

NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



2023- 2024 MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Nissitissit Middle School

Hawthorne Brook Middle School

Student Handbook 2023-2024

33 CHACE AVENUE
PEPPERELL, MA 01463

Telephone: (978) 433-0114
Fax: (978) 433-5498
Absent Line: (978)-433-0119
nms@nmrsd.org
<http://nms.nmrsd.org>

Student Handbook 2023-2024

64 BROOKLINE STREET
TOWNSEND, MA 01469

Telephone: (978) 597-6914
Fax: (978) 597-0354
Absent Line: (978) 597-5261
HBadm@nmrsd.org
<http://hbms.nmrsd.org>

Should you need this information translated, please contact the principal of your child's school.

En caso de necesitar esta información traducida, por favor comuníquese con el director de la escuela de su hijo.

如果您需要翻譯此資訊, 請與您孩子的校長聯繫

Rúguǒ nín xūyào zhèxiē xīnxi fānyì, qǐng liánxì nín háizi de xuéxiào de xiàozhǎng.

The North Middlesex Regional School District does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in, its services, programs, and activities, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or age.

School District Policy:

Over the course of the school year, District policies may be revised or new policies created. When this occurs, the revised or new policy automatically goes into effect. District policies can be found at the School Committee tab - <https://www.nmrsd.org/policies>.

NMRSD reserves the right to implement guidelines from the Department of Public Health and the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education at any time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
DISTRICT CALENDAR	6
MISSION STATEMENT	7
VISION STATEMENT	7
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY	8
ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORY	9
CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION	9
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2023-2024	10
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE	11
SCHOOL INFORMATION	12
ATTENDANCE	12
EXCUSED ABSENCE	12
EARLY DISMISSAL	12
ABSENTEE LINE	13
TARDINESS	13
PARENT/GUARDIAN DISMISSAL	13
AFTER SCHOOL INFORMATION	13
STUDENT INFORMATION	14
PRIDE IN AND CARE OF PERSONAL & SCHOOL PROPERTY	14
BUILDING CARE	14
CELLULAR PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES	14
LOST AND FOUND	15
DRESS AND APPEARANCE	15
HALLWAY PASSING	16
LOCKER GUIDELINES	16
TEXTBOOKS	16
CHROMEBOOK POLICY	16

TELEPHONE USAGE	19
BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/UNICYCLES/ROLLERBLADES	19
LUNCH	20
CAFETERIA RULES	20
STUDENT ACTIVITIES	20
STUDENT GOVERNMENT	21
SCHOOL VISITORS	21
STUDENT BEHAVIOR	22
BEHAVIOR AND COURTESY	22
HONESTY AND INTEGRITY	22
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PREVENTION AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT	22
APPEALS	22
BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT	22
HAZING	23
SMOKE-FREE SCHOOL POLICY	23
SCHOOL BUS USE PROCEDURES	28
PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION	30
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE SCHOOL	30
CONFERENCES	30
SCHOOL CLOSING	30
SCHOOL COUNCIL	30
MARKING PERIODS	30
PROGRESS REPORTS	31
HONOR ROLL GUIDELINES:	31
PROMOTION/RETENTION	31
MIDYEAR FAILURE	32
ACADEMIC/EXTRACURRICULAR PROBATION	32
HOMEWORK/ABSENCES	32
HOMEWORK GUIDELINES	33

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504	34
FIELD TRIPS	36
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT	36
HUMAN SEXUALITY CURRICULUM	37
INTERNET ACCESS	37
PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION	37
PARENT TEACHER SUPPORT GROUP (PTO)	38
NMRSD SPED PAC (SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL)	38
VOLUNTEERS	38
MEDICAL INFORMATION	38
DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES AND INFORMATION	41
NMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORDER OF BUSINESS	41
APPENDIX	43
DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS	55
BULLYING PREVENTION & INTERVENTION PLAN	68

DISTRICT CALENDAR

NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 2023-2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR

2023

August 21 & 22 New Employee Orientation
August 23 District-wide Meeting/Building-based Work
August 24 Full Day Professional Development
August 25 No School
★August 28 1st Day for Students Grades 1-12 & Pre-K Open House
August 29 Kindergarten Orientation
September 1-4 Labor Day Recess: No School
September 5 First Day for Pre-K & Kindergarten Students
October 4 Early Release: PD No Pre-K
October 9 Indigenous Peoples Day: No School
November 7 Election Day-Full Day PD: No School
November 10 Veteran's Day: No School
November 20-21 Early Release: K-8 Caregiver Conferences
No Pre-K & Full Day at NMRHS
November 22-24 Thanksgiving Recess: No School
December 6 Early Release: PD No Pre-K
December 22 Early Release Winter Recess No Pre-K
December 25-29 Winter Recess No School
December 25 & 29 Holidays - District Office & Buildings Closed



2024

January 1 New Year's Day Observed: No School
January 10 2½ Hour Late Start: Professional Development
January 15 M.L. King Jr. Day: No School
February 7 2½ Hour Late Start: Professional Development
February 19-23 February Recess: No School
March 18-19 Early Release: K-8 Caregiver Conferences
No Pre-K & Full Day at NMRHS
April 3 Early Release: PD No Pre-K
April 15-19 Spring Recess: No School
April 22-23 No Kindergarten due to screenings
May 24 Early Release: PD No Pre-K
May 27 Memorial Day: No School
★June 7 NMRHS Graduation
● June 10 Early Release - 180th Day of School with no snow days
● June 17 Early Release - 180th Day of School with 5 snow days
June 19 Juneteenth Observed: District Office & Buildings Closed

JULY 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	★ 28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

OCTOBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

DECEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

JANUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

MARCH 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MAY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	★ 7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Approved by NMRSD School Committee on March 20, 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

AT NM, WE ARE COMMITTED TO CREATING A DIVERSE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS ARE PROVIDED A MEANINGFUL EDUCATION THROUGH ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES. TOGETHER WITH PARENTS, CAREGIVERS AND THE COMMUNITY, STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO IGNITE AND EMBRACE THEIR INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL TO FIND SUCCESS WITHIN NM AND BEYOND.

VISION STATEMENT

WE ARE NM: A SAFE, INCLUSIVE, STUDENT-CENTERED COMMUNITY OF PERSEVERING AND EMPOWERED LEARNERS.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the North Middlesex Regional School District not to discriminate against students, parents/guardians, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or age in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin, sex, religion); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability); M.G.L. c. 76, § 5 (race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation); the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (homelessness); and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (age).

Inquiries regarding compliance with these laws may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, North Middlesex Regional School District (978) 597-8713, or to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148 (state laws) or to the United States Department of Education, Region 1, Office of Civil Rights, John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse, Room 222, Post Office Square, Boston, Massachusetts 02109 (federal laws).

"The North Middlesex Regional School District does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in, its services, programs, and activities, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or age."

See the Nondiscrimination Grievance Procedures in the Relevant Laws Appendix for further information.

ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORY

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Brad Morgan

Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Gary Reese

Director of Special Education

Mr. Brad Brooks

Director of Technology

Mr. Jeremy Hamond

DISTRICT COORDINATORS

504 Coordinator:

Director of Special Education

(978) 597-8713 X 1501

Homeless Liaison:

Director of Special Education

(978) 597-8713 X 1501

Title VI and Title IX:

Assistant Superintendent [Gary Burboa-Reese](#)

(978) 597-8713 X 1301

Director of HR, [Anne Marie Tucciarone-Mahan](#)

2023 – 2024 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FIRST	LAST	POSITION	MEMBER	TERM EXPIRES	TOWN	DISTRICT EMAIL
Jessica	Funairole	Member	Townsend	2024	Townsend	jfunairole@nmrsd.org
Craig	Hansen	Chair	Pepperell	2024	Pepperell	chansen@nmrsd.org
David	Carney	Pepperell	Pepperell	2024	Pepperell	dcarney@nmrsd.org
Susan	Robbins	Member	Townsend	2025	Townsend	srobbins@nmrsd.org
Thomas	Casey	Pepperell	Pepperell	2025	Pepperell	tcasey@nmrsd.org
June	McNeil	Vice Chair	Ashby	2025	Ashby	jmcneil@nmrsd.org
Lisa	Martin	Member	At-Large	2026	At Large	lmartin@nmrsd.org
Randee	Rusch	Member	At-Large	2026	At Large	rrusch@nmrsd.org
Lisa	Bloom	Member	At-Large	2026	At Large	lbloom@nmrsd.org



NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Ashby – Pepperell – Townsend, Massachusetts

2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR SCHEDULE OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meeting Location: Remotely via Zoom or
In-Person at NMRSD Central Office
Squannacook Early Childhood Center
66 Brookline Street, Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

Meeting Time: 6:00 p.m.

2023		2024	
Date	Type of Meeting	Date	Type of Meeting
July 20	Regular Meeting	January 18	Regular Meeting
August 17	Regular Meeting	February 8	Joint Boards/Budget Hearing
September 21	Regular Meeting	February 12	Snow Date Joint Boards/Budget Hearing
October 19	Regular Meeting	March 14	Regular Meeting/Budget Adoption
		March 18	Snow Date Regular Meeting/Budget Adoption
November 16	Regular Meeting	April 18	Regular Meeting
December 21	Regular Meeting	May 9	Organizational Meeting
		June 13	Regular Meeting

The North Middlesex Regional School Committee reserves the right to schedule additional meetings as needed. In the event of cancellation due to inclement weather, the snow date will be the following Monday.

66 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469 | TEL: 978-597-8713 | EXT. 1200 | FAX: 978-597-6534 | www.nmrtd.org
Superintendent, Brad Morgan - bmorgan@nmrtd.org | Chair of School Committee, Craig Hansen - chansen@nmrtd.org

SCHOOL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

Students are required by law to attend school on each scheduled school day. After an absence from school, a note from a parent or guardian is required. The note should include the date(s) the student was absent and the reason for the absence. Students are responsible for asking each teacher for all make-up work. Upon request, the guidance counselor will assist in the identification of missing work and, in special circumstances, extend the make-up period. Under M.G.L. c. 76, § 20, if a child does not attend school regularly, the school is required to take appropriate action, which could include filing referrals to child protection services and/or juvenile court (if deemed necessary). See the School Committee policy regarding attendance.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

The following types of absences are considered excused as long as proper documentation is submitted:

- Death in the family (parent/guardian, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin)
 - Professional health appointment (with note from practitioner)
 - Chronic Illness (documented by a physician)
 - Dismissal from school nurse prior day with illness requiring 24 hours at home
 - Religious holiday (with a note from parent/guardian specifying the holiday)
 - Legal appointment or court proceeding (must provide proof of appointment/proceeding signed by legal/court representative)
 - Two (2) college visits per year with verification from the college (for high school students only)
- Extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal or their designee.

EARLY DISMISSAL

The following types of tardy/early dismissal are considered excused as long as proper documentation is submitted:

- Death in the family (parent/guardian, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin)
- Professional health appointment (with note from practitioner)
- Religious holiday (with a note from parent/guardian specifying the holiday)
- Legal appointment or court proceeding (must provide proof of appointment/proceeding signed by legal/court representative)

Extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal or their designee

There may be specific dates when students have only half days and are dismissed at approximately 11:05 a.m.

ABSENTEE LINE

The absentee line for **Nissitissit Middle School** is: **(978)-433-0119**, the Absentee line for **Hawthorne Brook Middle School** is **978-597-5261**. This has been established to enhance our ability to ensure the security for each of our students. Parents are expected to call the absentee before 7:30 a.m. if your child is going to be absent that day. The message should consist of your name, your child's name, and your child's homeroom teacher. If no message is received, parents/guardians will be contacted when a student is absent or tardy.

Upon reaching either five (5) days of unexcused absences in the school year, or five (5) days in which the student has missed two (2) or more periods unexcused, a student's parent/guardian will be contacted for the purpose of developing action steps to address the student's attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive at school on time and prepared to learn. Any student who has not reported to his or her homeroom by 8:00 a.m. will be marked tardy and will need a note from the office to be admitted to class. It is important for parents/guardians to realize that tardiness disrupts classes that have already begun. Parents/guardians will be contacted when tardiness becomes excessive.

PARENT/GUARDIAN DISMISSAL

If a parent/guardian wishes to dismiss a student early (before 2:30 pm), a note from the parent/guardian should accompany the student to school. The parent/guardian should state the time of dismissal and come into the school office to pick up the student. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to wait outside for rides during the school day. Anyone dismissing a child must be prepared to show proper identification and must be listed on a student's emergency card. We urge parents/guardians to not dismiss their children within 15 minutes of the close of school. If transportation changes are required, office notification from parent/guardian must be provided to the office ahead of time. If the bus requested is at capacity, the student may not be granted permission. Students may not call home during the school day to make social arrangements for after school. Social arrangements need to be made prior to the start of the school day.

AFTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

The school day ends at approximately 2:30 pm. For safety reasons, car riders are dismissed first, followed by bus children, and finally by walkers. Parents/guardians picking up children need to wait in cars. Students may enter vehicles only in the designated pickup lane. Please do not block our bus access to the circular driveway.

There may be times during the school year when a student is asked (or arranged) to remain after dismissal for any number of reasons. If we do request that a student stay after school for detention, extra help, rehearsals, basketball practice, etc., we will make every effort to give 24 hours' notice. If you, as a parent/guardian, have transportation problems or concerns, please call your child's teacher.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Under state law, unnecessary motor vehicle idling is prohibited on or within 100 feet from school property.

STUDENT INFORMATION

PRIDE IN AND CARE OF PERSONAL & SCHOOL PROPERTY

We encourage students to take pride in their classrooms and the physical plant as a matter of respect for the school. Students are responsible for damage done to school property, books, and other materials issued to them. Respect for property also means not being careless about one's own school material, personal property, and belongings. We discourage students from bringing to school large sums of money. Only teacher-approved learning devices (such as calculators) are permitted on school property.

Electronic devices of any sort (cell phones, iPods, video games, pagers, etc.) are prohibited during the school day. Unauthorized use of items will lead to confiscation. Upon the first offense, items may be returned to the student at the end of the school day. A second offense will result in confiscation and the item will only be released to the parent/guardian.

BUILDING CARE

The appearance and good care of our building are everyone's job and concern. A clean and safe school is conducive to good education. Students are not allowed to chew gum or eat candy or snacks outside the cafeteria in order to prevent problems with insects, damage to carpets, etc. The only beverage allowed in classrooms is water. Students are not to litter or mark walls. We ask all students and staff to pick up litter and report instances of graffiti to teachers, aides, or the administration.

CELLULAR PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices of any sort (cell phones, iPods, video games, pagers, etc.) are prohibited during the school day. Cell phones should be turned off and stored in a locker. Cell phones should not be on their person during the school day. Students are not permitted to use earbuds unless instructed to by a teacher. Use of electronics during the school day by a student may result in the loss of the device and disciplinary action. Cell phones or electronic devices that are confiscated from students may need to

be picked up by a parent/guardian from the office. We will use progressive discipline for repeat offenders. Cellular phones, cameras, or other electronic devices are not to be used to capture pictures or take video while at school or on the bus.

First Offense: Student is issued a warning. Phone remains in the office until the end of the day.

After first offense: Phone remains in the office until a parent or guardian can pick it up.

LOST AND FOUND

If a student finds school material or personal property belonging to someone else, please return it to the secretary or teachers. Lost and found designated spaces are in the building.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Expectations for student dress are important to create a positive environment that is conducive to the learning and safety of students as well as providing a positive working environment for our staff. It is commonly accepted that student behavior and the school environment are strongly influenced by the dress and appearance of students. These expectations inherently teach students the importance of respectable appearance which can positively impact self-respect and self-esteem. Since school is primarily a place of learning and work, students are expected to dress appropriately for those tasks. Diversity within our school population is appreciated and the need for individual expression is respected. We strongly believe that those values can be celebrated and maintained while at the same time meeting the following expectations. Students shall not wear clothing items that contain messages that are vulgar, obscene or libelous; that denigrate others on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; that promote alcohol or drug use or violence; or that are otherwise disruptive to the educational process.

- Hats, hoods or other head coverings are not allowed except for religious or medical reasons, or on special designated spirit days, or with prior approval from administration.
- Outerwear, including coats, jackets, parkas, etc. will not be allowed to be worn inside school (Sweatshirts, vests or other layering pieces of clothing are allowed)
- There may not be any exposed undergarments or buttocks. Pajamas may not be worn.
- Sunglasses/colored glasses are prohibited unless prescribed or authorized by a physician.
- Footwear must be worn at all times; slippers are not permitted. Students must wear sneakers in PE class.
- Safety/protective clothing and footwear, as well as athletic and gym clothing and sneakers, shall be worn as required by the subject teacher or organization advisor while students are participating in specialized activities.

Parents/guardians may be contacted to bring a change of clothes if apparel is deemed to be unacceptable.

HALLWAY PASSING

Students who need to leave a classroom during class will sign-out of the room using school-based sign-out procedures. Students traveling in the hallways are to walk, not run, and speak in a reasonable voice so as not to disturb any classes in progress. Students are not allowed to have food or drink in the hallways. Students are expected to return to class promptly after they have completed their business.

LOCKER GUIDELINES

During the first few days of school a student may be given a locker. No student is allowed to open another student's locker or to take anything from it. Students are expected to keep their locker neat and clean. Writing on lockers is not permitted. Lockers are to store coats, jackets, hats, and your articles of clothing. They are for books, papers, pens, pencils, and other items. Students should keep book bags in lockers during the school day, using scheduled locker times to get their necessary materials. Please do not attach stickers or glue or paste items inside of lockers, and we ask that you do not store food in your locker for extended periods of time. Aerosol cans are prohibited because their contents are flammable and may be hazardous to your health. Lockers are school property and are subject to search. Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in their school lockers.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided by the North Middlesex Regional School Department. The money for the books comes from the property taxes paid by parents/guardians and other citizens of North Middlesex. Students are responsible for all books issued to them. It is expected that students will exercise proper care of their books. Multiple copies of a text will not be distributed to a student. Students should follow these guidelines:

- Books should be kept in a student's direct possession or their locker.
- Books including paperbacks should be covered either by a store bought book cover or a cover made from a brown paper bag. Clear adhesive covers should not be used.
- All books issued to a student must be returned at the end of the school year in acceptable condition.
- Books damaged by a student's abuse or carelessness will be repaired or replaced at the student's expense. Textbook replacement cost ranges upwards from - \$75. If a book is lost during the school year, the student must pay for it before another is issued.

CHROMEBOOK USE

Chromebook Care and Maintenance

- Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of their Chromebooks. *Families of students whose chromebooks are damaged will be assessed a bill for repair or replacement.*

- Students will not alter the Chromebook appearance in any way with the use of stickers, tape, glue, markers, etc.
 - Students will keep Chromebooks away from food and liquid as spills will damage the Chromebook.
 - Students will not place heavy objects on top of the Chromebook as pressure can damage the screen.
 - Students will make sure nothing is on the keyboard before closing the Chromebook in order to prevent damage to the screen.
 - While the Chromebook is off, students may clean the keyboard, trackpad and screen with a damp cloth.
 - The Chromebook must not be sprayed directly with cleaners. Only cleaners that are designed to clean LCD computer screens may be used.
 - All NMRSD Chromebooks are outfitted with an asset tag for inventory purposes. If the asset tag on the Chromebook is removed or altered, a fee equal to the cost of the Chromebook may be assessed.
- Chromebook Usage Requirements in School**

- While using the Chromebook students must follow all requirements of the NMRSD policy regarding acceptable technology usage. Violation of the policy will result in disciplinary action.
- Chromebooks may be used only by the student it is assigned to and for educational purposes only.
- Chromebooks are expected to be brought to school fully charged each day unless otherwise instructed by their teacher, a school administrator, or a district administrator.
- Students are expected to bring their Chromebook to each class unless otherwise instructed by their teacher. Students that do not bring in their Chromebook on multiple occasions may face disciplinary action and/or their grades may be negatively affected.
- If a student does not bring in their Chromebook or it is not charged, the student may request to obtain a loaner from a designated location before the start of classes. Students are required to return the loaner before dismissal that school day. This does not alter the requirement that students must bring the Chromebook to school unless otherwise instructed, and fully charged.
- The usage of Chromebooks in class is strictly at the teacher's discretion and direction.
- Students should have the Chromebook sound muted during class unless they are using headphones with the teacher's permission. Students must provide their own headphones.
- If a mouse, case, or other peripherals are desired, they must be provided by the student at no cost to the NMRSD unless the item is specifically required by the NMRSD.
- Printing from Chromebooks will not be available at school. Students are encouraged to share their work electronically with teachers or print from home.

Chromebook Usage Requirements Outside of School

- While using the Chromebook all students will follow all requirements of the NMRSD policy regarding

acceptable technology usage. Those requirements apply to use outside of school as well as in school. Violation of the policy will result in disciplinary action.

- Students may use their Chromebooks outside of school solely for educational purposes.
- Students may only use only their NMRSD account to log into the Chromebook.
- Students may print from their Chromebooks at home or other location (i.e., Public Library) using compatible printers.
- Chromebooks must be kept in a safe, secure place when not in use.
- Chromebooks should not be left unattended when traveling outside of the home.
- Chromebooks should not be exposed to extreme temperatures such as extreme cold or heat as that can cause damage to the device. Student Usage Safety and Requirements
- All Chromebooks are content filtered both inside and outside of school for student safety and CIPA compliance reasons. Please click on this link for more about the Children's Internet Protection Act.
- Internet browsing and history is logged in the system and accessible by school administration. Students have no expectation of privacy regarding their usage of Chromebooks or the information and content accessed or stored thereon.
- Students are prohibited from trying to circumvent content filtering or trying to alter the Chromebook operating system in any way. Doing so will result in disciplinary consequences for the student.
- All students agree to abide by all terms of the NMRSD policy regarding acceptable technology usage and as such will refrain from any harmful, illegal, or other activities prohibited by the policy while using their Chromebooks, their NMRSD school accounts or any NMRSD technology resources. Violation will result in disciplinary or legal consequences.
- Students will protect their data and will not share any NMRSD account credentials (i.e., usernames and passwords) with others for any reason.
- Students have unlimited storage available in Google Drive. Therefore, all content saved to the Chromebook should be saved to Google Drive and not to the Chromebook local drive. The NMRSD is not responsible for lost data.
- Students will use caution when connecting to an unsecured wireless network as unsecured networks can leave data unprotected.
- Only approved Chromebook apps and extensions may be installed on the Chromebooks. Students and teachers may request specific apps and extensions be made available for installation.
- The Chromebooks will install all browser and security updates automatically. It is recommended that students properly shut down their Chromebook daily, so updates are installed.
- Students experiencing a technical issue with the Chromebook must bring the Chromebook to the designated location at the school for troubleshooting and possible repair.

- A loaner Chromebook will be provided to the student while the Chromebook is being diagnosed and repaired. Students are responsible for all of the same requirements of care and maintenance of the loaner Chromebook as are outlined in this document and in the Chromebook Loan and Usage Agreement and as applied to the student's assigned Chromebook.
- If damage to the Chromebook or a charger is deemed to be accidental, a fee may be assessed to the student for repair. If, as a result of accidental damage and reasonable repair is not feasible, the full replacement cost will be assessed.
- If the Chromebook or a charger has been lost, the full cost for a replacement Chromebook or a charger will be assessed to the student.
- If the Chromebook has been stolen, the student must immediately contact the police department to report the stolen item. A police report must be filed and a copy presented to the NMRSD before a replacement Chromebook is issued. Conditions for Suspension of Deposit and Transportation Requirements
- The NMRSD may reduce or suspend the deposit requirement for students who participate in the free and reduced school lunch program.
- The NMRSD may temporarily reduce or suspend the deposit requirement for new loans to impacted students during times when remote learning is required, or may be required, by the district due to an extended health or environmental emergency. The deposit requirement may be reinstated once the remote learning requirement has ended.
- The NMRSD may temporarily suspend the ongoing requirement to bring loaned Chromebooks to school each day if confirmed that Chromebooks will not be required for that period of time or an alternative device can be provided for the student's in-school use during that period of time. Students will be required to bring their Chromebook or a charger to school within one (1) day, excluding weekends, upon request from a teacher, school administrator, or district administrator.

Acceptable Use for Technology Pre-k-12 - File IJNDB

TELEPHONE USAGE

Students may be given permission by their teachers to use the office telephone to make important phone calls. The telephone should not be used to make after school plans. Students may be given permission to make emergency calls out of the building any time during the day. For safety reasons, an adult should always be aware and give permission for a student to call out of the building.

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/ROLLERBLADES

Students riding bicycles, scooters, and unicycles to and from school must park and should lock them in designated areas. We cannot be responsible for stolen items. Students are not allowed to ride on school property during the time when the school office is open (7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.). Students who skateboard or rollerblade to school must be considerate of students and staff. These items may not be

stored in the building. Skateboarding or rollerblading in front of the school's entrances or on school property is not allowed at any time. Failure to follow these rules may result in a student's loss of privileges to ride bikes, etc. to school.

LUNCH

Our lunch period is 30 minutes in length. In our cafeteria, students may purchase a complete school lunch, or students may purchase a beverage or snack to supplement lunch brought from home. Lunches should not be delivered directly to the cafeteria. Pizza deliveries or deliveries from fast food establishments are not allowed. In emergencies, children can charge lunches.

CAFETERIA RULES

1. Conversations are to be carried on in a quiet, pleasant manner.
2. Only eat the food that you brought or bought. Students are not allowed to purchase food for others, or use other's lunch accounts.
3. Treat food properly.
4. Return all trays, silverware, and other items to appropriate areas.
5. Leave a clean table and floor area when finished eating.

Students are to abide by the decisions of our cafeteria supervisors regarding seating, permission to leave the cafeteria, and all other cafeteria concerns. Failure to behave properly in the cafeteria may result in disciplinary actions.

Free and reduced lunch forms are placed in the opening day packet. They are also available in the office and online. Children who receive free or reduced lunches are treated with dignity and privacy. (Only school administrators are aware of students receiving free or reduced lunch.) Please complete an application if you believe that your child qualifies. The process is very confidential. **(See MEAL CHARGE POLICY)**

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

There are a variety of student activities throughout the school year in which children can become involved. Activities such as student council, yearbook, band, drama, and interscholastic sports are available. After school enrichment courses/activities are available for all students throughout the year. NMRSD nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities are provided in such a manner as necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. Students will bring home information as the programs are developed each year. Student expectations for behavior during school-sponsored activities or events follow the same guidelines as during the school day. Failure to comply with expectations may result in dismissal from the event and impact eligibility for attending future events. Participation in extracurriculars is a privilege and not an entitlement.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

We have a Student Council for grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. During the course of the year, the council communicates information to classroom members and pursues activities to promote school spirit and a sense of community for our school.

SCHOOL VISITORS

All visitors must report to the office upon entering the building. They must sign in and wear an appropriate identification badge. Students are not permitted to have student guests attend regularly scheduled classes. For security purposes, all exterior doors other than the main entrance remain secured from the outside. Any unauthorized visitors should report to the office.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

BEHAVIOR AND COURTESY

We expect our students to be polite and respectful at all times. Positive behavior contributes a great deal to the overall success of our school. All students are entitled to attend a school that is both safe and free of negative behaviors and disruptions. The staff works diligently to maintain such an environment. Students who fail to maintain proper behavior may not be allowed to participate in athletics, extracurricular activities and/or field trips.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Good scholarship must be founded upon integrity. Students will be held responsible for standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. Tests or written assignments, for example, must be unquestionably their own. Plagiarizing from sources such as the Internet is unacceptable.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PREVENTION AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

The North Middlesex Regional School District has adopted a Physical Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures in accordance with state law. Corporal punishment is never used in the North Middlesex Regional School District. However, reasonable force may be used to protect students, staff or others from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Physical Restraint of a Student File: JKAA

APPEALS

Students have the right to discuss, protest, debate, or appeal issues with which they are concerned. However, such actions must take place by arrangement through normal school channels and must not disrupt the educational process.

BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Bullying, discrimination, and harassment are prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Individuals who feel that they have been subjected to bullying, discrimination, or harassment should report these incidents to an adult in the building (teacher, guidance counselor, or principal). The District has procedures in place for filing a complaint of bullying, discrimination or harassment, and these procedures are available in the Appendix to this Student Handbook.

See: Anti-Bullying Policy; Non-Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures; Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

(North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School Committee Bullying Prevention Policy File: JICFB)

HAZING

Hazing is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Please review the Massachusetts Hazing Statutes, M.G.L. c. 269, Sections 17-19, in the Appendix. **(Prohibition of Hazing File: JICFA)**

SMOKE-FREE SCHOOL POLICY

The Massachusetts Clean Indoor Air Law, effective April 13, 1988, **“prohibits smoking in public and private schools.”** This law was expanded by the Educational Reform Act of 1993, Section 36 of Chapter 71 which calls for the prohibition of tobacco products within school buildings, facilities, on school grounds, and on school buses. Tobacco products include cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and/or their packages, cigarette lighters, or matches. No person is allowed to possess these products in part of the school facility, grounds, or school buses including before school, during school, or after school hours.

Students caught smoking or vaping in the building or on school grounds will be subject to up to a five (5)-day external suspension. Students who commit subsequent offenses will be subject to additional days of external suspension. North Middlesex Regional High School partners with the Townsend Board of Health and the Massachusetts Tobacco Control Alliance to further enforce our current tobacco use procedure and town ordinances. According to Smoke-Free Workplace Law (M.G.L. c. 270, § 22) and the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, the penalty for smoking or use of any tobacco product is a \$100 civil fine that applies to everyone, including students, staff, and visitors. The fine is payable to the city or town clerk, similar to a parking ticket. School administrators have been designated as agents to issue these citations for the purposes of enforcing this law in school buildings and school buses. Students will receive these citations via certified mail and fines must be paid or appealed within 21 days. If the fine is not paid, the citation becomes a civil offense and the student will receive a summons to appear before the Court Magistrate in Ayer District Court. If the fine is still not paid, the civil citation becomes a criminal offense.

North Middlesex also prohibits the possession of any tobacco products or non-FDA approved nicotine delivery devices (e.g., e-cigarettes, hookah pens, or vape paraphernalia), or other tobacco products in school, on school grounds, on school buses, or in school facilities.

NOTE: This policy applies to both students and adults at all events including inside the facilities and any exterior location on campus. (TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED FILE: ADC)

GROUP A MAJOR INFRACTIONS

All school, bus and evening sponsored activities are subject to the relevant rules and regulations stated herein. The following major infractions will be referred to and handled by an administrator or designee.

In order to reinforce this standard of conduct, the types of behavior, which will not be permitted in School, are identified below. Some of these behaviors can warrant suspension of the student from school for 1 to 10 days. In certain cases, additional disciplinary action may be taken. Criteria to determine whether additional punishment is warranted includes such considerations as whether the behavior has been repeated; the severity of the reported violation; and the perceived danger to self, others, and the school in general.

These offenses cause serious disruption to the learning process and may result in an immediate suspension for a period up to 1 to 10 days. Due process guidelines will be followed. The student will be informed of the charges and the evidence against him/her. A discussion will be held between the administrators, giving the student the opportunity to tell his/her side of the story. Every effort will be made to telephone and inform the parent/guardian of the suspension. A written communication will be given to the parent/guardian. Each suspension may require a student, parent/guardian, and administrator conference prior to reinstatement. Students will be responsible for class work missed during the suspension. A reasonable timeframe will be given to complete missed work. Those assignments not turned in will be recorded as a zero. A student suspended for more than five separate instances during the school year may have his/her disciplinary record forwarded to the Superintendent by the Principal for the purpose of an administrative conference.

EXAMPLES OF MAJOR INFRACTIONS (Does not represent an inclusive list):

- Using or possessing a dangerous weapon while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event **[SECTION 37H]**
- Possession of or under the influence of a controlled substance on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event **[SECTION 37H]**
- Possession of, consumption of, and/or under the influence of alcoholic beverages on school premises or at a school-sponsored event
- Smoking or vaping on school premises, school grounds, school buses, before, during, or after school. Students are not to bring cigarettes or vaping materials to school, have them in their possession, or in their lockers. Doing so may result in suspension and notification to the police department regarding which business sold them.
- Profane, obscene, abusive language or gestures directed to school personnel.
- Assault on school staff. **[SECTION 37H]**
- Felony charge or conviction **[SECTION 37H1/2]**
- Willful destruction of school property. Arrangements for some form of restitution are to be made with the parent/guardian and/or child as soon as possible.

- Any form of serious fighting on school grounds or during a school sponsored activity.
- Physical retaliations as a response to verbal confrontation are not an appropriate means to resolving difficulties between students and will not be tolerated. Failure to stop fighting when ordered to do so by school personnel may lead to further consequences.
- Any type of willful behavior that would pose a threat to another individual. This includes, but is not limited to, comments or threats directed toward others, which may compromise safety.
- Pulling fire alarms or using fire extinguishers.
- Leaving school property during school hours.
- Stealing of school equipment, personal property, money, sports equipment, etc. Arrangements for some form of restitution are to be made with the parent/guardian and/or child as soon as possible.
- Gambling is not permitted.
- Truancy.
- Possessing or distributing pornographic, slanderous, or libelous material.
- Any act of discriminatory harassment, including, but not limited to sexual/physical harassment. **(See SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY)**
- Any act of hazing. **(See HAZING POLICY)**
- No person shall intentionally smell or inhale the fumes of any substance having the property of releasing toxic vapors, for the purpose of causing a condition of intoxication, euphoria, excitement, exhilaration, stupefaction, or dulled senses or nervous system, nor possess, buy or sell any such substance for the purpose of violating or aiding another to violate this section
- Furnishing, selling, possession of drugs, alcohol, e-cigarettes, vaping paraphernalia or any products containing tobacco or nicotine.
- Inappropriate use of technology **(See TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY)**

In cases of violations within Group A, the school may also report the incidents to the appropriate police department and/or Department of Children and Families.

GROUP B SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

The following serious misconduct will be referred to and handled by the teacher with notification to the administration, who retains the discretion to impose any appropriate disciplinary sanction, including suspension. Generally, immediate one-hour detention, with a 24-hr notification, may be assigned for infractions in this category. Misbehavior during detention will not be tolerated. Following three infractions, a parent/guardian conference may be held, and any further violations of these regulations may result in additional progressive discipline. Students who skip detention will be

assigned an additional detention or possible suspension. For the students whose conduct in the classroom has not improved and his/her behavior distracts from learning, he/she will be removed and referred to the office.

EXAMPLES OF SERIOUS MISCONDUCT:

- Disrespectful or defiant behavior toward any school personnel.
- Physical misconduct toward another student (tripping, pinching, pushing, etc.)
- Verbal abuse, bullying, harassment, profanity and/or obscene gestures toward another student.
- Profanity.
- Stealing.
- Malicious destruction of school or personal property.
- Throwing or propelling any inappropriate objects.
- Cutting a class or coming to class late without a valid pass or permission.
- Failure to follow cafeteria rules.
- Failure to report to a designated area or being in an unauthorized area without a pass from a teacher.
- Repeated and excessive tardiness to school.
- Repeated and excessive absences from school.
- Selling or trading of any items not sanctioned by the school.
- Cheating, plagiarism, forging parental signatures on school forms.

GROUP C MINOR INFRACTIONS

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that reasonable classroom rules are established and followed, which ensures proper classroom management, productivity, and protection of school and personal property. The classroom teacher usually handles minor infractions.

- Verbal correction, and if a student will not comply after a verbal correction, additional action may be taken at the teacher's discretion in the form of a teacher detention and notification of parents/guardians as outlined in Group B/serious misconduct.
- Overdue notes, absences slips, progress reports, detention slips, etc. will result in a call to parents/guardians.
- A second offense of any minor infractions will result in notification of parents/guardians by letter or phone.
- Third offenses will be considered defiant behavior and fall into the category of Group B/serious misconduct offenses.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS TO THE BEHAVIOR CODE

- All school principals and principal's designees and the Superintendent and Superintendent's designees, when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for school rules violations (violations other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses), shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal or designee shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4(b).

Consequences for conduct violations may include but are not limited to:

1. Phone Call Home
 2. Apology
 3. Mediation/Counseling
 4. Conflict Resolution
 5. Restorative Justice
 6. Collaborative Problem Solving
 7. Office Lunch
 8. Behavior/Safety Contract
 9. Detention
 10. Removal From Extra-Curricular Activities
 11. Out-of-School Suspension
 12. Police Notification
- Students and parents/guardians will be given 24-hours' notice for teacher detentions and office detentions unless parents/guardians are notified and agree that the consequence will be served on the same day it was issued.
 - Administrators reserve the right to meet with students at any time (without parent/guardian approval) in order to gather information related to a violation of the student handbook.
 - Any vaporization or electronic cigarette/cigar paraphernalia or material that is confiscated by the administration will be discarded as waste.

- Any controlled substance paraphernalia or material that is confiscated by the administration will be turned over to the local police department.
- Administrators reserve the right to make additions or amendments to the discipline code if the need arises and to impose additional disciplinary consequences where determined to be appropriate.

All students will be provided with the disciplinary due process rights set out in the Appendix prior to the imposition of any in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

Student Discipline File: JIC

SCHOOL BUS USE PROCEDURES

The regulations for school bus use for all students Grades K-12 in the North Middlesex Regional Schools are:

Prior to Loading: (on the road and at the school)

- Be on time at the designated bus stop.
- Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Bus riders should conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to step onto the bus.
- Do not crowd and push getting on the bus.
- Respectfully follow the instructions of school staff members on duty.

WHILE ON THE BUS:

- Keep hands and head inside the bus.
- Keep your hands to yourself and don't touch others inappropriately.
- Horseplay and fighting are not permitted on or around the school bus at any time.
- Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary. (DO NOT throw things on the bus, spit or litter the bus.)
- Keep voice tone at a moderate level.
- There is no eating or drinking on the bus.
- Do not swear, use vulgar or derogatory language.
- As written in the school district's sexual harassment policy, sexual harassment or assault will not be tolerated on the bus and will result in disciplinary action.
- Treat bus equipment/property as you would the furniture in your own home. Damage to bus equipment/property will be paid for by the offender.

- DO NOT leave books, lunches, or other articles on the bus.
- Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of aisles.
- Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.
- DO NOT throw objects inside the bus or out the bus window.
- DO NOT leave or change your seat while the bus is in motion.
- Be courteous to fellow pupils and the bus driver.
- Remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
- Remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the bus driver in an emergency situation.
- Sit where you are told.
- Do not use Technology inappropriately on the bus.

A written permission slip from the parent/guardian is necessary in order for a student to get on/off the bus at a place other than his/her regular bus stop, or to ride a different bus. Students should bring their parent's note to the office in the morning and they will receive a bus pass that must be presented to the driver. *Allowing students to ride a different bus is at the discretion of the school administration and bus company as some buses are filled to capacity.* Otherwise, students must get on or off the bus at their assigned stop. Continued refusal to promptly obey the directions of the driver or refusal to obey bus regulation may cause a student to be referred to the principal for disciplinary action.

Possessing a weapon, lighting matches, smoking, alcohol and drug use on the bus are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action as is outlined in this handbook.

Student Conduct on a Bus File: JICC

AFTER LEAVING BUS:

Cross the road, when necessary, immediately after getting off the bus, at least ten feet in front of the bus, and only after looking to be sure that no traffic is approaching from either direction.

Extra-Curricular and Field Trips:

Bus rules and regulations will apply to any trip under school sponsorship. Pupils shall respect the wishes of teachers and chaperones appointed by the school.

Bus Contractor:

Dee Bus Service, 978-597-2860

Bus Disciplinary Actions: See Page 35 for the NMRSD policy.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE SCHOOL

Communication among students, parents/guardians and teachers is essential to a positive middle school year. Parents are encouraged to call, email or arrange to meet with their child's teachers and/or the administration to discuss their child or any concerns they might have. Formal conferences are scheduled in November and again in March. In an effort to make communication more efficient, we have an email distribution list that we encourage parents/guardians to join.

CONFERENCES

Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend parent/guardian-teacher conferences and to contact teachers when questions arise. **Parent teacher conferences are November 20 & 21, and March 18 & 19.** Other conferences may be set up at any time during the year by phoning the teacher at the school or sending a note with your child.

SCHOOL CLOSING

North Middlesex Regional School District will generally close school during the following emergencies:

- Excessive snowfall
- Dangerous ice/road conditions
- Flood conditions
- Hurricane and high wind conditions
- A problem with the school building.

Messages will be sent through our Connect-Ed service when school is closed or the regular school day schedule is altered. In addition to the Connect-Ed messages, delays and school closures will be announced on local TV and radio stations.

When school is delayed in the North Middlesex Regional School District, it is a two-hour delay and school will begin at 10:00 a.m.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The school council is made up of the principal, parents/guardians, teachers, and appointed community members. Parents/guardians interested in becoming members of the council should send a letter to the principal's attention at either middle school.

MARKING PERIODS

We send report cards home to parents three times each year. Our school district's guidelines for grading are listed below:

A+	98-100	C+	78-79
A	93-97	C	73-77
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		F	below 60

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued to all students halfway through each trimester.

Progress reports must be signed and returned to school. When you receive a progress report or other communication from a teacher, please respond quickly by writing or phoning the teacher. Don't hesitate to ask questions and get involved in your child's future progress. The sooner positive action is taken, the less likely the child will experience a failure in a subject.

HONOR ROLL GUIDELINES

High Honors:

- No less than A's in all academic subjects
- No less than B's in special area subjects
- No less than satisfactory in conduct in any subject

Honors:

- No less than all A's and B's in all subjects
- No less than satisfactory in conduct in any subject

PROMOTION/RETENTION

A student may be retained if they fail two or more core academic subjects for the school year with an average of less than 60 in these subjects unless the retention is not deemed to be warranted or beneficial by the administration. Academic subjects include Language Arts, Reading/Literature, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Please contact our school guidance office for more information.

Eighth-grade students must successfully complete their academic requirements, must have returned all school property, and must have paid any debts incurred in order to participate in the end of the year celebration activities. Any 8th grader who fails 2 or more subjects for the year will not be allowed to participate in the end of the year celebration.

MIDYEAR FAILURE

At midyear, parents or guardians will be notified of any child who is at risk of failure for the year.

ACADEMIC/EXTRACURRICULAR PROBATION

The North Middlesex Regional School District follows the eligibility standards set forth by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). A student who is participating in cross-country, track, field hockey, basketball, or any other NMS athletic team at the interscholastic level, must have a passing grade in the equivalent of four out of five major subjects in the prior quarter grades. Cross-country participants will need to have passed the four out of five major subjects the previous year. Academic eligibility will become official on the day the report card is issued. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility. A student receiving services under Chapter 766, whose individualized education plan is a 502.4 or more restrictive prototype, may be declared academically eligible by the principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met. Any student on academic probation is not eligible to participate in interscholastic sports. This includes all practices and game situations.

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

The policies contained within this School Student Handbook shall apply to a student's participation in all academic environments, including, but not limited to, in-person classes, distance/remote learning instruction, and environments that combine in-person and distance learning (hybrid) instruction. Students are responsible for complying with all school policies regardless of the academic environment. Parents/guardians are expected to read and discuss the enclosed school policies with their child(ren).

HOMEWORK/ABSENCES

Students who are absent for one or two days are requested to contact a classmate for assignments. If the absence is for three or more consecutive days, parents/guardians may call the school for assignments. However, if a parent/guardian is certain that their child will be absent from school due to illness or injury, they may request assignments earlier. Requests received by 8:30 a.m. should be available at 3:00 p.m. that day. Parents must pick these up at the office.

The North Middlesex Regional School District does not support the use of school days for the purpose of family vacations. Each school day is vital to the progress and development of every child. ***Homework and class assignments will not be provided in advance of family vacations.*** Students are required to follow-up on assignments, missed quizzes, and/or tests by speaking with their teachers upon returning from their school absences. The teacher will use appropriate discretion for when assignments are due.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

In the North Middlesex Regional School District, we value study that occurs beyond the classroom and school day largely because we have learned through research and practice that good homework accelerates achievement and establishes a positive work ethic invaluable in later pursuits. To this end, the assignment of homework aligns with what educators and others believe to be the primary purposes of homework: the reinforcement of skills and knowledge learned in the classroom, the application of learning to a new situation, and the independent acquisition of skills and knowledge. Additionally, educators offer these justifications for the assignment of homework.

- To provide opportunity for parents/guardians and children to work together on academic pursuits
- To keep parents/guardians abreast of the curriculum
- To serve as a guide to the teacher in planning instruction
- To develop study habits and a work ethic among students
- To provide activities that support other learning styles

With these thoughts in mind, the following guidelines for homework have been established:

- All projects assigned will reflect the primary purpose(s) of homework, will be given sufficient time for completion, and will not be due immediately upon return from vacation. Recognizing the difficulties associated with determining individual student contributions and equitable grading, teachers are discouraged from assigning out-of-school group projects unless these issues can be assessed with certainty.
- At the middle school level students can generally expect up to 90 minutes of nightly homework. Communication among middle school teachers is essential to ensure compliance with this guideline.
- The teacher and the student will assess all homework assignments. Collected homework will be returned to the student in a timely fashion.
- Homework generally should not count for more than 20% of a student's grade. There will be consistency regarding this guideline.
- Teachers will communicate in a timely manner with parents when homework assignments are not being completed. Parents will communicate with teachers if their children are experiencing difficulty with assignments.
- When assigning homework, teachers need to be aware of extra-curricular school events in which many students are involved.

- Parents are encouraged to utilize the resources available through the school to assist students with the successful completion of assignments.
- Failure to complete assignments may result in a detention or working lunch.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504

Rights and Responsibilities

Rights and information relating to special education and students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are available through the guidance and special education departments. Such rights are pertinent when students are not progressing effectively in regular education programming due to a suspected mental or physical impairment or when students are unable to access the regular education curriculum without disability-related accommodations. Parents, guardians, and any person in a caregiving or professional capacity concerned about the student's development have the right to request a special education or Section 504 evaluation of the student.

Special Education Eligibility

Following a referral, the Team determines if a student is eligible for special education based on a thorough evaluation. Prior to any special education evaluation, parental/guardian consent is required. Not every student will require all of the assessments offered by the school. Each evaluation must have an educational assessment as well as an assessment by one or more specialists in all areas related to the suspected disability. Eligibility is based upon the determination of presence of a disability (as defined by state and federal regulations), the lack of progress in the general education program as a result of the disability, and the need for specially designed instruction/related services in order for the student to make effective progress.

Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

If a student is found eligible for special education, the Team develops an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) that highlights, among other things, the student's strengths, areas of concern, strategies for accommodating the student's disability, modifications to the curriculum, services that the student will receive and important goals and objectives developed to ensure student progress. Parent/guardian involvement during the evaluation and IEP development is an integral part of the process. The IEP is a vehicle for improving the educational experience for a student with disabilities.

Progress reports shall be provided at least as often as parents/guardians are informed of the progress of students without disabilities.

The Parents' Rights Brochure from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education is available in the school special education office. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the student's special education teacher, guidance counselor, principal or special education director with questions about special education.

Special education and transfer of parental rights at the age of majority .

Upon a student reaching the age of eighteen (18) years of age, the district will continue to send the parent/guardian written notices and information but the parent/guardian will no longer have decision-making authority, except as provided below:

- (a) If the parent/guardian has sought and received educational guardianship from a court of competent jurisdiction, then the parent/guardian retains full decision-making authority. The parent/guardian does not have authority to override any decision or lack of decision made by the student who has reached the age of majority unless the parent/guardian has sought or received educational guardianship or other legal authority from a court of competent jurisdiction.
- (b) The student, upon reaching the age of majority and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to share decision-making with his or her parent/guardian (or other willing adult), including allowing the parent to co-sign the IEP. Such choice is made in the presence of the Team and is documented in written form. The student's choice prevails at any time that a disagreement occurs between the adult student and the parent/guardian or another adult with whom the student has shared decision-making.
- (c) The student, upon reaching the age of majority and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to delegate continued decision-making to his or her parent/guardian, or other willing adult. Such choice is made in the presence of at least one representative of the school district and one other witness and is documented in written form and maintained in the student record.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" The Section 504 regulations also require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under Section 504, a FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as

the needs of students without disabilities are met.

.

Any questions about Section 504 or requests for evaluations of Section 504 or IEP eligibility may be directed to the district's Section 504 Coordinator and Director of Student Support Services, Mr. Brad Brooks, at the Central Administration Office. A Notice of Rights under Section 504 is available in the school's guidance office. The school counselor is responsible for monitoring each student's Section 504 plan. The principal is responsible for the successful implementation of each student's Section 504 plan.

Individuals who have complaints regarding the District's compliance with Section 504 may bring suit in federal district court or file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02118. In regard to concerns related to the identification, evaluation, and placement of students with disabilities, parents/guardians may file a hearing request with the Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals at 14 Summer Street, 4th Floor, Malden, MA 02148.

FIELD TRIPS

Students are encouraged to participate in various field trips that serve as an extension of the classroom program. These enrichment trips are funded through grants, student fees, school budgeting, private donations and the PTO. If participation causes a financial hardship for a family, the student is encouraged to speak with his/her teacher. Funds are available to assist these students. Students and families will receive ample notification with the necessary permission slips and guidelines relative to the trip. Teachers and parent/guardian volunteers provide supervision.

All school rules apply to behavior standards while on field trips. Children are expected to show cooperation and self-control. Students who display poor academic effort and/or poor behaviors may find themselves excluded from future field trips during the same academic year. Participation on field trips is a privilege and not an entitlement. If an exclusion from a field trip is warranted, parents/guardians will be notified within a reasonable time before the trip. The school will provide an alternative educational program for those students not attending a class trip.

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires that schools immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency, as long as the student has been properly immunized. Information on lead screenings as well as immunization records may be transferred over the phone. Parents or Guardians intending to register students who are homeless should be aware of the following:

1. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing.
2. Children who move from a homeless situation into a permanent residence during the course of a school year have the right to stay in the school they were attending while they were temporarily homeless. If the child or youth continues his or her education in the school of origin but begins living in an area served by another school district, the school district of origin and the school district in which the homeless child or youth is living must agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child or youth with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the school districts cannot agree upon a method, the responsibility and costs for transportation are to be shared equally.
3. Students who choose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them. If a homeless student arrives without records, the school district's designated Homeless Education Liaison will assist the family and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.
4. A child who is homeless and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for Title I services and the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

HUMAN SEXUALITY CURRICULUM

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review the program instruction materials and exempt their child from any curriculum involving human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To exempt a child, the parent/guardian should provide written notification to the principal, specifying the class they wish their child not to participate. The exempted student will not be penalized and will be provided with an alternative educational assignment or provided with a directed study period.

INTERNET ACCESS

Because the Internet is an open system, some of the material that is available on the Internet may not be suitable for students. The school does provide a filter, which denies access to inappropriate Internet sites. Staff always monitors student use of the Internet.

Private e-mail is not allowed. Parents and students have the responsibility for discussing the appropriate usage of the Internet Access Network. An Internet Policy will go home with the opening packet. All students and parents/guardians must return this signed policy handout to school. **(See District Acceptable Use Policy)**

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

One of our goals is to make parents/guardians feel welcome at the North Middlesex Regional School District. We believe that through cooperation between home and school, we can maximize the

educational experience for all. The following information may help parents/guardians decide what role to play when becoming involved in activities at school.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Our philosophy is that the best possible educational experience for our children can only be achieved through the combined efforts of parents/guardians, teachers, administration, and other school personnel. Working toward this goal, the **PARENT TEACHER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION** has been actively striving for better communication between parents/guardians and the school. Please keep in mind that YOU are urged to join our efforts, so that the educational changes and progress, which we all desire for our children, can evolve from groups such as this one. The **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION** will announce a meeting/program schedule at the beginning of each school year. This information will go home in newsletters, and be available on our website.

NMRSD SPED PAC (SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL)

Massachusetts law requires school districts to create a districtwide special education parent advisory council (SEPAC) offering membership to all parents of eligible students. The parent advisory council duties shall include but not be limited to advising the district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities and meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school district's special education programs.

In instances where districts have not had success with generating strong interest in creating a SEPAC (such as ours), districts may work with other districts or through an Educational Collaborative to establish a Regional SEPAC.

The NMRSD participates in a Regional SEPAC with several neighboring districts. SEPAC meeting dates are sent out annually and the meetings generally are located at the offices of the CAPS Collaborative in Westminster.

For SEPAC information, please contact the special education office.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to help at our school and the staff welcomes volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact your student's middle school office.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

The following items relate to our health office procedure. If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly.

- **Emergency Contact Information:** These cards/sheets are issued to every student at the beginning of each school year. These should be completed on both sides and signed by the parent or guardian. Please update your card should your home, cell or work numbers change.
- **Illness at School:** When a student becomes ill at school, she/he is sent to the school nurse. If the nurse feels that the child should go home, she contacts the parents. If they are not available, she will notify the alternate name listed on the student's emergency card.
- **Health Exams:** Every student in the seventh grade is required by state law to submit proof of a complete physical exam. This exam may be performed by a private physician or by the school physician on a designated date. Any student participating in an after school sport is required to have a current physical on file dated within 13 months of the beginning of the sport. All new students must have a current physical within one year of start date.
- **Immunization:** According to Massachusetts State Immunization Laws all students are required to have the following immunizations prior to entering seventh grade. Students will not be able to start grade 7 without them.
 - Two doses of MMR vaccine
 - Three doses of Hepatitis B Vaccine
 - Two doses of varicella vaccine or physician certified proof of chickenpox disease
 - One booster dose of Tdap
 - Four doses of polio
 - One dose of Meningococcal vaccine (MenACWY)
 - More information regarding immunizations can be found at: [Immunizations](#)
- **Illness:** Parents are asked to call the absent line to report an illness.
- **Prolonged Absence:** Students are required to bring a written note explaining his/her absence regardless of the number of days absent. However, the school nurse or guidance will contact the family if a student has an unexplained absence of 3 days or longer. After an absence of 5 days or longer, a doctor's note is required before the child can be readmitted to school.
- **Hearing and Vision Screening:** Parents of students who have their hearing and vision tested will be notified in writing if a student fails either of these tests. Vision is tested in 5th and 7th grade, hearing is tested in 7th grade.
- **Height, Weight:** Students in grade 7 will have this screening.
- **SBIRT Screening:** Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment is a screening designed to raise awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol use for our students. All 7th grade students are screened in the spring.
- **Postural Screening:** The state of Massachusetts mandates that all students in grades 5 through 9 can be screened for scoliosis. Parents will be notified in advance of screening and have the

choice to opt-in their student for this screening.

- **Excuse Notes for Physical Education:** If your child has a temporary or long term physical condition that may affect his/her participation in a Physical Education class, please send a note to the school nurse. If there is a problem, the school nurse will contact the parent for further clarification. The nurse will also forward a copy of the note to the child's physical education teacher.
- **Medication:** Only emergency or long-term medications should be dispensed at school, such as those required for asthma, hyperactivity, bee sting allergies or diabetic reaction. Any medication that must be given at school should be brought to the school nurse in the original pharmacy container and cannot be transported back and forth each day. Medication must be brought to school by a parent or guardian. Any child who needs medication at school (prescription or non-prescription) orally, injection, or inhalers (daily or as necessary) needs to provide a new doctor's order at the beginning of each school year. This must also be accompanied by written permission from a parent or guardian. Medication is kept locked in the nurse's office and is dispensed by the School Nurse. For their own safety and the safety of others, students are not allowed to carry medication around during school. When a physician deems it necessary for a student to have immediate access to medication (inhaler), the parent will provide documentation from the physician stipulating such necessity and confirmation that the student has been advised of cautions and proper use of the inhaler in school. We have several Over-The-Counter medications that can be administered with written parental consent using this [OTC form](#).
- **Field trips:** NMRSD has a license to delegate certain medications for field trips. Any medications needed by a student during a field trip will be given to the school nurse in advance of the trip. The nurse will review the health concerns and medications for all students attending. A nurse will be sent on the trip if required based on medical need. If not required, the school nurse will review the health concerns and medications that can be delegated with the teacher prior to the trip. Students may self-carry inhalers during the field trip with an appropriate doctor's order, written parental permission, and school nurse approval. Proper administration of Epi-pens will be reviewed with teachers prior to field trips.
- **Life threatening allergies:** Documentation from a doctor of the allergy including signs, symptoms, and treatment must be renewed annually. All Epi-pens are kept unlocked in Nurse's office. All staff members are trained annually on signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and correct use of Epi-pen. The school nurse will work with the parents and primary care provider of the student with life threatening allergies to prepare an individual health care plan (IHCP).
- **Injuries:** If a child is injured and sees a doctor for treatment, please send documentation from the doctor on what type of injury occurred, treatment being done, and any restrictions the

child may have.

The responsibilities of the school nurse include various screenings, daily treatments, medication administration and participation in a host of activities in addition to emergency treatment of students who are injured or become ill in school. It is not their responsibility to provide parents with opinions about medically related issues. Parents must seek such opinion from other sources that have such responsibility -- family physician, public health nurse, public health clinics, etc. Your cooperation with respect to this matter is greatly appreciated.

DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE

Oftentimes policies are updated over the course of the year and posted to the district website. Policies that have been updated and posted supersede policies in this handbook.

DISTRICT POLICY BOOK

A copy of the North Middlesex Regional School District School Committee Policy Manual is available in the Superintendent's office for review.

(5) Regulatory Authority:

603 CMR 23.00: M.G.L. c. 71, 34D, 34E.

NMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORDER OF BUSINESS

At regular meetings of the District School Committee the following shall be the order of business:

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous regular Meeting and any Intervening Special Meetings.
3. Information Items/Superintendent's Report*
4. Old Business.
5. New Business.
6. Adjournment/End of Meeting

* At this point in the meeting, the Chair may recognize any member of the public who wishes to address the Committee. Committee members may ask to have a member of the public recognized. In the event a member of the public does wish to speak, they should receive a copy of the procedures

they are expected to follow. In the event a printed copy is unavailable, the Chair shall clearly explain the rules for addressing the Committee.

- a. The Committee must be informed of the topic to be addressed. Whenever possible, advance notice of the topic to be addressed should be given to the Chair or a member of the Committee. It should be determined that an individual has followed the appropriate chain of authority. Any written statement should be presented to the Committee and summarized when speaking.
- b. Persons addressing the Committee may address only issues over which the Committee has direct control. The topic should deal only with agenda items.
- c. A member of the public may have two minutes to address the Committee, unless the majority of the Committee wishes to grant more time to an individual.
- d. No motions or actions should be made or taken by the Committee during this portion of the meeting. The Chair may recognize the Superintendent, other administrators or members of the Committee if they wish to ask questions or address comments specific to the topic that has been raised. No one shall be recognized until the speaker has finished addressing the Committee or has used the allotted time.
- e. The Committee must ensure that the rights of district employees and students are protected.
- f. Persons should avail themselves of NMRSD policy books available in all public libraries in the district and in each school in the district.
- g. This policy will be included in each school handbook.

LAWS & REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

M.G.L. c.71, §37H

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

(A) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(B) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(C) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(D) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(E) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued

presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of

chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4.

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

M.G.L. c.76, §21

Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress

during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school.

Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

M.G.L. c.71, §37L

Section 37L. The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under section 51A of chapter 119 and the reporting requirements for fires under section 2A of chapter 148.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of children and families, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

M.G.L. c. 269, § 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 both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

M.G.L. c. 269, § 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. Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

M.G.L. c. 269, § 19. Hazing Statutes to Be Provided;

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and section seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution, which fails to make such report.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

**PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS
UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. *Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE):* political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:* any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. *Inspect upon request and before administration or use:* protected information surveys of students created by a third party; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

The NMRSD will directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. This notification will occur at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution;
- the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE; and
- any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights under PPRA have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

SUMMARY OF MASSACHUSETTS LAWS AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS

I. Inspection of the Student Record

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old (eligible student), has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The parent and/or eligible student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating materials. The record must be made available to the parent or eligible student no later than ten (10) calendar days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and/or eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

II. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H and 603 CMR 23.07 specify detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children.

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

- 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
- The parent has been denied visitation, or
- 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
- There is an order of a probate and family court judge that prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

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

Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

III. Confidentiality of Student Records

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent(s), student, and authorized school personnel are eligible to access information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the parent or the student. One such exception is the authority of the school district to forward, without consent, the complete student record to schools or school districts to which a student transfers or enrolls.

IV. Amendment of the Student Record

Eligible students and/or parents have the right to add additional information, comments, data, and/or other relevant material to the student record. Eligible students and/or parents also have the right to request in writing that the student record be amended. Any such request should be directed to the principal. The building principal will render a written decision on such a request within one week. A denial of a request to amend a student record may be appealed to the Superintendent.

V. Destruction of Student Records

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed within seven (7) years of a student's transfer or graduation. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and eligible student must be notified, and provided with the opportunity to obtain a copy of any records to be destroyed.

VI. Directory Information

Federal and state regulations authorize school districts to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the North Middlesex Regional Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

If you do not want directory information from your child's education records disclosed without your prior written consent, please notify the Principal in writing, no later than September 15th. The North Middlesex Regional School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

- Email address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

The above is only a summary of some of the more significant provisions of the laws and regulations pertaining to student records. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be obtained from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These state regulations are designed to insure parent and student rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records. The regulations apply to all information kept by a school committee on a student in a manner such that the student may be individually identified. The applicable regulations may be found at 603 CMR 23.00.

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

Prior to the imposition of a suspension, a student will be given an opportunity to receive notice of, and respond to, the allegations or charges against them (except in cases of extreme emergency). Before suspending a student from school, depending on the alleged conduct, the administrator will apply the appropriate level of disciplinary due process consistent with Massachusetts and federal law as described below.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Definitions

In-School Suspension

The removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.

Short-Term Suspension

The removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Long-Term Suspension

The removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or in section 37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the

first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Expulsion

The removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

Due Process for Infractions Other than Dangerous Weapons, Narcotics, Assaults on Staff or Felony Complaints (M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37H ¾)

Emergency Removals; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾:

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. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe 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: (1) make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate

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, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below,, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing.

Additionally, the Principal is required to 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 notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension at set forth below, whichever is applicable.

A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

In-School Suspension, M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾:

Due Process for In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. Students have the right to appeal an In-School Suspension that will result in their In-School Suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

Out of School Suspensions under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾:

In accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4, as amended through Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022, all school principals and principal's designees and the Superintendent and Superintendent's designees when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for violations of school rules other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses, shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal or designee shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about

the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4(b). Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

Short-Term Suspension, M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾:

Due Process for Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4:

Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; and the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4:

At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

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 provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. 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.

Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ³/₄:

Due Process for Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ³/₄:

The student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and (5) 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.

Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H³/₄:

The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and 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.

Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, 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: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) 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 stated in plain language: (a) 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 (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4:

A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ 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 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. 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 the 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 as identified above.

The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) 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.

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.

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress During Suspension/Expulsion:

Less Than 10 Consecutive Days - Student shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

More than 10 Consecutive Days - Student shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan.

Due Process for Offenses of Dangerous Weapons, Drugs, Assaults on Staff and Criminal Felony Matters (M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 Offenses)

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - For disciplinary offenses involving a)

possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of the formal disciplinary hearing.

Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student for means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) 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, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.

Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – 37H - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal.

After said hearing, the Principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H - Any student who has been expelled

from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress - Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

Suspensions or expulsions are decisions that must consider a student's due process rights. Building Principals or designees are required to report to the police department the presence of any weapon on school premises.

Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½

Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Notice of Principal's Hearing – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H 1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the

hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Notice of Principal's Hearing – Long-Term Exclusion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

Superintendent's Appeal – Long-Term Exclusion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. The hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision with regard to the expulsion.

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress

The District shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and related regulations, require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections upon the imposition of a discipline sanction that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or which will result in a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for ten (10) school days or less to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement," building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
2. No later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district will notify the parent(s) of that decision and provide them with the written notice of procedural safeguards.

3. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students, except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. The student's IEP Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, may, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the misconduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that incident of misconduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others). The student's IEP or Section 504 Team shall review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment. The IEP or Section 504 Team will develop (with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) consent), modifications to or a new 504 Plan, IEP, behavior intervention plan and/or placement as appropriate.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a dangerous weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may, with or without parent/guardian consent, and regardless of the manifestation determination, place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. A parent can also consent to a forty-five (45) school day interim setting.
6. The interim alternative setting must enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and progress toward the goals in the IEP. The interim alternative setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring.
7. At the conclusion of the forty-five (45) school day period, *the student shall be returned to his/her previous placement* unless the parent (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the interim alternative setting or an Order is obtained from the Bureau of Special Education Appeal authorizing the student's continued removal.

8. The parent shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

Note: If, prior to the disciplinary action, the school district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district will make all protections available to the student (e.g., manifestation determination) until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if: (a) the parent had expressed concern in writing; (b) the parent had requested an evaluation; or (c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student's eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. If the suspension imposed terminates prior to the completion of said expedited evaluation, the student shall be allowed to return to school immediately upon the conclusion of the disciplinary exclusion. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.



North Middlesex Regional School District Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan 2023-2024

The North Middlesex Regional School District does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or age.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. LEADERSHIP	3
II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	4
III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES	6
IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES	7
V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION	8
VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES	13
VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION	13
VIII. DEFINITIONS	14
IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS	14
X. COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT	15
APPENDIX A	16
Chinese Translators/Psychologists	16
DESE – Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement	16
Fax. 781 338-3318	16
APPENDIX B	18
LIST OF SCHOOLS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS	18
APPENDIX C	21
Date(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:	27
SIGNATURE OF PERSON FILING THIS REPORT	29

I. LEADERSHIP

A. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this Plan is shared with stakeholders via meetings, publication, online posting, mailings, and public presentations, which includes teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.

B. Assessing needs and resources:

With input from staff, school leaders assessed the adequacy of current programs; reviewed current policies and procedures; available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessed available resources, including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. Based on these findings, schools are in the process of revising or developing policies and procedures; establishing partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement.

The district will carry out periodic needs assessments, including: 1) surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; 2) administering a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-developed student survey at least once every four (4) years to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in schools; and 3) collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying.

C. Planning and oversight:

School or district leaders identified below will be responsible for the following tasks:

Person(s) Responsible	Task
Superintendent	Implementation and oversight of the Plan on a district-wide basis
Principal or designee	Implementation and oversight of the Plan on a building level
Director of Human Resources	Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes
Superintendent's Advisory Council	Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
Assistant Superintendent	Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use
Guidance Counselors	Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors
School Committee, Superintendent	Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of

	them
Superintendent, Principals	Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials, reviewing and updating the Plan each year

D. Priority Statement

The North Middlesex Regional School District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The North Middlesex Regional School District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The North Middlesex Regional School District will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-sponsored/school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the North Middlesex Regional School District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. This Plan provides the same protections to all students regardless of legal status. Each principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan in their building.

E. Reporting to DESE

The school or district will annually report bullying incident data to DESE, including: 1) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; 2) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying and retaliation; 3) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; and 4) other information required by DESE.

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. Annual staff training on the Plan will include:
1. Staff duties under the Plan
 2. An overview of the steps the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a suspected report of bullying or retaliation
 3. An overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district
 4. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years
- B. Ongoing professional development.

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

1. developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
2. developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
3. information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying
4. research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
5. information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying
7. ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), with a particular focus on the needs of students with a disability on the autism spectrum or students whose disability affects social skills development

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

1. promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
2. fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
3. building relationships and communicating with families

4. constructively managing classroom behaviors
5. using positive behavioral intervention strategies
6. applying constructive disciplinary practices
7. teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
8. engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
9. maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students

C. Written notice to staff:

The North Middlesex Regional School District will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources:

Current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services:

Staff
Building Administrators
Instructional Staff
Non-instructional staff (Custodians, secretaries, bus drivers, food service)
School Guidance/Adjustment Counselors and Social Workers (Counseling Staff)
School Nurses
School Psychologists
Speech and Language Pathologists (Social Pragmatic Skills for Students who receive special education or 504 services)
Early Childhood Intervention Program Coordinator
Programs/ Activities related to social programming, creating a safe and inclusive learning environment and being respectful of individual differences
Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) K-12 Evidence-Based Curriculum
Responsive Classroom model training for teachers
Character Counts
High School/ Middle School Required Physical Education and Health Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Health • Yoga: Mind and Body Connection • Competitive Team Sports • Comprehensive Health
High School Social Studies Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary • Introduction Into Sociology and Psychology
High School Community Service Learning Program

NMRSD Gay Straight Alliance
NM Community Outreach Program
North Middlesex Theatre
Best Buddies
Senior Sidekicks
Annual Special Olympics Programs
Building based Student Councils (Upper Elementary, Middle and High School)
CLICK (Middle School Good Citizenship program)
"Mix It Up Day"
Social Skills Groups led by Guidance Counselors
Guidance Lunch Groups
Guidance Developmental Classroom Education
Freshman Orientation
Leaders International Club
Individual Student Support Team (ISST) meetings (Child Study Groups)
Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
Community Reading Days (Elementary)
Athletic Department Coaches Training (High School and Middle School)
Rachel's Challenge- Programming meant to quell violence and bullying (Middle and High School)
Student Ambassadors
Caught Being Kind: School Wide Incentive Program
"Balance of Power" (Multimedia presentation promoting positive environments)

B. Counseling and other services

- a. As part of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), all NM students have access to a counselor(s) in their building daily

C. Availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources outside the district. The district maintains a list of translation services and interpreter services for building administrators to access. (See Appendix A)

D. Linkages with community-based organizations: The district may refer students to a variety of outside agencies who either provide direct mental health counseling or who can assist families with locating a provider. Examples of these include but are not limited to:

- a. Luk, Inc. Herbert Lipton Center
- b. Children's Medical Center at UMASS Memorial
- c. Care Solace Inc.

E. Students with disabilities:

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

F. Referral to outside services

Referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services is carried out by contacting the school social worker.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches.

1. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:
 - using scripts and role plays to develop skills
 - empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance
 - helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance
 - emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies
 - enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications
 - engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference
2. Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan via class meetings, classroom instruction, and the student handbook in an age appropriate manner.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts:

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

1. setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
2. creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students or student groups, actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics
3. using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
4. using positive behavioral supports
5. encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students

6. modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors
7. using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development
8. using the Internet safely
9. supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

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

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation:

1. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing by the principal or designee.
2. A school staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.
3. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may be made anonymously. However, no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.
4. The district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a dedicated mailing address, a list of telephone numbers, and an email address (Appendix B)

B. Incident Reporting Form

1. Use of a formal Incident Reporting Form (Appendix D) is not required as a condition of making a report. Anyone may make a report of a behavior or activity that is believed to be bullying, including cyberbullying or retaliation to the principal or designee
2. The principal or designee will evaluate whether or not it meets the definition of bullying, including cyberbullying or retaliation, and make a formal report using the Incident Reporting Form if applicable
3. An Initial Referral Form for reporting behavior or an activity that is believed to be bullying including cyberbullying or retaliation can be used by staff, students, and parents /guardians to report such behavior.
4. The school or district will:
 - a. Include a copy of the Initial Referral Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians
 - b. Make the form available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee
 - c. Post it on the school's website
5. The Initial Referral Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

C. Written Notice of Policies for Reporting Acts of Bullying and Retaliation

1. At the beginning of each school year, the district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation
2. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school and district website, and information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians
3. Reporting:
 - a. Reporting by Staff
 - i. A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when they witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation.
 - ii. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the staff member's authority to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.
 - iii. Staff may use the Initial Referral Form to report this conduct.
 - b. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others
 - i. The district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee.
 - ii. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
 - iii. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report.
 - iv. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the principal or designee.

D. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Safety
 - a) Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents.
 - b) Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to,
 - i. creating a personal safety plan
 - ii. pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus
 - iii. identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target
 - iv. altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target
 - ii. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary

- a. The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.
- b. Student safety planning procedures will be implemented as per the school protocols.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the event and of the procedures for responding to it to prevent further acts of bullying. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with federal and state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. Notice to another school or district. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- c. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that the behavior is in violation of the law, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that the behavior is in violation of the law. In making this determination, the principal will consult with local law enforcement agency, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate, consistent with the Plan and with applicable district policies and procedures.

3. Investigation

- a. The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.
- b. During the investigation, the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary.
- c. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

4. Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate.
5. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process.
6. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.
7. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

E. Determinations

1. The principal or designee will make a determination based on all of the facts and circumstances.
2. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted from participating in school or benefiting from school activities.
3. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.
4. Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s), school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.
5. The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.
6. All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.
7. The bullying determination notice to the parents/guardians of the target must include information about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Problem Resolution System (PRS) and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through PRS' contact information: Program Resolution System Office, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700; TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370.

F. Responses to Bullying.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(2)(v) requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include, but are limited to:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

- a. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the district's code of conduct.
- b. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are also governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in conjunction with state laws regarding student discipline.
- c. If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

- a. The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.
- b. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

- A. Parent education and resources.
 - 1. The district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school.
 - 2. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.
 - 3. Parent presentations will be recorded and aired on the local cable community access channel, copied onto DVD, and posted on the website for parents to view.
 - 4. Copies of the DVD and accompanying written material will be placed in each school library parent section and made available to local public libraries.
- B. Notification requirements.
 - 1. Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula being used.
 - 2. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, cyberbullying, and online safety, and how parents/guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan.
 - 3. The school will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy.
 - 4. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats. They will be available in the language(s) primary among parents or guardians.
 - 5. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

- A. Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:
 - 1. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
 - 2. at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target, infringe on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- B. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.
- C. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor or Perpetrator is a student or a member of a school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional, of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school;
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school; or
- bullying as defined herein shall also include cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes but is not limited to email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Target or Victim is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

- A. Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based

on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

- B. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, or 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.
- C. The statutes and regulations infer that the administrators will have basic knowledge of the possible criminal statutes that may be in play in a case of bullying. Principals are encouraged to seek advice from local law enforcement officials if there is a question regarding an infraction of a law.

X. COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

- A. The North Middlesex Regional School District has a current Memorandum of Understanding with the Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell Police Departments and the Middlesex County District Attorney.
- B. The district will review and update the Memorandum of Understanding periodically.

APPENDIX A

TRANSLATION SERVICES CONTACT LIST

Chinese Translators/psychologists

Joy Chen Yu Lewis (Holden) (psychologist)

508 829-7626 (home)

508 579-9204 (cell)

Dr. Xin (*shing*)

617 521-6782

Alice Li

781 259-3410

DESE – Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement

Nyal Francisco Fuentes - Now in the CCR dept

Tel. 781 338-3593

Fax. 781 338-3318

Language School Int., Inc.

179 Great Road

Acton, MA

Tel. 978 263-0328

Fax 978 264-9552

Translation Center, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Offers translation and interpretation services in more than 60 languages. Many translators are full-time language teachers. Services also include web page translation, video voice-overs, multilingual word processing, and design. Site includes rates. Documents up to five pages can usually be returned within 48 hours. Documents up to twenty pages can be returned within five working days.

www.umass.edu/transcen/

Catholic Charitable Bureau of the Archdiocese of Boston, Inc.

Provides interpreting services to state and private agencies. No translation services provided.

270 Washington St.

Somerville, MA 02143

617 625-1920 ext. 204

Cambridge Translation Resources, Inc.

A unit of Language for Industry, a provider of web-based services primarily for the business community.

186 South St.

Boston, MA 02111

617 451-1233 <https://mbbnet.ahc.umn.edu/www/ctr.html>

Cross Cultural Communication Systems, Inc.

Provides translation and interpreting services in more than 40 languages in the areas of health, education, legal, business and human services. Other services include language classes and consultation to promote cultural competency.

<https://embracingculture.com/>

P.O. Box 860

Winchester, MA 01890

781 729-3736

Latino Health Institute, Inc.

A major Latino public health organization, which provides translation of documents from, English to Spanish and vice versa. Has experience with health, social service, and education agencies.

95 Berkeley St.

Boston, MA 02116

617 350-6900

www.lhi.org

Peritus Precision Translations, Inc.

Offers translation services in more than 30 languages using certified, native speakers who are selected for assignments based on direct experience within a subject area.

201 Center Hill Road, Suite A

Plymouth, MA 02360

508 224-8361 <https://www.peritusls.com/>

Multicultural Community Service of the Pioneer Valley

1000 Wilbraham Road

Springfield, MA 01109

413 782-2500

Somali Development Centre, Inc.

205 Green St.

Jamaica Plain, MA 02180

617 522-0700

MAPA Translations & Language School

Drita Protopapa, MA, MPH

302 Union Ave, Ste. 100

Framingham, MA 01702

508 309-6309

www.mapatranslation.com

drita@mapatranslation.com

Client Services Administrator Pacific Interpreters

Kristin Tryba

520 SW Yamhill STE 320

Portland, OR 97204

503 445.5652 direct

503 296.5626 fax

APPENDIX B**LIST OF SCHOOLS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	PHONE	PRINCIPAL
Ashby Elementary School	911 Main Street, Ashby, MA 01431	978 743-1005	Ms. Anne Cromwell-Gapp
Hawthorne Brook Middle School	64 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-6914	Ms. Chantele Olmstead
Nissitissit Middle School	33 Chace Avenue, Pepperell, MA 01463	978 433-0114	Ms. Lauren Young
North Middlesex Regional High School	19 Main Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-8721	Mr. Tim McMahon
Spaulding Memorial School	1 Whitcomb Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-0380	Ms. Kate Guziejka
Squannacook Early Childhood Center	66 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978-597-3085	Mr. John Judge
Varnum Brook Elementary School	10 Hollis Street, Pepperell, MA 01463	978 433-6722	Ms. Meghan Branco Ms. Ami Dolan
North Middlesex Regional School District	66 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978-597-8713	Mr. Brad Morgan, Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX C

North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School Committee Bullying Prevention Policy

The North Middlesex Regional School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards and strictly prohibits the bullying of students in any form. 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.

Bullying is strictly prohibited:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- at school-related 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 North Middlesex Regional School District.

Bullying is also 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 North Middlesex School District if the act or acts in question:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school;
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Definitions:

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students, or by a member of a school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, 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 also includes 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

“Aggressor or Perpetrator” is a student or a member of a school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

“Target or Victim” is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

“Hostile environment” is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education.

“Retaliation” is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student or staff member who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Bullying 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 includes 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 plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex,

socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics and shall include the specific steps that the school district shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall apply to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessionals. The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan within the school.

Reporting:

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 building equity coordinator who will promptly notify the building principal. Parents/guardians, students, or members of the community are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

Investigation Procedures:

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying, although 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 or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The school principal or principal's designees shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged aggressor, staff members, students and/or witnesses. Appropriate strategies will be implemented to protect the safety and privacy of the target and witnesses during the investigation. The Principal shall also promptly assess an alleged target's needs for protection and, if appropriate, shall develop and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student. The Principal shall also make a preliminary determination as to the need for referral to law enforcement authorities. The investigation shall be completed within fifteen (15) school days from the date of the report.

If the school principal or principal's designee determines that bullying has occurred they shall promptly notify the parents or guardians of the student who has been the target and/or aggressor, of bullying consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. Additionally, the school principal or equity coordinator shall take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal shall consult with the school's

liaison to the police department 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.

Disciplinary actions for students or staff members 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.

Retaliation:

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be strictly prohibited. Retaliation in any form will result in disciplinary action including suspension from school.

Target Assistance/Aggressor Assistance:

The North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School District shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, families and staff members, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment:

Ongoing training shall be provided for teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, and administrators 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 including the duties of faculty and staff 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.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School District's website.

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c.71, §37O; 603 CMR 49.00



REPORTING AN INCIDENT THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED BULLYING, HARASSMENT or DISCRIMINATION

PLEASE NOTE:

All reports must be sent directly to building administration (Principal and/or Assistant Principal) in order to be investigated.

REPORTER INFORMATION

Last Name

First Name

☐ ANONYMOUS

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

I am the:

My Role is:

☐ Target/Victim of the behavior

☐ Student

☐ Witness (and not the target)

☐ Staff Member

☐ Other: _____

☐ Administrator

☐ Parent / Caretaker Family Member

☐ Other _____

My Best Contact Information is:

() _____ - _____

Phone Number

Email Address

If student, state your school: _____

If staff member, state your school or worksite: _____

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALLEGED INCIDENT/BEHAVIOR

Date(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:

_____/_____/_____ through ____/____/____ or PRESENT
Month / Day / Year Month / Day / Year

If specific date information is not known, please describe time frame (e.g. before around Halloween - Thanksgiving Break, etc.):

Time(s) of the Incident(s)/ Behaviors:

If specific time(s) is not known, please describe time frame (e.g., before school, after school, lunch, etc.):

Location(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:

Target(s)/Victim(s): *Who was the student that may have been impacted, harmed or injured?*

Last Name	First Name	Grade/School

--	--	--

Alleged Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s): *An aggressor is a student or member of a school staff.*

Last Name	First Name	Student	Staff	School

Witness(es)/Bystander(s): *List people who saw the incident(s) and/or people you believe may have helpful information about what is reported to have happened.*

Last Name	First Name	Student	Staff	Other

SIGNATURE OF PERSON FILING THIS REPORT

*You are certifying under the penalty of perjury that the information provided herein is true and complete to the best of your knowledge.
NOTE: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

Print Name

Signature

Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIVED BY (Initials): _____ **DATE:** _____

NOTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF REPORT (as applicable):

Parent/Guardian of Target(s)/Victim(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): _____ DATE: _____

Parent/Guardian of Target(s)/Victim(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): _____ DATE: _____

Parent/Guardian of Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): _____ DATE: _____

Parent/Guardian of Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): _____ DATE: _____

Local Law Enforcement: NMRSD STAFF (Initials): _____ DATE: _____

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION:

Finding of Bullying or Retaliation:

_____ Yes _____ No

ACTION TAKEN:

_____ Warning _____ In-School Counseling _____ Safety/Behavior Plan

_____ Detention _____ Community Service _____ Suspension

FOLLOW-UP:

Target(s)/Victim(s)

Date: _____

Initial & Date Upon Completion:

Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s)

Date: _____

Initial & Date Upon Completion:

Signature & Title:

Date:
