

# **NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**



## **2023 - 2024**

### **INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Back Letter	6
NMRSD Vision Statement	7
Preschool's Mission, Philosophy, Program Descriptions	7
<b>NMRSD Integrated Preschool Handbook</b>	
Absent Line Procedures	8
Absences	8
Academic Environment	9
Behavior Code	9
Care of Building and Property	10
Chain of Command	10
Civil Rights and Statement of Non-Discrimination	11
Clothing	11
Corporal Punishment	11
Daily Attendance	12
Daily Schedule	12
Delayed School Opening	12
Dismissal Procedures By a Parent/Guardian	12
Early Morning Arrivals	12
Early Dismissal	12
Early Release or In-Service Days	13
Easing the Transition	13
Electronic Devices	13
Email	14

Emergency Cards	14
Entrance Into the School	14
Field Trips	14
Food Allergies	15
Health Services-School Nurse's Role	15
Health Services-Children Who Become Ill at School	15
Health Services-Medication Policy	15
Health Services-Medication Permission Form	16
Preschool Entrance Requirements	17
Homework	17
Lost and Found	17
Massachusetts Early Childhood Curriculum	18
Motor Vehicle	19
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	19
NMRSD SPED PAC NMRSD (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee)	20
Notices	20
Outreach Programs	20
Parent Committees	20
Parent - Guardian Involvement	21
Parent-Teacher Conferences	21
Party Invitations	21
Preschool Home Connection	21
Recess	23

Report Cards, Progress, and Conferences for Preschoolers	23
Safety Drills	23
School Calendar	23
School Cancellation for Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies	23
School District Policy	24
Services for Students with Disabilities	24
Snacks	25
Sources of Assistance to Parents and Guardians for Social and Emotional Assistance	25
Student Conduct	25
Suspension (Long-Term or Expulsion) From School-Consequences for Violations to the Behavior Code	26
Tardy	27
Toy Brought From Home	27
Transportation	27
Transportation School Van Regulations / Procedures	27
Use of School Equipment	28
Volunteering at the School	28
When Your Child Must Leave Early	29
Withdrawal of Student(s)	29
Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan	30

**NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ASHBY - PEPPERELL - TOWNSEND, MASSACHUSETTS**

**School Committee 2023-2024**

Mr. Craig Hansen, Chairperson	Ms. Jessica Funaiole
Ms. Randee Rusch	Mr. David Carney
Ms. Susan Robbins	
Mr. Thomas Casey	Ms. Lisa Martin
Ms. June McNeil, Vice-Chairperson	

**District Office Administration - 978-597-8713**

Mr. Brad Morgan, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Gary Reese, Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Brad Brooks, Director of Student Support Services

**504 Coordinators**

Director of Student Support Services (978) 597-8713 X1501

**Coordinators for the Homeless**

Director of Student Support Services (978) 597-8713 X1501

**Title VI**

Assistant Superintendent (978) 597-8713 X1301

**Title IX for Students**

Assistant Superintendent (978) 597-8713 X1301

**Title IX for Staff**

Director of Human Resources 978-597-8713 Ext 1601

**DISTRICT COMMITTEES**

The following district committees have been developed over the years as vehicles to develop communication. They include Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee; Special Education Advisory Committee; School Councils and numerous building and district curriculum committees. For further information, please contact the principal's office.

## WELCOME LETTER

To All Our Students and Families,

Welcome to the North Middlesex Regional School District. We encourage you to use this handbook, as it provides important guidelines relating to our integrated preschool program and the North Middlesex Regional School District. Becoming familiar with procedures and district policies will assist you in making informed decisions.

The towns of Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell have a preschool program at Squannacook Early Childhood Center that provides a quality education for students age three to five years of age. SECC strives to ensure a consistent program that prepares our youngest learners for entrance into our elementary schools.

The mission of our District is to ensure that every student is achieving his or her potential. Our schools encourage all students to strive for excellence academically, socially and emotionally, in a safe and supportive atmosphere. Our goal is to work in partnership with parents and our three communities to create an engaging learning experience. Our students will have opportunities to inspire, explore, discover and create.

As part of our goal for frequent communication from our schools to your home, we encourage you to utilize our online tools. Valuable information can be found at the NMRSD website (<http://www.nmrtd.org/>). During the school year, notices and newsletters will be either sent home or made available electronically on a regular basis to support our ongoing commitment to communication.

We look forward to your involvement at SECC!

Sincerely,

SECC staff

## NMRSD VISION STATEMENT

The North Middlesex Regional School District is dedicated to working with students, families, and the community to ensure that every student is achieving at his or her potential. The social and emotional health of all students is supported in an engaging, inspiring, and challenging learning environment necessary for student success.

## INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL MISSION/PHILOSOPHY/PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

The mission of Squannacook Early Childhood Center is to foster an education that includes academic and social skills within a safe and caring community. Children are respected as individuals and encouraged to reach their potential as they develop skills through play and academic activities that create a strong, solid foundation for learning.

Children must be three years of age by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Preschool provides an opportunity for children with and without special needs aged three to five to engage in learning among their peers. It is a positive supplement to the home environment. Preschool stimulates all areas of development: motor, cognitive, language, social/emotional, and self-help skills. The teacher's role is to facilitate and guide at appropriate times, make modifications where needed, and ensure competence and self-esteem. Our goal is to foster a love of learning in a safe, caring, and nurturing environment.

An important feature of our integrated preschool is the integration of children with special needs with their typical peers. A variety of specialists are available to provide diagnostic, consultation, and therapeutic services to students when appropriate. Therapists often work in the integrated classrooms to support staff members in meeting the needs of all students, but particularly those children with special needs who have Individual Educational Programs.

## NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL DISTRICT INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

### *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 <https://www.nmrtd.org/policies>.*

*The Student Handbook addendum and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and the Bullying Incident Report Form can be found on the “For Families” tab on our website.*

### **ABSENCE LINE PROCEDURE**

If your child will be absent from school, please call **your school's absence line** before 9:00 AM and leave a short message including your child's name and classroom teacher. “For example, Sue Smith, Mrs. Wendling’s class, will be out today. She has a bad cold.” You must call every day your child is absent unless you specify the exact dates your child will be out. For example, Sue Smith, M’s class, will be out from November 1st through the 10th. She has a broken leg.

Each day the absentee list is compared with the recorded messages left by parents.

You should call if your child will be tardy as the child is regarded absent until he or she reaches school.

Please know the phone line is operating **24 hours a day** so you may call it whenever you know your child will be absent or tardy.

### **ABSENCES**

If a student has excessive absences, parents will be contacted by phone call and then by letter and a copy of the letter will be included in the student’s file. Pupil absence notices to parents and pupil absence meetings with parents will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B.

Children are required by law to be in school during the hours that school is in session. Upon returning to school after any absence, the student must present a note of explanation by the parent or guardian to the teacher. Please notify the nurse of any contagious illnesses, i.e., chickenpox, strep throat, etc.

**Excused Absence:** The following types of absences are considered to be 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 a 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

## **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).

## **BEHAVIOR CODE**

**It is suggested that you take the time early in the school year to review the behavior code with your child. A good procedure is to read the rules together and discuss why each one is necessary.**

A school is a place of learning. Many children and adults come together at school and spend many hours together. A school needs rules of behavior to make sure that everyone can be free of distractions or discomfort so that the learning process can take place.

The following is a list of our behavior code:

- Students will respect all public property, and will not break, damage, or deface school property the building and grounds, materials, and furnishings.
- Students will respect the personal property and school materials of the teacher and other students.
- Students will respect the rights of fellow students.
- Students will use language that is free from vulgarity and profanity.
- Students will use honesty in their words and deeds.
- Fighting, wrestling, and biting are not allowed.
- Students will act in a way that does not disrupt the work of the teacher or the learning of other students.
- Students will walk, not run, on school property, except for in the OT/PT space or on the playground.
- Students will enter and leave the school in a quiet, orderly manner.
- Students will not threaten another child or staff member in words, pictures, or actions.

- On the playground, students will stay within the designated playground area.
- Students will use playground equipment properly, safely, and will share the use of equipment fairly with other students.
- Gum is not allowed at school or on the van.
- Stealing, coercing other students, or bullying will not be tolerated. Offenders subject themselves to disciplinary action.
- Students are not allowed to use or throw sticks, stones, or snowballs. Students will not throw sand or other objects and materials that may cause an injury.
- On the playground, students will discard refuse into containers provided.
- Students will re-enter the school from the playground only with permission.
- During a fire drill, students will form a single file and follow the designated classroom exit route.
- Students will not run, talk, or push during drills.
- Upon arriving at the school from the vans, students will go immediately to their classrooms.
- Students will not bring personal cell phones, iPods, handheld video games, radios, or iPADS to school unless requested by the teacher.
- Bullying and harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated. The District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as well as the District's Grievance Procedures for complaints of discrimination and harassment are in the Student Handbook Appendix and on the District's website.
- Corporal Punishment – Corporal punishment in public schools is illegal in Massachusetts. School staff may not hit, spank or physically punish students. School staff members may, however, use reasonable force if necessary to protect students, other persons, or themselves from an assault by a student.

#### **CARE OF BUILDING AND PROPERTY**

The school belongs to the citizens of the town. We ask our children to take responsibility for the care of the building and property. We ask all students to do their best to keep the school clean inside and out. Students are asked to take proper care of books and other school materials that are loaned to them for the year.

#### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

In the case of a concern or problem, the teacher is to be consulted first. If the matter is not resolved with the teacher, the parent/guardian should then contact the building administration (Special Education Director). If the matter has not been resolved after contacting the Special Education Director, please contact the Superintendent of Schools.

If a parent needs to talk to a teacher concerning their child's progress, we ask that you use the following procedure:

1. Call the school secretary to arrange to have an appointment scheduled with your child's teacher(s).
2. Follow through with the designated conference time.
3. Allow some time for the change to occur. If you still have concerns regarding your child's progress, call the Special Education Director that will discuss the situation and look into the problem area. The Special Education Director may ask for a joint conference so that everyone can work together as a team to find the most appropriate action.
4. In the unlikely event that the problem cannot be resolved at the building level, the parent has the right to ask for assistance from the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will ascertain whether all attempts to resolve the problem have been tried at the school building level. Every effort should be made before the Superintendent becomes actively involved to resolve the problem using the personnel at the school. The Superintendent may counsel the parents individually or call for a joint meeting.
5. In extreme cases, the School Committee may become involved when a school district policy is in question.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS AND STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

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. Additionally, discrimination or harassment by administrators, teachers, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and strictly prohibited. The North Middlesex Regional School District Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures are included in this Handbook and posted on the District's website.

### **CLOTHING**

Each day the children are engaged in a variety of projects. Please send your child to school in clothes that can take wear and tear, some messes, and an occasional spill, as they do occur. Shoes with rubber soles are essential. Each child should bring in a full set of extra clothes to keep in case of an accident. Please place the clothes in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on the bag. If you take soiled clothes home to be washed, remember to bring a fresh supply the next morning.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal Punishment – Corporal punishment in public schools is illegal in Massachusetts. School staff may not hit, spank or physically punish students. School staff members may, however, use reasonable force if necessary to protect students, other persons, or themselves from an assault by a student.

### **DAILY ATTENDANCE**

We must emphasize the importance of consistent and regular student attendance at school. We ask parents to make every effort to have their children at school on time each day and in good health. A tardy student must report to the school office before going to the classroom.

Please keep your child at home if they display the following conditions: vomiting, in pain, have a contagious condition, have a fever, too tired to make it through the day, diarrhea, open weeping wounds, rash of unknown origin, lice, open sores in the mouth, productive cough, and asthma not under control. Students can return to school when: they have been fever-free without the use of Tylenol or Motrin for 24 hours, diarrhea free for 24 hours, must be able to eat a normal diet, have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

The day is organized according to a daily schedule. The day provides time for large-group, small-group, and individual activities. The schedule provides for a balance of active and quiet activities, teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities. A consistent daily schedule gives the children a sense of security and structure.

### **DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING**

When listening to the school closing/delayed lists on the radio or television, you may hear that **"The North Middlesex Regional School District is delayed" followed by the time length of the delay (for example, 2 hours).**

### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES BY A PARENT/ GUARDIAN**

If there are to be any changes to your child's schedule, please submit a note detailing changes. Notes must contain the child's full name, teacher's name, and parent signature. Notes will be submitted to the office early in the session. Children will be dismissed by their classroom teachers.

### **EARLY MORNING ARRIVALS**

For safety reasons, students are not to arrive at school prior to the start of school if they are not part of the Before School Program. See Arrival/Dismissal procedures in the first-day packet.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

If a child must leave school early, the child must have a written statement from the parent/guardian. When the parent/guardian arrives to pick up the child, he/she must report to the office to properly sign the child out. The office will notify the teacher and the child will report to the office. Students are to remain in class until the parent/guardian arrives.

### **EARLY RELEASE OR IN-SERVICE DAYS**

Please check with the preschool program on specific dismissal times. Please make sure your child's teacher knows if there are any changes. **Written notes are required.**

### **EASING THE TRANSITION**

Adjusting to new situations is an important and exciting part of growing up. Each child adjusts to new situations differently. Both parents/guardians and children need to know that the classroom is a secure and safe place for them.

*Things teachers will do to help promote a positive adjustment*

- Teachers will work on developing a relationship with your child to get to know their strengths, interests, and needs.
- Teachers will introduce children to the classroom routine and where to locate materials in the classroom.
- Teachers will help to get the children involved in activities within the classroom.
- Teachers will keep you informed as to how your child is adjusting.

*Things parents/guardians can do to promote a positive adjustment*

O, Bring your child to school feeling confident that they will be successful. Your child will learn that there is nothing to fear and that they will be picked up at the end of their day.

o A child can sense when a caretaker is uncertain about leaving. This can increase your child's anxiety. Once a good-bye is said, follow through by leaving. Often when a child is upset, within ten minutes he/she is calm and engaged in an activity.

o Prompt arrival and pickup are very important. Part of your child's sense of security while participating in the program is his/her awareness of the daily routine.

o Please share pertinent information with the teachers. Examples may include changes in the family, changes in sleeping habits, changes in medications, etc.

o Please do not hesitate to request a conference if you have any questions regarding your child's participation in the program.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones and other personal technology are not allowed at school, on the playground, or the school van for any reason. In addition, cell phones and personal technology may not be used to capture images or make recordings.

**RADIOS, CD PLAYERS, CELL PHONES, i-PODS, IWATCHES, HANDHELD VIDEO GAMES, iPADS or SIMILAR DEVICES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE USED ON THE SCHOOL BUS AND IN SCHOOL AT ANY TIME UNLESS A SPECIFIC SCHOOL BEHAVIOR WRITTEN PLAN IS IN PLACE.**

### **EMAIL**

It is the practice of our staff **not** to use email to relay any confidential or personal information concerning students. All school emails are public and therefore it is best to refrain from sending confidential emails about your child.

### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

An emergency card is needed for every student. Parents are required to complete the cards on both sides, sign and return them promptly. The card should list neighbors or relatives who can be notified in case a child becomes ill at school and parents are not available. **Please inform us of changes** of address, telephone numbers, emergency person contact, etc. as they occur throughout the year, as this is our only means of communication.

**For the safety of your child: PLEASE MAKE US AWARE OF ANY CHANGES OF ADDRESS, EMERGENCY PERSON TO CONTACT, CHANGE IN CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS, ETC., AS THEY OCCUR THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

### **ENTRANCE INTO THE SCHOOL**

All persons entering the school must enter at the front of your child(ren)'s school and sign in at the Main Office; **you are not to go directly to a classroom**. Visitor badges will be issued to individual visitors and volunteers while they are in school. For security reasons, all visitors and volunteers are asked to visibly wear their stickers.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Once or twice a year, we bring performers or events into our school to enhance our curriculum. If we participate in a field trip off school grounds, parents are given information, via school notice, before the trip. The fees charged for field trips are based on admission costs and costs of transportation. Students are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior reflecting school-wide rules and procedures while on a field trip. 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.

Classroom teachers will obtain chaperones for each field trip. Parents who are not serving as chaperones are not to meet their children at the field trip site as additional adults create a safety issue. Chaperones must have a CORI check on file with the school district to be chosen as a chaperone. The CORI form used by North Middlesex Regional

School District requires you to verify your identity by showing a photo I.D. in person when completing the form.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Food allergies are increasingly recognized and diagnosed among school-age children. Reactions to food allergies vary and exposure to a particular food may result in a severe allergic reaction requiring immediate medical attention. **Squannacook Early Childhood Center is a food-free facility.** There will be a designated snack time in each classroom. Only snacks sent from home for your child are allowed. If your child has a food allergy, feel free to keep extra snacks for them at school in case they forget it at home one day. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the bus company of any allergies.

### **HEALTH SERVICES and SCHOOL NURSE'S ROLE**

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

### **CHILDREN WHO BECOME ILL AT SCHOOL**

When a child becomes ill at school, he/she is taken to the nurse. If the nurse feels the child should go home, they will contact the parents/guardian. If a parent is not available, a relative or neighbor designated on the Student Emergency Card will be notified. Students will only be released to people listed on the emergency card. Whenever there is a **change** to this information you must notify the school so that time is not wasted when trying to make contact.

### **MEDICATION POLICY**

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law and for the safety of our students, this medication policy has been written and will be strictly enforced. The policy for the administration of medications, whether prescribed or over-the-counter, during school hours, is as follows:

- Medication must be accompanied by a MEDICAL PERMISSION FORM signed by both the physician and parent. A signed physician's order, stipulating a specific diagnosis requiring treatment, accompanied by a MEDICATION PERMISSION FORM signed by a parent will also be accepted.
- Medication must be supplied by the parent in the original pharmacy container. (Please ask your pharmacist to provide a second container and bring only the amount of medication needed to school.)



- Medication is kept locked in the nurse's office and is dispensed by the school nurse. For their safety and the safety of other students, students are not allowed to carry medication around during school. Parents must bring prescription medications and over-the-counter medications into the school. They should not be sent to school with the student. 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. The school nurse will verify the student's ability to safely self-administer.
- Psychotropic medication, such as Ritalin, may only be given by obtaining certification from the Department of Public Health. To accomplish this, the school must file the following forms:
  - a. Parent/Guardian Consent Form
  - b. Physician's Form
  - c. Application for Certification Form

Application for recertification is required each school year. Psychotropic drugs may only be administered in public schools by a registered nurse.

### **MEDICATION PERMISSION FORM**

This form is to be completed by a physician and parent for any medication to be dispensed at school.

Under Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Chapter 112, Section 80B, a licensed nurse must have a medication order from a physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant to administer any medication, whether it is a prescription drug or over-the-counter medication.

#### **Physician's Order**

Physician:

Please complete this form if the below-named student must take prescribed medication during school hours, as you require it to be administered more than three times a day and it cannot be given at home only.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of  
School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_  
Medication Prescribed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dosage  
Prescribed: \_\_\_\_  
Time during the school day to be given: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Duration of medication: \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Physician's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian:

I, the undersigned, permit the school nurse to administer the above-named medication to my child. I understand that school personnel is not responsible for any problems arising from the taking of this medication, its side effects (if any), or for the omission of medication. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the School Committee and its agents and servants against all claims as a result of any or all acts performed during this authority.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

(Please return to the school nurse)

[Medication Permission Form](#)

### **PRESCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

A child with special needs is eligible for enrollment in the preschool program when he/she becomes three (3). Children without special needs must be three (3) years of age before August 31<sup>st</sup>. A copy of the child's birth certificate must be presented to the school before the entrance date.

A physical examination within one year of the entrance is a school health requirement. The following immunizations are required and immunization records, a listed below, must be presented:

- DtaP/DTP – 4 doses\* If DT is given without Pertussis, a letter of exemption is required from the physician
- Polio – 3 doses
- MMR – 1 dose
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella (chickenpox) 1 dose or the date of the disease in written form from the doctor
- HIB 4 doses
- Physical examination
- Lead level - should include date and results

### **HOMEWORK**

From time to time students may receive a project, etc to reinforce and provide enrichment opportunities to go along with the curriculum.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

There will be a table for lost and found clothes and other items in the lobby. Parents are invited to claim articles at any time. Lost books, glasses, and jewelry can be found in the

school office. **Please do not send valuables to school with your child.** At the end of the year, all unclaimed articles will be given to charity.

### **MASKS (PRE-K)**

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

### **MASSACHUSETTS EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM**

Squannacook Early Childhood Center adheres to the Massachusetts State Frameworks. Our programs are theme-based, building upon the needs, strengths, and interests of the children while targeting individual goals and objectives. The classrooms are organized to support a variety of learning styles through the use of interest centers. These centers provide a focus for activities that actively engage children. Our developmental program recognizes the development of the whole child in the areas of cognitive, social, emotional, language, fine motor, and gross motor skills.

Young children learn through play and need to be provided many varied opportunities to explore and experiment with materials through hands-on activities in their natural and comfortable environment. Through these play experiences, preschool children continually refine their skill development and understanding. As teachers observe the children's play and development, they can identify specific skills that need to be targeted to provide new challenges.

*Math:* Children are introduced to early math concepts and problem-solving skills through manipulating concrete materials in their environment. Pre-math skills acquired through play include matching, sequencing, sorting, categorizing, counting, and one-to-one correspondence.

*Science:* Children are offered a variety of science-related activities through a hands-on approach. Children learn to observe, predict, experiment, categorize, and measure.

*Language Arts and Pre-reading:* We work to help children develop their ability to understand language and express themselves effectively at their developmental level. Teachers help children make the connection between written and oral language by reciting what is written on the paper. Our curriculum is based upon the Scott-Foresman reading series which is utilized in the higher grades.

*Sensory Motor:* Children are continually developing physical mastery within their environment. Our preschool provides opportunities for children to explore spatial concepts through activities including movement games, rhythm songs, and songs with gestures. Small motor control is encouraged daily through manipulation of toys, tools for play, and completion of multi-step projects. Staff members encourage children to develop physical competencies, awareness of physical boundaries, coordinated movement, and hand-eye control.

*Socialization Skills:* A major goal in preschool is to provide opportunities for children to develop social and pragmatic communication skills to successfully interact with peers and adults. Children are guided throughout the day to develop such skills as cooperation, turn-taking, identification of feelings, sharing, decision making, problem-solving, following rules, respecting others, and expressing ideas. At the same time, the teachers encourage each student to develop a sense of autonomy so that they can be independent and self-sufficient learners.

*Arts:* All children are allowed to express themselves through the arts. The arts provide another means of communication for ideas, feelings, and creativity. These experiences promote self-expression through art, dance, play, and music.

Interest centers include puzzles, library/quiet reading, language arts, blocks, dramatic play, math, fine motor manipulatives, games, art, easel, and sensory (sand/water table).

### **MOTOR VEHICLES**

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

### **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 a 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 chose 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.

#### **NMRSD SPED PAC (North Middlesex Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Committee)**

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 Westminister.

For SEPAC information, please contact the special education office.

#### **NOTICES**

An open line of communication among the administration, teachers, and parents/guardians is most important during your child's school years. Many notices are sent home with your child. These notices are important and will keep you advised of early release days, vacation periods, parent conference schedules, special programs, and other information necessary to your child's successful school experience. The principal's updates are shared via the school website, email, and/or, Connect Ed phone calls. Please make sure to have updated email and contact numbers at your child(ren)'s school to receive these notices.

#### **OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

Outreach programs are available to provide support for district families in need. Families in need of resources, such as additional food and clothing during the year should contact the school guidance counselor or school nurse. Information relating to your town's outreach program will be provided.

#### **PARENT COMMITTEES**

The following committees have been established over the years as vehicles to develop communication. They included: Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, and Parent Teacher Organization.

## **PARENT-GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

Parent/guardian involvement is a vital component of the preschool program. We acknowledge and support parents/guardians as their child's primary teacher. Together we promote positive self-esteem and considerations for others. We encourage parents to communicate, share, and participate in their child's school experience. Parent conferences are scheduled twice annually or at parental/guardian request.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are encouraged to maintain communication between home and school. Conferences can be held whenever there is a need simply by requesting one with the child's teacher. In addition, there are designated times in the fall and winter when early release days are also used for conferences.

## **PARTY INVITATIONS**

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthdays by bringing in goodie bags to share with their friends. Stickers or other small party favors make excellent choices. **Just a reminder: Squannacook Early Childhood Center has a no-food expectation.**

If you are planning a party for your child, please do not send invitations to be distributed in school unless everyone in the class is invited. If you are not inviting everyone in the class then invitations must be distributed outside the school and not on school grounds. We understand that you must limit the number of children you can invite, however, the children who do not receive an invitation feel left out or excluded.

The first-day packet has a form for you to fill out to indicate if you permit the classroom teacher to give your child's name, telephone number, and address to another parent in the class for the stated purpose of inviting them to a birthday party, for Valentine's cards, special events or a summer event.

## **PRESCHOOL HOME CONNECTION**

Parents/guardians often ask what they can do at home to further enhance their child's preschool experience. The following is a list of skills that parents can help practice at home through modeling and coaching.

### **Self-Help**

*Exposure and Practice:* handwashing; toileting skills; identifying age and gender; taking off/putting on coat and backpack; zipping jackets, lunchboxes, and backpacks; cleaning up after oneself (snack, art projects, toys, etc.); opening snack containers; appropriate nose-blowing, coughing and sneezing into their elbows.

### Social Skills

*Exposure and Practice:* interactions with peers – playdates, playgroups, etc.; storytime at the public library or local books stores; playground; outside social activities; using manners; sharing; taking turns; cooperatives games (board games, card games, etc.)

### Fine Motor

*Exposure to various manipulative and tools:* Playdough; scissors; writing tools (crayons, markers, pencils, etc.); paint (easel, finger paints); various sensory items (sand, rice, glue, shaving cream, etc.)

### Gross Motor

*Exposure and Practice:* hopping; skipping; climbing; running; jumping; walking up and down stairs; catching a ball.

### Academic Readiness

*Exposure and Practice:* numbers and counting; colors; shapes; name recognition; choosing books from the public library.

While preparing your child for preschool, please enjoy the opportunities and activities that include getting messy! Children learn most through play and hands-on creativity.

### What Did You Do At School Today?

When preschoolers come home at the end of their day, caretakers often ask, “What did you do at school today?” To parents’ dismay, they are told that their preschooler did “nothing” at school. So much occurs during their time at preschool, so much seems to have happened and so long ago. As they are heading home, their attention may no longer be on school, they are thinking about what they may be having for lunch or what they are going to play with when they get home.

It helps to ask specific questions about your child’s day in order to elicit discussion. A specific question will help focus your child on a particular portion of their day and be able to recall events more readily.

- What did you have for snack today?
- Did you sing today?
- What songs did you sing? Please sing one for me.
- Did you play in the (block, art, puzzle, house, writing, etc.) center today?
- Who did you play with at that center?
- Did you go outside for recess?
- Were you a helper?
- What was something nice you said to a friend today?
- How did you help a friend today?
- What book did the teacher read?
- What was your favorite part of the day?

## **RECESS**

All students have a recess period during each preschool session. Recess is a time for relaxing, exercising, playing, socially communicating, and renewal for learning. The school rules and classroom rules are guidelines for appropriate behavior at recess. The school playgrounds are always supervised by school personnel. Children wishing to play on the equipment cannot be wearing flip-flops. Children who disobey rules may lose recess privileges. Bullying, fighting, biting, threatening, swearing, or sexual harassment is strictly forbidden and may result in other disciplinary measures. Please dress your child appropriately for all weather conditions. Weather permitting, children will go outside.

**PLEASE NOTE: Children who cannot participate in outdoor recess due to any type of medical or health issue MUST HAVE A DOCTOR'S NOTE EXCUSING THEM FROM OUTDOOR RECESS.** Children will not be excused from outdoor recess with only a parent's or guardian's request. **PLEASE NOTE:** Parents may not attend recess with their children.

## **REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS, AND CONFERENCES FOR PRESCHOOLER**

Preschool report cards and progress reports are issued twice a year. (January & June)  
Parent conferences are held twice a year. (November & February)

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire and lockdown drill procedures are conducted regularly in connection with Massachusetts State Law. All procedures are posted in the classrooms. These will take place periodically during the school year.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

<https://www.nmrtd.org/Page/2#calendar1/20210820/month>

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATION FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES**

To assist families and support student safety, the administration of the North Middlesex Regional School District offers the following important information about emergency school closings during the school year. In the North Middlesex Regional School District, the decision to close school is usually made the prior evening or during early morning hours by the district administrators.

The Superintendent of Schools will send out a Connect-Ed message to all families if there is a decision to close schools. The call may come between 4:30 – 6:30 AM. If you miss the call, you can check the following radio and television stations.

**WBZ-TV (Channel 4)**

**WCVB-TV (Channel 5)**

**WHDH-TV (Channel 7)**

**FOX25-TV (Channel 25)**



**The towns of Ashby, Pepperell, and Townsend are part of one school district called the "North Middlesex Regional School District".** When listening to school closing lists on the radio or television, you will hear that **"The North Middlesex Regional School District is closed"**. There are seven schools in our district. They are Ashby Elementary School; Nissitissit Middle School, Varnum Brook Elementary School, North Middlesex Regional High School, Hawthorne Brook Middle School, Spaulding Memorial School, and Squannacook Early Childhood Center.

The North Middlesex Regional School District would generally close schools during the following emergencies:

- Excessive snowfall.
- Dangerous ice/road conditions.
- Flood conditions.
- Hurricane and high wind conditions.
- Problems at schools such as heat, power, or water failure.
- District schools are being used as emergency shelters.

**In summary, please remember only central office school officials close schools on emergency closing days. You should assume school is open unless you hear otherwise by phone call or on local radio or television stations typically between 4:30 AM and 6:30 AM. Parents are encouraged not to call local communication centers at the police and fire departments.**

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY**

Over the school year, district policies may be revised or new ones created. When this occurs, the revised or new policy automatically goes into effect. School district policies can be found at [nmrsd.org](http://nmrsd.org).

### **SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Some students with disabilities may require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to enable them to make effective progress in school. Parents or teachers may refer students to the NMRSD Special Education Department for an evaluation. Upon receipt of the parent(s)' consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a Team meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If a student is found eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

Additionally, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely because 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." Under Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet

a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

If you would like more information about special education services at NMRSD, please contact the Special Education Department.

### **SNACKS**

Parents provide a snack and beverage for their children each day. For those children who attend a full-day program, a lunch and second snack will need to be provided. Please refrain from sending in "sweets" (candy, soda, etc.) as part of snack or lunch. Please note: if a child in the group has a food allergy, some foods might need to be restricted. Your child's teacher and the nurse will provide information if this is the case.

### **SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE**

State and county agencies have assisted any number of family and child concerns. Please see the school guidance counselor or school psychologist for specific information.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflecting a sense of responsibility, good citizenship, and consideration for the rights of others.

#### **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS TO THE BEHAVIOR CODE**

- Administrators will use professional discretion in determining the appropriate consequence and length for each disciplinary step depending on the severity and/or frequency of offense(s). Consequences may range from the following examples:
  1. Phone Call Home and/or email
  2. Apology
  3. Mediation/Counseling
  4. Indoor Recess
  5. Office Lunch
  6. Behavior/Safety Contract
  7. Detention
  8. Out-of-School Suspension
- Students and parents/guardians will be given 24-hour's 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 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.

### **SUSPENSION (LONG-TERM OR EXPULSION) FROM SCHOOL**

Disciplinary action may be taken following a violation of any state or federal law, school committee policy, or rule or policy in this handbook. Each incident will be considered individually, and consideration may be given to the number of offenses, type, and the seriousness of the offense. The Principal has the authority to exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for a student who has violated disciplinary rules. The Principal shall first consider ways to re-engage the student offender in the learning process, and shall avoid using long-term suspension until other remedies and consequences have been tried. Other remedies may include: mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

Certain breaches of conduct are so serious that the Principal may long-term suspend or expel a student under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H ½. These include:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- Possession of a controlled substance while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- An assault on a School Administrator, teacher, teacher's aide, or another staff person
- A felony charge or conviction

Other violations of the code of conduct will subject a student to disciplinary action up to and including mediation, detention, or suspension under the provisions of M.G.L. chapter 71, § 37H ¾.

Due process will be provided in accordance with federal and state law. Please see "Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Student Conduct and Behavior," in this Handbook for details regarding due process.

### **TARDY**

A tardy student **must** report to the school office to obtain a pass before going to the classroom. Being consistently tardy is to be avoided, as it disrupts student learning time. Students are marked tardy based on the arrival time at each elementary school.

### **TOYS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL**

We discourage bringing toys from home to school. Favorite toys can be misplaced or broken and sharing can be difficult. Our goal is to have the children use classroom toys and materials and to leave his/her toys at home.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **SCHOOL VAN REGULATIONS and PROCEDURES**

The regulations for school van use for all students grades Pre-K-12 in the North Middlesex Regional Schools are:

##### **Previous 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 safely conduct themselves before it while waiting.
- Wait until the van comes to a complete stop before attempting to step onto the bus.
- Do not crowd and push getting on the van.
- Respectfully follow the instructions of school staff members on duty.

##### **While on the van:**

- Keep hands and head inside the van. Keep your hands to yourself and don't touch others inappropriately. Horseplay or fighting is not permitted on or around the school van at any time.
- Assist in keeping the van safe and sanitary. (DO NOT throw things on the van, spit or litter the van)
- Keep voice tone at a moderate level. Do not swear or use vulgar or derogatory language.
- Bullying, discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment or assault, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.
- Damage to van equipment/property will be paid for by the offender.
- DO NOT leave books, lunches, or other articles on the van.
- Keep books, packages, coats, and other objects out of aisles.
- Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.
- DO NOT throw objects inside the van or out the van window.
- DO NOT leave or change your seat while the van is in motion.
- Be courteous to fellow pupils and the van driver.
- Remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.

- Remain on the van unless requested to leave by the van driver in an emergency.
- Sit where you are told.
- A written permission slip from the parent/guardian is necessary for a student to get on or off the van at a place other than his/her regular stop. Students must get on or off the van at their assigned stop.
- Continued refusal to promptly obey the directions of the driver or refusal to obey van regulations 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 van are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

#### **After Leaving van:**

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

#### **Extra-Curricular and Field Trips:**

- Van 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:**

Van Pool Company- (978) 400-7811  
See District policy for Bus Disciplinary Action

#### **USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT**

Unauthorized entrance to any area of a school, by anyone, and/or use of any equipment without proper supervision is prohibited. Failure to observe this rule could result in disciplinary action.

#### **VOLUNTEERING AT THE SCHOOL**

All volunteers must have CORI checks prior to working in the school. A volunteer application is included in your child's first-day packet. If you are interested, please complete the paperwork provided and return to the school. Opportunities to volunteer include work in classrooms, the library, special education classrooms, and at home. Each volunteer donates however much time they have available. Volunteers working in the school must sign in and out and wear a volunteer name tag. CORI (Criminal Record) checks are required for all volunteers, including chaperones. This is a policy that will be strictly enforced. The policy endeavors to provide for the safety of students, employees, and visitors while at school and/or participating in school-sponsored activities. Please complete the volunteer application along with a CORI (available in the school office); upon completion of these forms, you may be contacted to volunteer.

### **WHEN YOUR CHILD MUST LEAVE EARLY**

If a child must leave school early, the child should have a written statement from the parent/guardian on the morning of early dismissal. When arriving to pick up the child, please report to the main office to properly sign out the child. The office will notify the teacher over the intercom and the child will then report to the office. **Dismissal is always from the main office. Do not go directly to the classroom.** Thank you.

### **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENT(S)**

Students moving from North Middlesex to another community will be processed through the Main Office. A transfer card will be issued, as well as a record release form signed. NMRSD may forward student records to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the signed consent of a parent or eligible student, in accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g).



## **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**

<b>I. LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>VIII. DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>X. COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Chinese Translators/Psychologists</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>DESE – Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Fax. 781 338-3318</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>LIST OF SCHOOLS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>SUMMARY FOR HANDBOOKS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>APPENDIX D</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Date(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SIGNATURE OF PERSON FILING THIS REPORT</b>	<b>29</b>



## **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"><li>• Principles of Health</li><li>• Yoga: Mind and Body Connection</li><li>• Competitive Team Sports</li><li>• Comprehensive Health</li></ul>
High School Social Studies Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contemporary</li></ul>

• 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 foiling 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 ½, or 37H ¾, 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/sychologists

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/](http://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](http://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](http://www.mapatranslation.com)

[drita@mapatranslation.com](mailto: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**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL</b>
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

### SUMMARY FOR HANDBOOKS

#### **Anti-Bullying Law: *Reporting, Investigation, and Notification of Bullying or Retaliation and Confidentiality of Student Record Information***

##### **I. Purpose:**

Bullying, which includes cyberbullying, and retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation about bullying, or who has reliable information about bullying, or against witnesses, is prohibited. North Middlesex Regional School District has a written Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and school committee policy to address the requirements of the Anti-bullying Law. It may be accessed electronically, on the district and school websites, by hard copy in each school, at Central Office, and in the public library in the towns of Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell.

##### **II. Definitions and Terms:**

**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 themselves, or of damage to their property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying.

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but 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. Cyberbullying shall also include: (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying 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 of posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

**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.

### **III. Reporting, Investigation, and Notification**

#### **Staff**

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. Staff may use the Initial Referral Form to report this conduct.

#### **Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

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.

Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports may be made orally or in writing. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. 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.

#### **Principal**

When receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, the principal or their designee will promptly respond to the incident and carry out an investigation.

#### **Parents**

The principal or designee will notify the parent of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator of a report of bullying or retaliation and of the school's procedures for investigating the report; and inform the parent of a victim of bullying or retaliation of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.

#### **Law Enforcement**

Upon reviewing the report of the investigation, the principal will decide whether to notify the police of the reported incident. The decision to notify the police is based on a reasonable belief that the incident may result in criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator. If the principal decides to notify the police, they will document the reasons and immediately make a notification.

If the principal decides not to notify the police, or the police determine that its involvement is not necessary under the circumstances, the principal shall respond to the incident of bullying or retaliation with appropriate disciplinary action. If the principal subsequently determines facts that cause them to believe that the perpetrator's conduct may be criminal, the principal shall then notify the police.

In either case, nothing in the anti-bullying law shall prevent the principal from taking appropriate disciplinary or other action pursuant to school policy and state law related to the incident.

#### **IV. Confidentiality of Records**

##### **Parents**

A principal may not disclose to a parent any student record information regarding an alleged victim or perpetrator who is a student and who is not the parent's child, unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that each student must be aware of in order to comply.

##### **Law Enforcement**

A principal may disclose a report of bullying or retaliation to police without the consent of a student or their parent. The principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of victims, student witnesses, and perpetrators to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

##### **Additional Authorities**

A principal may disclose student record information about a victim or perpetrator to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This provision is limited to instances in which the principal has determined there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals. It is limited to the period of emergency and does not allow for blanket disclosure of student record information. The principal must document the disclosures and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

#### **V. Regulatory Authority:**

603 CMR 49.00 is promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010. Student Confidentiality Laws: 603 CMR 23.07(e) and 34 CFR 99.31(10) and 99.36

#### **APPENDIX D**

##### **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  
☐ Witness (and not the target)  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Student  
☐ Staff Member  
☐ 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

### Describe the Incident(s)/Behavior

*Describe the details of the incident(s), behavior(s) and/ or action(s) in detail:*

[illegible]

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_