system for tracking purposes.
- B. Following any concussion the athletic trainer must notify the athletic director and school nurses.
- C. Following a concussion the student athlete will take a **post-injury test within 24 to 48 hours following the head injury. STUDENT ATHLETES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MOVE ON TO FUNCTIONAL/PHYSICAL TESTING UNTIL THEIR IMPACT TEST IS BACK TO THE BASELINE SCORE AND ASYMPTOMATIC.** After a student athlete takes their first post-injury test, the student athlete will not be re-tested again for **5 days.**
- D. If, after the first post-injury ImPact test, the athlete is not back to his/her baseline the parent/guardian(s) will be notified, and the student athlete will be referred to their healthcare provider and must have the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by a physician, physician assistant, licensed neuropsychologist or nurse practitioner stating when the athlete is allowed to return to play.
- E. Following a post-injury test, the certified athletic trainer will take the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and fill in the date of all post-injury tests taken by each student athlete.
- F. The certified athletic trainer will also document the date on which the athlete is asymptomatic and sign the document agreeing that all the above statements are true and accurate.
- G. Once the athlete starts on the exertional post concussion tests, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and the athlete will be sent home with all signed documents relating to head injury. At this time the parent/guardian(s) must bring the student athlete to a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, licensed physician assistant, nurse practitioner or other appropriately trained or licensed healthcare professional to be medically cleared for participation in the extracurricular activity.
- H. **Student athletes who continue to exhibit concussion symptoms for a week or more must be evaluated by a physician before returning to play.**
- I. Once a student athlete's post-injury test is back at the student athlete's baseline score, the student athlete will go through 5 days of Exertional Post Concussion Tests. The student athlete must be asymptomatic for all functional and physical tests to return to play (RTP). All tests will be administered by a certified athletic trainer.

#### **Exertional Post Concussion Tests:**

- A. Test 1: (30% to 40% maximum exertion): Low levels of light physical activity. This will include walking, light stationary bike for about 10 to 15 minutes. Light isometric strengthening (quad sets, UE light hand weights, ham sets, SLR's, resistive band ankle strengthening) and stretching exercises.
- B. Test 2: (40% to 60% maximum exertion): Moderate levels of physical activity. Treadmill jogging, stationary bike, or elliptical for 20 to 25 minutes. Light weight strength exercises (resistive band exercises UE and LE, wall squats, lunges, step up/downs. More active and dynamic stretching.
- C. Test 3: (60% to 80% maximum exertion). Non-contact sports specific drills. Running, high intensity stationary bike or elliptical 25 to 30 minutes. Completing regular weight training. Start agility drills (ladder, side shuffle, zig-zags, carioca, box jumps, and hurdles).
- D. Test 4: (80% maximum exertion). Limited, controlled sports specific practice and drills.
- E. Test 5: Full contact and return to sport with monitoring of symptoms.

**Section VI. School Nurse Responsibilities:**

1. Assist in testing all student athletes with baseline and post-injury ImPact testing.
2. Participate and complete the CDC training course on concussions. A certificate of completion will be recorded by the nurse leader yearly.
3. Complete symptom assessment when student athlete enters Health Office (HO) with questionable concussion during school hours. Repeat in 15 minutes.
4. Observe students with a concussion for a minimum of 30 minutes.
5. If symptoms are present, notify parent/guardian(s) and instruct parent/guardian(s) that student must be evaluated by an MD.
  - a. If symptoms are not present, the student may return to class.
6. If symptoms appear after a negative assessment, MD referral is necessary.
7. Allow students who are in recovery to rest in HO when needed.
8. Develop plan for students regarding pain management.
9. School nurse will notify teachers and guidance counselors of any students or student athletes who have academic restrictions or modifications related to their concussion.
10. Educate parents and teachers about the effects of concussion and returning to school and activity.
11. If injury occurs during the school day, inform administrator and complete accident/incident form.
12. Enter physical exam dates and concussion dates into the student information system.

**Section VII. School Responsibilities:**

1. Review and, if necessary, revise, the concussion policy every 2 years.
2. Once the school is informed of the student's concussion, a contact or "point person" should be identified (e.g. the guidance counselor, athletic director, school nurse, school psychologist or teacher).
3. Point person to work with the student on organizing work assignments, making up work and giving extra time for assignments and tests/quizzes.
4. Assist teachers in following the recovery stage for student.
5. Convene meeting and develop rehabilitative plan.
6. Decrease workload if symptoms appear.
7. Recognize that the student's ability to perform complex math equations may be different from the ability to write a composition depending on the location of the concussion in the brain.
8. Educate staff on the signs and symptoms of concussions and the educational impact concussions may have on students.
9. Include concussion information in student handbooks.
10. Develop a plan to communicate and provide language-appropriate educational materials to parents with limited English proficiency.

**Section VIII. Athletic Director Responsibilities:**

1. Provide parents, athletes, coaches, and volunteers with educational training and concussion materials yearly.
2. Ensure that all educational training programs are completed and recorded.
3. Ensure that all students meet the physical exam requirements consistent with 105 CMR 200.000 prior to participation in any extracurricular athletic activity.

4. Ensure that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activity have completed and submitted their pre-participation forms, which include health history form, concussion history form, and MIAA form.
5. Ensure that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.
6. Ensure that all head injury forms are completed by parent/guardian(s) or coaches and reviewed by the coach, athletic trainer, school nurse and school physician.
7. Inform parent/guardian(s) that, if all necessary forms are not completed, their child will not participate in athletic extracurricular activities.

**Section IX. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

1. Complete and return concussion history form to the athletic department.
2. Inform school if student sustains a concussion outside of school hours. Complete new concussion history form following new injury.
3. If student suffers a concussion outside of school, complete head injury form and return it to the school nurse.
4. Complete a training provided by the school on concussions and return certificate of completion to the athletic department.
5. Watch for changes in your child that may indicate that your child does have a concussion or that your child's concussion may be worsening. Report to a physician:
  - A. Loss of consciousness
  - B. Headache
  - C. Dizziness
  - D. Lethargy
  - E. Difficulty concentrating
  - F. Balance problems
  - G. Answering questions slowly
  - H. Difficulty recalling events
  - I. Repeating questions
  - J. Irritability
  - K. Sadness
  - L. Emotionality
  - M. Nervousness
  - N. Difficulty with sleeping
6. Encourage your child to follow concussion protocol.
7. Enforce restrictions on rest, electronics and screen time.
8. Reinforce recovery plan.
9. Request a contact person from the school with whom you may communicate about your child's progress and academic needs.
10. Observe and monitor your child for any physical or emotional changes.
11. Request to extend make up time for work if necessary.
12. Recognize that your child will be excluded from participation in any extracurricular athletic event if all forms are not completed and on file with the athletic department.

**Section X. Student and Student Athlete Responsibilities:**

1. Complete Baseline ImPact Test prior to participation in athletics.
2. Return required concussion history form prior to participation in athletics.
3. Participate in all concussion training and education and return certificate of completion to the athletic department prior to participation in athletics.
4. Report all symptoms to athletic trainer and/ or school nurse.
5. Follow recovery plan.
6. **REST.**
7. **NO ATHLETICS.**
8. **BE HONEST!**
9. Keep strict limits on screen time and electronics.
10. Don't carry books or backpacks that are too heavy.
11. Tell your teachers if you are having difficulty with your classwork.
12. See the athletic trainer and/or school nurse for pain management.
13. Return to sports only when cleared by physician and the athletic trainer.
14. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
15. Report any symptoms to the athletic trainer and/or school nurse and parent(s)/guardian(s) if any occur after return to play.
16. Return medical clearance form to athletic trainer prior to return to play.
17. Students who do not complete and return all required trainings, testing and forms will not be allowed to participate in sports.

**Section XI. Coach & Band Instructor Responsibilities:**

1. Participate in Concussion Education Course offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) on a yearly basis. Complete certificate of completion and return to the athletic department.
2. Ensure all student athletes have completed ImPact baseline testing before participation.
3. Ensure all student athletes have returned concussion history and health history form prior to participation in athletics.
4. Complete a head injury form if their player suffers a head injury and the athletic trainer is not present at the athletic event. This form must be shared with the athletic trainer and school nurse.
5. Ensure all students have completed a concussion educational training and returned their certificate of completion prior to participation in athletics.
6. Remove from play any student athlete who exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion.
7. Do not allow student athletes to return to play until cleared by a physician and athletic trainer.
8. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
9. Refer any student athlete with returned signs and symptoms back to athletic trainer.
10. Any coach, band instructor, or volunteer coach for extracurricular activities shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student athlete, including using a musical instrument, helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

## **Section XII. Post Concussion Syndrome:**

Post Concussion Syndrome is a poorly understood condition that occurs after a student athlete receives a concussion. Student athletes who receive concussions can have symptoms that last a few days to a few months, and even up to a full year, until their neurocognitive function returns to normal. Therefore, all school personnel must pay attention to and closely observe all student athletes for post concussion syndrome and its symptoms. Student athletes who are still suffering from concussion symptoms are not ready to return to play. The signs and symptoms of post concussion syndrome are:

- Dizziness
- Headache with exertion
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Difficulty in coping with daily stress
- Impaired memory or concentration
- Eating and sleeping disorders
- Behavioral changes
- Alcohol intolerance
- Decreases in academic performance
- Depression
- Visual disturbances

## **Section XIII. Second Impact Syndrome:**

Second impact syndrome is a serious medical emergency and a result of an athlete returning to play and competition too soon following a concussion. Second impact syndrome occurs because of rapid brain swelling and herniation of the brain after a second head injury that occurs before the symptoms of a previous head injury have been resolved. The second impact that a student athlete may receive may only be a minor blow to the head or it may not even involve a hit to the head. A blow to the chest or back may create enough force to snap the athlete's head and send acceleration/deceleration forces to an already compromised brain. The resulting symptoms occur because of a disruption of the brain's blood autoregulatory system which leads to swelling of the brain, increasing intracranial pressure and herniation.

After a second impact a student athlete usually does not become unconscious, but appears to be dazed. The student athlete may remain standing and be able to leave the field under his/her own power. Within fifteen seconds to several minutes, the athlete's condition worsens rapidly, with dilated pupils, loss of eye movement, loss of consciousness leading to coma and respiratory failure. The best way to handle second impact syndrome is to prevent it from occurring altogether. All student athletes who incur a concussion must not return to play until they are asymptomatic and cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

## **Section XIV. Concussion Education:**

It is extremely important to educate coaches, athletes and the community about concussions. On a yearly basis, all coaches must complete the online course called "Concussion In Sports: What You Need to Know". This course is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Student athletes also need to understand the importance of reporting a concussion to their coaches, parents, athletic trainer and other school personnel. Every year student athletes and parents will participate in educational training on concussions and complete a certificate of completion. This training may include:

- CDC Heads-Up Video Training, or
- Training provided by the school district

The school district may also offer seminars, speakers, and discussion panels on the topic of concussions. Seminars offer an opportunity for the certified athletic trainer, athletic director and nurse leader to speak about concussions on the field at practices and games and to discuss the protocol and policy that the district has enacted. Providing education within the community will offer the residents and parents of athletes an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns on the topic of brain injury and concussions. When it comes to concussions, everyone needs to be aware of the potential dangers and remember that a concussion is a brain injury. Whenever anyone has a doubt about a student athlete with a concussion, **SIT THEM OUT and have them see the appropriate healthcare professional!**

**Section XV. Student & Parental Notification:**

Annual notification of Concussion Policy will be distributed yearly to all student athletes and their parents.

Adopted: 3/12/12

SOURCE: MASC/New Bedford

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Massachusetts General Laws require the School Committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules not inconsistent with the law nor in conflict with School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H ¾; 71:37L; 76:16; 76:17  
603 CMR 53.00

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

State law provides that:

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

Established by law

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

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS**

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR 46.02.

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

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 themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop 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 of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents 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 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.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of 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;

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

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

LEGAL REF.:           M.G.L. 71:37G  
                              603 CMR 46.00

## **STUDENT WELFARE**

### Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

### Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

### Student Safety

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

### Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment;
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

### Fire Drills and Reporting

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The Principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the Principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The Principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:37L; 148:2A

## **STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM**

A noncompulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan.

## **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS**

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

### Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parents shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;

Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parents. Requests made by parents for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;

Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;

Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

### Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

LEGAL REF.: 71:53; 54; 54A; 54B; 55; 55A; 55B; 56; 57; 69:8A

CROSS REF.: EBB, First Aid  
EBC, Emergency Plans  
JLCD, Administration of Medications to Students

## PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined for screening in sight, hearing, BMI\*, and for other physical problems as provided in the law and regulation. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

Every student will be given a general physical examination four times: upon entering school and upon admittance to the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

Every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of parent or guardian in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school Principal.

The school physician will make a prompt examination of all children referred to him/her by the school nurse. He/she will examine school employees when, in his/her opinion, the protection of the student's health may require it. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

Whenever the school nurse finds a child suffering from any disease or medical problem, the situation will be reported to the parent or guardian in writing, or by personal visit if remedial treatment is recommended. A copy of the report will be filed at the school.

The school nurse will make a monthly report to the Superintendent of the number of students examined; the number excluded; and the number recommended for treatment or special adjustment of work. In all cases of exclusion or recommendation, the causes will be included in the report.

*\* NOTE: Department of Health Regulations call for vision screenings in Grades 1-5, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; hearing screenings in grades 1-3, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; BMI in grades 1, 4, 7, 10.*

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:53; 71:54; 71:56; 71:57  
105 CMR 200

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

## **INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS**

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, tetanus, measles, and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent.

Established by law

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:15

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55

## ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). When the school nurse is not present, a student who needs medication during the school day may be called to the office at the scheduled hour and reminded by the secretary to take the medicine. This provision only applies when the correct dosage of the medication has been placed in an individual container clearly marked with the student's name, the dosage to be administered, and the time and/or conditions under which the medicine is to be taken. In addition, the student must be able to recognize the medicine that he/she or she is taking. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

### Exceptions:

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, the School Committee shall vote to approve such training and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:54B  
Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR 3.00

## **STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS**

Because of the embarrassment that might result among children, students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school system will be made only as approved by the Principal.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent.

CROSS REFS.: GBEB, Staff Gifts and Solicitations  
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities  
KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools  
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

## **STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES**

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. No student will be denied access into any program because of inability to pay these supplementary charges.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon Board approval. The schools, however, may:

**Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.**

**Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.**

Students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees. However, indigent students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the withholding of report cards until payment is made or denial of participation in extra class activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR 23.00). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS:           Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,  
                          P.L. 93-380, Amended  
                          P.L. 103-382, 1994  
                          M.G.L. 66:10 71:34A, B, D, E, H  
                          Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/77, June 1995 as  
                          amended June 2002.  
                          603 CMR: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education 23.00 through 23:12  
                          also  
                          Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Records;  
                          Questions, Answers and Guidelines, Sept. 1995

SOURCE: MASC

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know

## STUDENT RECORDS

603 CMR 23.00 is promulgated by the Board of Education pursuant to its powers under M.G.L.c.71, s.34D which directs that “the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the maintenance of student records by the public elementary and secondary schools of the Commonwealth,” and under M.G.L.c.71, s.34F which directs that “the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the retention, duplication and storage of records under the control of school committees, and except as otherwise required by law may authorize the periodic destruction of any such records at reasonable times.” 603 CMR 23.00 was originally promulgated on February 10, 1975, and was reviewed and amended in June 1995. 603 CMR is in conformity with federal and state statutes regarding maintenance of and access to student records, and is to be construed harmoniously with such statutes.

### Application of Rights

603 CMR 23.00 is promulgated to insure parents’ and students’ rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of students’ records and to assist local school systems in adhering to the law. 603 CMR 23.00 should be liberally construed for these purposes.

- (1) These rights shall be the rights of the student upon reaching 14 years of age or upon entering the ninth grade, whichever comes first. If a student is under the age of 14 and has not yet entered the ninth grade, these rights shall belong to the student’s parent.
- (2) If a student is from 14 through 17 years or has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent, or either one acting alone, shall exercise these rights.
- (3) If a student is 18 years of age or older, he/she alone shall exercise these rights, subject to the following. The parent may continue to exercise the rights until expressly limited by such student. Such student may limit the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 which extend to his/her parent, except the right to inspect the student record, by making such request in writing to the school Principal or Superintendent of Schools who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, s.34E, the parent of a student may inspect the student record regardless of the student’s age.
- (4) Notwithstanding 603 CMR 23.01(1) and 23.01(2), nothing shall be construed to mean that a school committee cannot extend the provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered the ninth grade.

### Definition of Terms

The various terms as used in 603 CMR 23.00 are defined below:

Access: shall mean inspection or copying of a student record, in whole or in part.

Authorized school personnel: shall consist of three groups:

(1) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the School Committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(2) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the School Committee or are employed under a School Committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(3) The evaluation team which evaluates a student.

Eligible student: shall mean any student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered 9th grade, unless the School Committee acting pursuant to 603 CMR 23.01(4) extends the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered 9th grade.

Evaluation Team: shall mean the team, which evaluates school-age children pursuant to M.G.L.c.71B (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR 28.00.

Parent: shall mean a student's father or mother, or guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. Any parent who by court order does not have physical custody of the student, is considered a non custodial parent for purposes of M.G.L. c. 71, s.34H and 603 CMR 23.00. This includes parents who by court order do not reside with or supervise the student, even for short periods of time.

Release: shall mean the oral or written disclosure, in whole or in part, of information in a student record.

School-age child with special needs: shall have the same definition as that given in M.G.L. c. 71B (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR 28.00.

School committee: shall include a school committee, a board of trustees of a charter school, a board of trustees of a vocational-technical school, a board of directors of an educational collaborative and the governing body of an M.G.L. c.71B (Chapter 766) approved private school.

Student: shall mean any person enrolled or formerly enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school or any person age three or older about whom a school committee maintains information. The term as used in 603 CMR 23.00 shall not include a person about whom a school committee maintains information relative only to the person's employment by the School Committee.

The student record: shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information, recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. The terms as used in 603 CMR 23.00 shall mean all such information and materials regardless of where they are located, except for the information and materials specifically exempted by 603 CMR 23.04.

The temporary record: shall consist of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information clearly shall be of importance to the educational process. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff.

Third party: shall mean any person or private or public agency, authority, or organization other than the eligible student, his/her parent, or authorized school personnel.

Log of Access. A log shall be kept as part of each student's record. If parts of the student record are separately located, a separate log shall be kept with each part. The log shall indicate all persons who have obtained access to the student record, stating: the name, position and signature of the person releasing the information; the name, position and, if a third party, the affiliation if any, of the person who is to receive the information; the date of access; the parts of the record to which access was obtained; and the purpose of such access. Unless student record information is to be deleted or released, this log requirement shall not apply to:

- (a) authorized school personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(a) who inspect the student record;
- (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(b), who add information to or obtain access to the student record; and
- (c) school nurses who inspect the student health record.

Access of Eligible Students and Parents. The eligible student or the parent, subject to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07 (5), shall have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided in 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Upon request for access, the entire student record regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available.

- (a) Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or the parent. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged if to do so would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records.
- (b) Any student, regardless of age, shall have the right pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 34A to receive a copy of his/her transcript.
- (c) The eligible student or the parent shall have the right upon request to meet with professionally qualified school personnel and to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.
- (d) The eligible student or the parent may have the student record inspected or interpreted by a third party of their choice. Such third party shall present specific written consent of the eligible student or parent, prior to gaining access to the student record.

Access of Authorized School Personnel. Subject to 603 CMR 23.00, authorized school personnel shall have access to the student records of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the eligible student or parent shall not be necessary.

Access of Third Parties. Except for the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a) through 23.07(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for information described in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

(a) A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR 23.07 and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.

(b) Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena the school shall comply, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance.

(c) A school may release information regarding a student upon receipt of a request from the Department of Social Services, a probation officer, a justice of any court, or the Department of Youth Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 119, sections 51B, 57, 69 and 69A respectively.

(d) Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents shall have access to student records as necessary in connection with the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws, or programs; provided that except when collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by law, any data collected by such officials shall be protected so that parties other than such officials and their authorized agents cannot personally identify such students and their parents; and such personally identifiable data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws.

(e) A school may disclose information regarding a student to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures to the local police department and the Department of Social Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, section 37L and M.G.L. c. 119, section 51A.

(f) Upon notification by law enforcement authorities that a student, or former student, has been reported missing, a mark shall be placed in the student record of such student. The school shall report any request concerning the records of the such child to the appropriate law enforcement authority pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 22A, section 9.

(g) Authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's record without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving, or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.

(h) School health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. the parent has been denied visitation, or
3. the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

(b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

(c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.

(d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).

(e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

(f) Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

At least once during every school year, the school shall publish and distribute to students and their parents in their primary language a routine information letter informing them of the following:

(a) The standardized testing programs and research studies to be conducted during the year and other routine information to be collected or solicited from the student during the year.

(b) The general provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 regarding parent and student rights, and that copies of 603 CMR 23.00 are available to them from the school.

In those school systems required under M.G.L. c. 71A to conduct a bilingual program, all forms, regulations, or other documents regarding 603 CMR 23.00 that a parent receives or is required to receive shall be in the language spoken in the home of the student, provided that it is a language for which the school system is required to provide a bilingual program.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,  
P.L. 93-380, Amended  
P.L. 103-382, 1994  
M.G.L. 66:10 71:34A, B, D, E, H  
Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/75, as amended June  
2002  
603 CMR: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education 23.00 through 23:12  
Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Records;  
Questions, Answers and Guidelines, Sept. 1995

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know

## **STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS**

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

**Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.**

**Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.**

**Provide a service to parents and students.**

**Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.**